

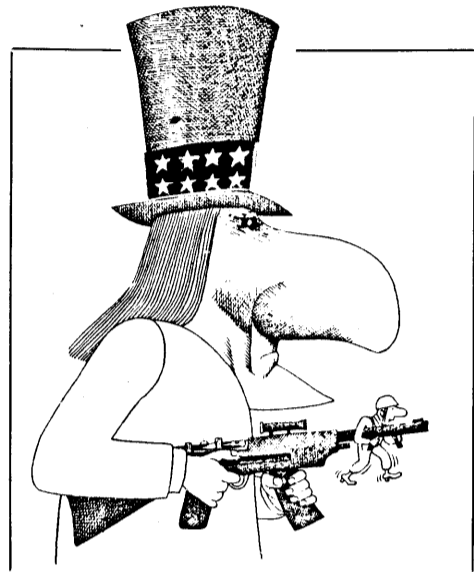
A Socialist ACTION

Hiroshima. See pp. 8-9



VOL.3, NO.7 AUGUST 1985 50 CENTS

'State of emergency' fails to halt S. African revolt



Nicaraguans rebuff U.S. 'terrorism' lie

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Only in the "Looking Glass" world of the Reagan administration—in which "freedom fighters" are payrolled to rape and murder—could the United States be portrayed as the victim of "outright acts of war" by a small Central American nation. But the U.S. government has singled out Nicaragua for the brunt of its hypocritical campaign against "terrorism."

On July 23, U.S. State Department aides admitted that the White House considered a "surgical air strike" last month against Nicaragua. The officials claimed that the attack would have been aimed at several sites near Managua at which Nicaragua allegedly trained Salvadoran "terrorists."

Instead, the officials revealed, the government decided to release a statement that threatened future U.S. military action. The "warning," released on July 18, attempted to implicate the Nicaraguan government in the June killings of six U.S. citizens by Salvadoran revolutionaries.

The statement also charged that the Sandinistas are helping to prepare terrorist attacks against U.S. personnel in Honduras and warned—while avoiding details—that the United States will "react accordingly" if the attacks take place.

The U.S. government timed its threats to coincide with celebrations of the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. On July 19 Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega ridiculed the U.S. charges while addressing a half-million people from all over the country at a rally in Managua.

"Who blew up the oil tanks in Corinto?" Ortega asked the crowd. "Who

(continued on page 14)

The racist South African government declared an indefinite state of emergency on July 20 in 36 cities and towns. President P.W. Botha motivated the new repression by fuming against acts of "violence and thuggery...mainly directed at the property and persons of law-abiding Black people..."

What most disturbs the South African slavemasters is hardly "violence" directed at Black people. They are panicked by a superbly effective boycott in the Eastern Cape region that has resulted in a total suspension of Black trade in shops owned or operated by whites.

It is this boycott—led by Black labor unions—which has compelled the ruling white capitalist minority to take desperate counteraction. The last emergency declaration was declared 25 years ago after the massacre of 69 Blacks by police at Sharpeville.

The boycott is being enforced by organized groups of young Black freedom fighters who patrol the white business areas to discourage individual Blacks, who might be enticed by lower prices, from ignoring the boycott.

The boycott, slated to extend for two months, may set an example to be fol-

**More on South Africa.
See page 13.**

lowed in other cities and in industry as well. The ruling class, fearing the revolutionary consequences of such a burgeoning mass mobilization, can be

(continued on page 13)



Socialist Action/ Joe Ryan

Claim of bankruptcy forces steel strike

By MARIE WEIGAND

During the past few years, corporations have forced extensive contract concessions upon millions of working people. Top union leaders have done nothing to stop the bosses from digging deeper and deeper into the workers'

pockets.

An international officer from the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) summed up the smug complacency of these bureaucrats when he defended the 1980 concession-laden Basic Steel Agreement by saying that "we probably could have gotten more,

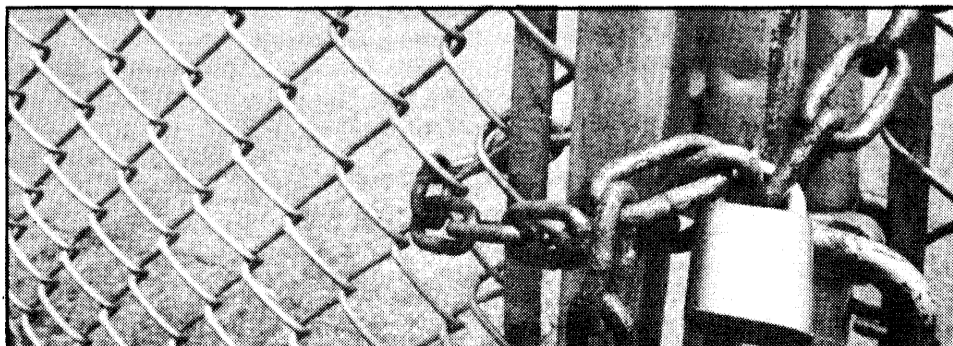
but we didn't want to kill the money tree."

This lack of leadership only emboldens the corporations to increase their attacks against the unions. Thus, the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corporation announced that, based on 1984 revisions to federal bankruptcy laws, it would unilaterally reduce wages and benefits by up to 30 percent. The USWA estimates this will be a \$6905 cut for every worker.

Last month the seventh-largest steel producer filed for bankruptcy and received permission from a federal court to void its contract with the USWA. The contract would have expired next year. In a booklet mailed to employees, management has emphasized that the revised work rules and wages are subject to even more cuts in the future at company discretion.

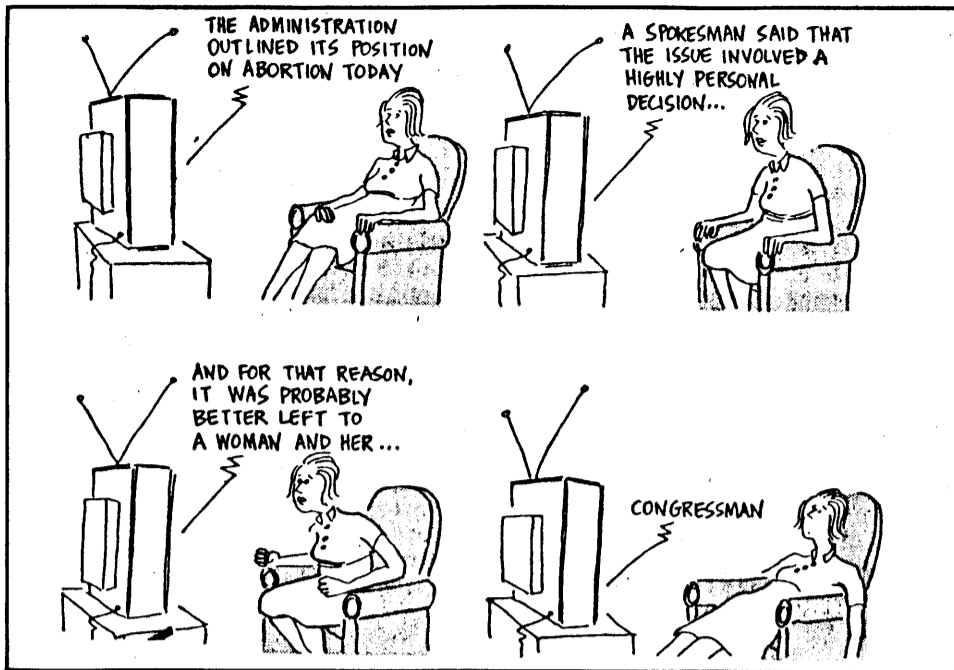
The immediate response of the 8200 workers in 19 plants in the Ohio-West Virginia-Pennsylvania region was to call for a strike. The walkout, which began

(continued on page 5)



The challenge facing U.S. antiwar movement. See pp. 6-7

Fight back!



Defend Abortion Rights

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

The Reagan administration, in its continuing terrorist war against women, is asking the Supreme Court to do away with the constitutional right to abortion.

Last month Attorney General Edwin Meese requested the Supreme Court to reverse its 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision. The court ruling had stated that the

decision to end pregnancy was a "fundamental right of privacy" and therefore protected by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

At the time of the 1973 decision, in most states, women who obtained abortions and doctors who performed the operations faced criminal penalties. Now, using the legal gimmick of "states' rights," Meese has asked the Supreme Court to "return the law to the

condition in which it was before that case [Roe vs. Wade] was decided."

By "states' rights" the attorney general means laws such as those passed in Pennsylvania and Illinois that restricted access to abortion. Federal courts have declared these laws to be unconstitutional and in violation of the Roe vs. Wade decision.

After repeated attempts by right-wing "pro-lifers" to negate and repeal the right of women "to choose," the Reagan administration has now decided to ask for the whole hog—to simply remove this right from the lawbooks. Reagan and his marauding "pro-lifers" do not let a little thing like the Constitution of the United States stand in the way of their narrow view of what is right and wrong.

Love the fetus; hate children

One would think that given their zeal for saving the fetus, the "pro-lifers" would also be tireless in their efforts to aid children who are out of the womb and living in the world of poverty. On the contrary, anti-abortion legislators are notorious for voting against every bill designed to increase social aid to low-income women and children such as childcare, medical aid, nutrition, and school lunch programs.

It is obvious by their actions that while the "pro-lifers" believe that life begins at conception, they also believe that it ends at birth.

I suspect that their hatred stems from the fact they have discovered that children are not delivered by the stork but are actually the result of SEX! And you know what SEX is. It is something to be punished and so the result of SEX is

also to be punished.

The "pro-lifers" know that if they get their way, women would be forced back to the bloodbath of illegal abortions. They know that only safe abortions would end.

The economic facts of life require women to make their own decisions about having children and when they can afford to have them.

Black robes

Women of this nation are now glued to the news media to see if nine old men in black robes (I include Sandra Day O'Connor among them) will continue to allow women their constitutional rights.

Reagan, another rich and evil old man, lay in his hospital bed, enjoying the best medical care money can buy. His right to live is well protected as he demands that the Supreme Court take away a woman's right to choose... and live!

For the first time in the history of this country a president is trying to take away a constitutional right because he doesn't like it. This is a serious test by the right-wing rulers of this country to get away with whittling away our rights. If he is successful, what will be next? Our right to vote?

The only way to protect our right "to choose" and all of the other rights we have gained, is by going out into the streets of this country by the thousands and millions and expressing our outrage at being abused by a sexist government. Women's organizations must answer this threat with a call to action. We will not be driven back into the hands of the back-alley abortion butchers of this country. ■

By CLIFF CONNER

NY housing crisis: People vs. profits

NEW YORK—The dominant ideology in any society, according to Karl Marx, is the ideology of the ruling class. Here, as in the rest of the country, capitalist ideology lays down the line for the lawmakers, the educational system, and the news and entertainment media. And most people, most of the time, accept it as naturally as they accept sugar in their breakfast cereal.

But not always. Occasionally something happens that leads a large part of the population to reject, or at least question, some key aspects of bourgeois ideology. The Vietnam War was one such event. The shortage of affordable living space in New York City is another.

It isn't quite accurate to call this a housing crisis because it has been going on for at least four decades. In 1943 the city passed emergency rent-control regulations designed to ease the problem. But every year the legislation has to be

extended—it's an emergency that never subsides.

And every year when the rent laws come up for renewal a sharp ideological debate opens up between landlords and tenants. Rent Guidelines Board hearings turn into polarized, emotional, mass demonstrations, with hundreds—and sometimes thousands—of people on each side shouting bitter slogans at each other.

Not philanthropy

The landlords extol the virtues of laissez-faire capitalism. Rent control, they argue, is bad for profits. If there's no profit to be made, no new housing will be built and the crisis will deepen.

"Housing is a business, not a philanthropy," says one of their advocates. To restore their profitability, the landlords demand that they be allowed to charge whatever rents the market will bear.

Tenants, of course, look at the problem from a very different angle. Of the nearly two million renter-occupied apartments in New York City, 61 percent—well over a million—are subject to some form of rent regulation. If the rent stabilization laws were repealed, hundreds of thousands of people would be forced from their homes.

The *New York Times* pointed out on June 4 that all new construction in Manhattan in recent years is called "luxury," not because the apartments are really luxurious, but because they are priced "out of reach of 98 percent of the city's population."

Nonetheless, the landlords and real-estate interests insist that to resolve the housing crisis "would require resuming a system of unfettered risk, of making a killing on a scarce commodity or suffering losses in a glut."

"But," writes the *Times*' commentator, "that runs counter to the dominant ideology in New York City."

Which is...? That "the profit motive is not appropriate in the provi-

sion of necessities."

A tenants' advocate is quoted as saying, "I wouldn't start with the premise that housing is something you can maximize your profit from."

Sounds like socialism

Sounds like a lot of socialism to me. But is it really "the dominant ideology in New York City?" According to a poll conducted by the *Times*, it is indeed. The survey found that "even those who might be thought least sympathetic to

are necessary because their costs have risen, the chairman of a tenants' coalition replied, "Until the [Rent Guidelines] board adopts a method of requiring landlords to open up their books and records—to get a true picture of actual landlord incomes, expenditures and profits—there is no way to know if rent increases are needed."

The demand to open the books of property owners to public inspection is a powerful challenge to bourgeois property rights. It places social rights—in this case everyone's right to a roof over their head—above individual landlords' right to business secrecy.

If the pollsters were to ask New Yorkers, "Are you a socialist?" probably not one in a hundred would say yes. Yet the dominant ideology on the housing question is manifestly pro-socialist and anti-capitalist.

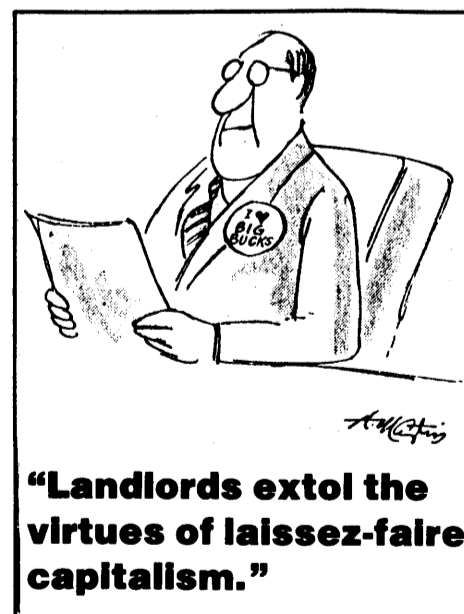
Permanent emergency?

The farce of renewing emergency legislation every year is a way of pretending that the housing shortage is a temporary aberration. The permanence of the emergency, however, shows that it is a built-in fact of life in the capitalist system.

Rent regulation is necessary to offer tenants at least some protection against landlord greed, but it doesn't go to the root of the problem. It treats the symptoms, not the disease. As long as the power of investment in new housing construction remains in the hands of private, profit-seeking capitalists, the quantity and quality of housing will continue to deteriorate.

Isn't that similar to what the landlords claim? Yes, but the solution is not to loosen restrictions on landlord profiteering; it is to take the profit away from the real-estate developers, too. Not backward to the free-market rent system of a bygone era, but forward to socialized planning of housing.

As the annual battles at the Rent Guidelines hearings escalate, New York's dominant ideology will no doubt be pressed toward another leap in socialist consciousness—this time beyond people-before-profits sentiments. The next level is an awareness that the profit system can't be patched up by rent laws but will have to be scrapped altogether. ■



rent regulation say it is needed to keep housing affordable.

This socialistic attitude is so pervasive that the bourgeois politicians are afraid to buck it. Rent regulation, says the New York state assemblyman who chairs the Housing Committee, is "an untouchable issue."

Open the books!

Furthermore, the "dominant ideology" isn't limited to abstract socialist sentiments, but leads to further anticapitalist insights. When the landlords claimed—as always—that rent increases

Socialist ACTION

Closing news date: July 23, 1985

Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN
Assistant Editor: MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Staff: Paul Colvin, Suzanne Forsyth, May May Gong, Millie Gonzalez, Mark Harris, David Kirschner, Hayden Perry, Joe Ryan, Carole Seligman, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Marion Syrek, Sylvia Weinstein

Business Manager: Don Mahoney
Circulation Manager: Ralph Forsyth

Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$6 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Rates: 12 issues for \$6.00; Canada and Mexico \$12.50; \$30.00 airmail for all other countries; \$14.00 surface mail for all other countries. Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialist Action*. These are expressed in editorials.

Reagan's tax 'reform': Welfare for the wealthy

By HAYDEN PERRY

On May 28 the American people heard some startling news. The Second American Revolution is coming and Ronald Reagan is going to lead it. For the last two months the president has campaigned around the country in an attempt to rally the troops.

The target of this crusade is that scourge of mankind—the tax collector. Inscribing on his banner the slogans "fairness" and "simplicity," Reagan promises the American people a new tax code that will usher in a golden age of painless federal taxation.

When the income tax law was first enacted in the United States in 1913 a *New York Times* editorial charged that the new tax "transferred the burdens of the many onto the shoulders of the few."

In that year less than 1 percent of the taxpayers had to file a return and pay 1 percent of their income.

Today, 72 years later, over 93 million returns are filed, and wage earners pay at least 20 percent of their income to the federal government. The income tax law that was intended to tax citizens in proportion to their ability to pay has been turned into a mechanism for putting the major burden of taxation on working people. Today the many are supporting the few.

By voting subsidies, exemptions, depletion allowances, depreciation writeoffs, business loss refunds, tax shelters, and numerous other tax-avoidance gimmicks, a bipartisan Congress cut the taxes of the rich to the point where a multimillionaire could pay no income tax at all. Only recently has a small minimum tax been put on these wealthy freeloaders.

It is estimated that a multimillionaire and a factory worker each pay about 30 percent of their income in taxes when state and local levies are included. No Second American Revolution worthy of the name could ignore this glaring injustice inflicted on the nation's working people.

A tidbit

Reagan and his crusaders are charging to the "relief" of the low-income taxpayer. The Reagan plan proposes exempting the first \$2000 of the wage earners' income and \$4000 if a person is married. This compares to the \$1200

personal exemption now in force. A few million more of the lowest-paid workers would now escape the income tax.

But after offering this tidbit to the poor, Reagan delivers a blow. Under his plan workers would have to pay taxes on company-sponsored health care plans. Workers would be charged up to \$10 a month for individuals and \$25 if their family is covered—even if they never collect on the benefits. If workers lose their job, they would have to pay tax on their unemployment compensation.

The working mother who puts her child in a child-care center would no longer be able to deduct this expense. Nor would a worker be able to deduct money contributed to a political candidate.

A safety net for the rich

Having taken care of the poor to his own satisfaction, Reagan comes to the relief of his wealthy friends. Under the new guidelines, some 70 percent of people with incomes over \$200,000 would pay less taxes.

Reagan proposes cutting the maximum tax rate from 50 percent to 35 percent. This means that any multimillion-

aire can be assured of keeping \$650,000 out every million dollars of income. It is estimated that Reagan would save some \$28,000 in taxes for himself under this provision.

Devising tax loopholes for the wealthy has been developed into a fine art by tax lobbyists and compliant congressmen. They prefer to enact these giveaways for the rich with no publicity. When this is not possible, the congressmen announce that they are reforming the tax code in the interest of "fairness and simplicity."

We have seen nine of these "simplifications" pass Congress since 1954. Nearly every one has added several pages to the taxpayers' instruction manual.

Claims of fairness in the nine tax revisions have been refuted by such conservatives as the late Senator Walter George of Georgia, who called the system of exemptions "a very cruel method by which the tax upon the people in the low-income brackets has been constantly increased."

With a sound safety net under the millionaires, Reagan feels he can eliminate some of the more notorious exemptions that the wealthy have enjoyed. No more three-martini lunches at taxpayers' expense. Henceforth no business lunch can cost more than \$25 a person to qualify for a tax deduction. This would not reduce executives to eating at Doggie Diners, but overpriced restaurants are screaming in pain.

Unearned income

To ease some of the pain in executive circles Reagan proposes to cut the capital-gains tax from 20 percent to 17.5 percent. This is the tax applied to profit derived from the sale of stocks, bonds, or more tangible property. Capital gains are an important source of saving to the wealthy since these profits are always taxed at a lower rate than ordinary income.

Wealthy people also save tax money on their large stock dividends and interest income, which have always been taxed at a lower rate than income earned as wages and salaries from productive labor. It has been estimated, for example, that four people who each receive an income of \$7000 a year could pay very different amounts in income tax according to the source of their income.

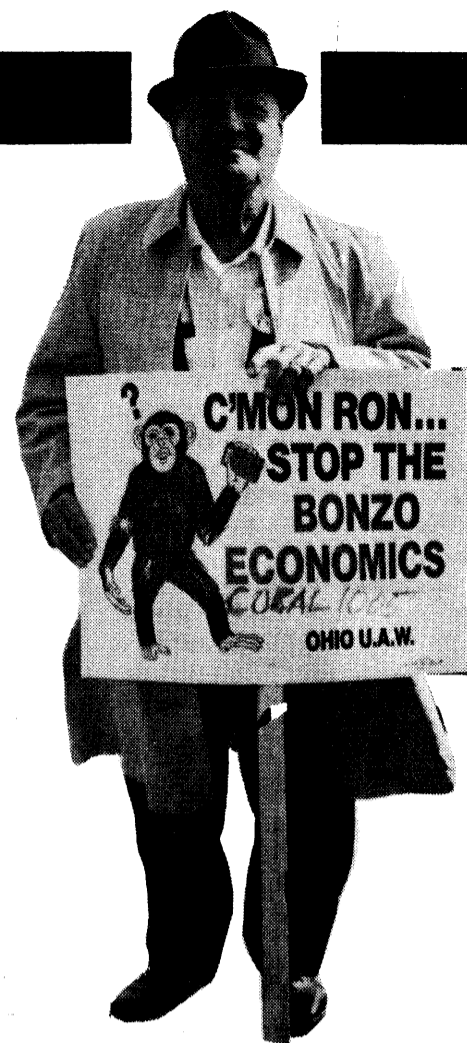
A steel worker earning \$7000 a year by heavy labor would pay \$1282. (These are pre-1985 figures.) A person who received \$7000 from dividends would pay \$992.30. A person who reaped a \$7000 profit by selling stocks would pay only \$526 in capital-gains tax. Meanwhile, a person who invested money in state and municipal tax-free bonds yielding \$7000 would pay no tax at all.

Here is an injustice crying for redress. But Reagan's Second American Revolution shows no concern for this kind of unfairness.

Stumbling before the troops

The shock troops of revolutions usually are the poorest and most distressed members of society. But Reagan is not going into the slums to appeal to these people to join his crusade. Despite the little tax cut he is offering, he knows the poor are not going to welcome the man who cut foodstamps, job training programs, and dozens of other vital services.

Instead Reagan is appealing to those middle-income citizens who cheered his tirades against big government and wasteful spenders. Don't these people also hate unfair taxes—especially those they have to pay?



Here the going gets a little sticky for Reagan. He has cut the taxes of the very poor, and he has cut the taxes of the very rich. But Reagan says his tax plan is "revenue neutral."

That is, it will bring in as much money as the old tax code. If the rich and the poor pay less, then middle-income people must pay more.

Many features of Reagan's tax code show how that would happen. Taxpayers would no longer be able to deduct mortgage payments on a vacation or second home. They would not be able to deduct their state and city taxes. There would be no more deductions for households where both partners work. Donations to charities would not be deductible unless itemized and receipted.

Reagan's hopes of rekindling the drive and enthusiasm of his first term through his tax crusade is stumbling on two fronts. Reagan's middle-income supporters are not convinced that his tax reform will benefit them. They have seen "reforms" before.

Last month a *Business Week* poll found that 77 percent of Americans believe that Reagan's plan would be fair to rich people, but only 47 percent think it would be fair to themselves.

In addition, the "revenue neutral" tax bill would not reduce the horrendous national debt by a single penny. In fact, recent estimates indicate that the government would actually lose some revenue under Reagan's new tax code.

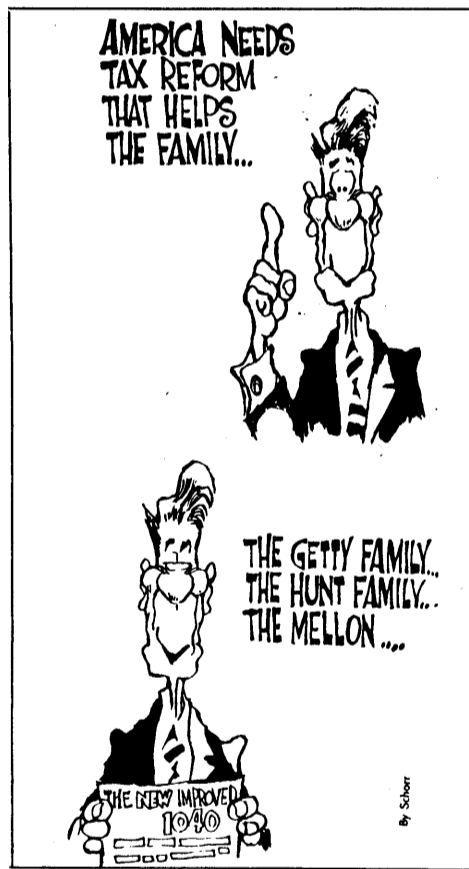
Democratic Party joins the crusade

The Democrats, who are big spenders and wasters to Reagan's way of thinking, have taken up the cause of tax reform themselves. They claim they will give more relief to middle-income voters.

The Democrats promise that their tax reform plan will be fairer than fair. They will be aided by lobbyists for every special interest who will help modify the bill in the interest of more fairness—to themselves.

Even the business tax and depreciation allowances that are intended to move capital out of the rust-bowl industries into hi-tech enterprises may not withstand the assaults of lobbyists and special pleaders. The oil industry has already forced the administration to retain two-thirds of the depletion allowances that were cut in earlier versions of Reagan's tax plan.

There is every indication that Reagan's tax reform will meet the fate of all past attempts at a fundamental tax revision. It will be nibbled to pieces by wealthy special interests. The Second American Revolution slogan will appear ludicrous as yet another version of "soak-the-workers" tax legislation finally emerges—as unfair and complicated as before.



New NOW president vows abortion action

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

Eleanor Smeal won an upset victory over Judy Goldsmith at the National Organization for Women's national convention held in New Orleans. Smeal served as president of NOW from 1977 to 1982. Goldsmith had served a two-and-a-half-year term. Smeal defeated Goldsmith 839 to 703.

Smeal's victory was a surprise and represents a deep dissatisfaction with NOW's do-nothing policy on abortion rights and the Equal Rights Amendment. Goldsmith campaigned on the fact that under her rule a woman was nominated for vice president for the first time in history.

Unfortunately for Goldsmith, most NOW women did not feel that the nomination of Geraldine Ferraro for vice president had added to their pay check or given them reproductive choice.

Smeal ran on a campaign of "back into the streets."

She has promised a militant campaign for abortion rights, including a march of 200,000 in Washington, D.C., in March of 1986.

She spoke of the need to move away from the Democratic Party and to begin the campaign for the ERA again. She also reported the growing loss of membership and promised a "campus crusade" to gain new members.

Aug. 26 is National Suffrage day. It is a celebration of women's victory for the right to vote. The National Organization for Women could do for women of the '80s what the suffragists did in the early part of this century.

Women joined NOW because they are ready to fight for full equality and for reproductive rights. Smeal must live up to her campaign promise or she will go the way of Goldsmith.

Two union actions: A study in contrasts

The 4500-member Local 6 of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America voted 3500-24 on June 30 to go on strike against Bath Iron Works.

The shipyard bosses in Bath, Maine, following the current trend, are demanding major concessions from the workers that include a three-year freeze on wages and a two-tier wage structure. The latter, an entry wage \$3 an hour lower for newly hired workers, is the issue most offensive to the shipyard workers.

Putting a finger on the heart of the matter, shop steward Milt Dudley told a *New York Times* reporter, "What they are basically asking us to do is to sell out our own sons and daughters."

This popularly-put expression of class loyalty and solidarity is understandably put in family terms in a region where many Iron Works employees are themselves the children and grandchildren of shipyard workers.

The strike in Maine stands in marked contrast to an action reported in Washington, D.C., a couple of days later by another union, the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA).

Raiders get union backing

The pilots' union announced that it had allied itself with a group of capitalists headed by corporate raider Carl C. Icahn, which is carrying out its own little greedy war against the present clique of equally money-hungry capitalists in charge of Trans World Airlines.

ALPA's aim in supporting the corporate takeover is to stop a merger between TWA and Texas Air Corporation. The latter is under the control of Francisco Lorenzo, who busted the pilots' union at Continental Airlines after it was taken over by Lorenzo's Texas Air.

But the price ALPA paid to gain a "pro-union" commitment from Icahn was to give away pay and benefit cuts amounting to 20 percent. Icahn



United pilots' strike in June 1985. Although the fightback was strong, the union had already given in to the company's two-tier demands.

promises to sweeten the deal with "profit sharing," in exchange for the pay cuts. Profit sharing for the pilots' union would be based on common stock amounting, they say, to 20 percent of the post-merger TWA value.

It is well known that "profit sharing" is merely a euphemism for the unequal exchange of hard cash for promises rarely, if ever, fulfilled. The corporate sharks have many a trick up their sleeves, including the capability of draining TWA of its capital, leaving the union holding an empty bag of worthless stocks.

The failure of the other airline unions to unambiguously repudiate the deal made between ALPA and Icahn will be interpreted as essential approval. And no matter who winds up in control of TWA, the airline workers will discover they have been virtually committed to major givebacks.

These events involving shipyard and airline workers are, in a sense, connected. They express opposing labor strategies, whether or not the participants are thinking in such terms.

The shipyard shop steward's expression of solidarity with

workers yet to be hired is consistent with the great labor principle of working-class unity *against* the bosses.

In contrast, the Air Line Pilots Association's action is based on the principle of collaboration *with* the bosses (the "good" ones, of course) on the basis of reducing wages to maintain the profitability of the employer.

The most damaging consequence of official labor strategy based on the delusion of labor-capital partnership is that it *always* leads to the sacrifice of one or another section of the workers to the profit-hungry bosses.

It is no accident that just before the recently concluded pilots' strike, their union had already capitulated to United Airlines' two-tier demand. The two-tier trick is sucker bait for the unions. It plays up to the narrow-mindedness of the most backward layers of workers, who don't see the consequences of givebacks, not to mention selling out a more helpless section of their class.

The pilots' union shortsightedly sacrificed the wage levels of pilots who would be hired after the strike (their "own sons and daughters," as it were) in the vain hope of sating the insatiable appetites of the bosses. United Airlines responded by demanding more concessions, which led to the strike. This resulted, as we know, in the strike ending with further inroads into union positions made by the employer.

Shipyard workers fight back

Shipyard workers are following a sounder policy. Whatever the outcome of their strike—which depends on factors beyond their direct control—they will come out of it better than if they had capitulated to the bosses' demands for frozen wages for the life of the contract and sacrificing \$3 per hour of yet-to-be-hired

workers' wages without a fight. First, even in the worst outcome, they will have made the bosses pay a heavy price for whatever takebacks are wrenched away due to a *temporarily* unfavorable relation of forces. History teaches that it's better to fight back and lose rather than lose without a fight.

Second, the shipyard workers will have shown the next wave of workers entering the shipyard that the union loyally fought for all workers—true to the principle of labor solidarity.

And third, the refusal to give in without a fight is a statement by the marine union that pay cuts (equaling increased profits) are good for the bosses but bad for the workers. It is a statement, too, that there is no basis for partnership other than the kind between slaveowner and slave.

This more clear-eyed union position will morally prepare their members for the next round of struggle in the years to come, contributing to creating a relation of forces more favorable to the workers in the next battle.

Building mutual confidence

Class solidarity is the cardinal principle of a successful labor strategy. It cannot be denied that when the day comes that all working people act as one, nothing will be beyond their grasp. A successful labor strategy is founded on building mutual confidence among workers along the road to a movement capable of united action to advance class interests.

This simple principle, key to a winning labor strategy, will not be put into effect by the current labor misleadership. As a group they are unreformable. A new leadership will emerge from the ranks in the course of the unrelenting assault on living standards.

A massive labor upsurge is certain. New fighting leaders will emerge. They will join with the best of the officials—those who are responsive to the needs of the labor rank and file—to build a class-struggle wing of the union movement. ■

Court bucks trend; convicts bosses

By CARRIE HEWITT

CHICAGO—In a remarkable court ruling here that is being widely hailed as a victory in the struggle for safer working conditions, two corporate executives and a plant foreman were found guilty of the murder of a worker poisoned on the job.

On June 28, after an eight-week bench trial, the three officials of the now-defunct Film Recovery Systems, Inc., were each sentenced to 25 years in prison for causing the death of Stefan Golub, a 61-year-old Polish immigrant. Golub collapsed and died while working over tanks of cyanide employed to recover silver from used photographic film.

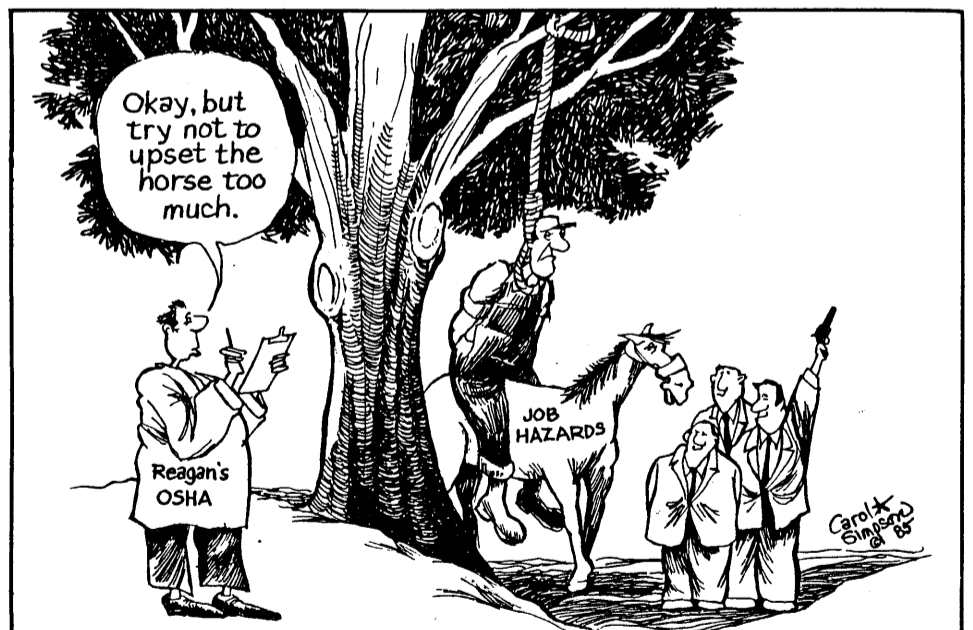
The unique murder trial represents the first time that corporate executives have personally faced criminal charges stemming from hazardous plant conditions. Consumer advocate Ralph Nader predicted that the guilty verdicts, if upheld on appeal, "will send signals to corporate executives who have been exposing workers or consumers to dangerous materials or dangerous products."

Witnesses stated that the cyanide fumes were so thick at the plant that workers suffered chest pains, dizziness, and nausea on a daily basis. One former worker stated that special safety masks were distributed to workers only once—when the company was expecting a visit by safety inspectors.

The company went to great lengths to hide from its workers just how dangerous the work was. Skull-and-crossbones labels were burned off cyanide containers, according to one worker. Witnesses said that even after Golub's death the company claimed that he was recovering in the hospital.

Most of the workers at the plant were Hispanic and Polish immigrants, who spoke little, if any, English. A large number were undocumented workers who could not afford to complain about working conditions.

The guilty verdicts, if upheld, may give the green light for other indictments against blatant corporate violators of health standards. It appears unlikely, however, that even a small upsurge in the number of such prosecutions will improve the safety conditions



for many workers.

Over the past few years the trend has been in the opposite direction. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), for example, has become increasingly less effective in enforcing safety standards. A report issued recently by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment criticized OSHA for conducting annual inspections of fewer than 4 percent of the nation's workplaces.

According to Margaret Seminario, the health and safety director of the

AFL-CIO, "The fact of the matter is that [OSHA] has a small inspection staff—fewer than 1200 inspections nationwide—and they've never really focused in a manner that insures adequate coverage."

With the decline of OSHA, it would be illusory to hope that prosecutors will pick up the reins of the struggle for safe workplaces. Only pressure from workers organized around demands for better working conditions will succeed in pressuring profit-minded corporate executives to change their ways. ■

Unionists call meeting to plan concessions fight

By LYNN HENDERSON

St. PAUL, Minn.—An organizing meeting to initiate a National Conference Against Concessions has been scheduled for Aug. 10 in Gary, Indiana.

The National Conference was first proposed at a meeting here on June 28 attended by representatives from union locals in eight states. The participants met to discuss the battle against concessions being waged by the membership of UFCW Local P-9 against the Hormel company in Austin, Minn.

They concluded that the pattern of local unions being left to fight against concessions on their own must come to an end. They proposed a broader meeting in Gary to take the first steps. A letter drafted out of the St. Paul meeting states, in part:

"Meatpackers in Minnesota cannot afford to have their battle separated from the rest of labor, nor can the rest of labor afford such a defeat. . . . We all remember the devastating impact the initial Chrysler agreement had on the rest of labor.

"The concessions of the last five years have done nothing to save jobs and in fact have only served to sharpen the competition that pushes the downward spiral of wages. Enough is enough!"

The letter is signed by 13 local union officials. The signers include David Arian, president, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 13; Ron Weisen, president, United Steel Workers Union Local 1397; Jim Guyette, president, United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9; and Pete Kelly, president, United Auto Workers Local 160.

The corporations have been emboldened in their concession drive by the refusal of top union officials to fight back. But the resulting vulnerability of



... Steelworkers

(continued from page 1)

on July 21, is the first against a major steel producer since 1959.

"They were cheering the strike plans like they were at a football game. The response was tremendous, just unbelievable," said one USWA local official.

Ironically, Wheeling-Pittsburgh has pleaded poverty because it spent money modernizing its facilities. By claiming that modernization is not profitable for the stockholders unless the workers pay for it, Wheeling-Pittsburgh is linking the growth of the steel industry to a perspective of permanently reducing the standard of living of steel workers.

Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers already had agreed to drastic contract concessions twice since 1978, including \$120 million in the last three years alone. As a result, their pay package has been reduced by \$4 an hour, even before considering the losses from inflation.

In the latest round of negotiations with Wheeling-Pittsburgh, the union had made two proposals for more concessions and was even prepared to make a third. But the company wanted still more.

In a letter to strikers, USWA District 23 Director Paul Rusen expressed the determination of the members when he

the unions has begun to promote a new mood in the rank and file. They have reacted in union locals around the country by throwing out the existing officials and electing new leaders who fought the concessions.

It is elements of this new local leadership that are organizing the Aug. 10 meeting and pushing for a call for a National Conference.

The purpose of the Aug. 10 meeting is to hear proposals from unions in each industry and region of the country as to how the National Conference should be organized and what actions should be focused on. The meeting will adopt an agenda and establish a structure to aid in organizing the conference. Union locals throughout the country are encouraged to send representatives.

The meeting will convene at 10 A.M. on Saturday, Aug. 10, in Gary, Ind., at the Genesis Center, 4th and Broadway. It will continue until Sunday noon, if necessary. Persons wishing to make room reservations may call the Interstate Motel, Route 20, Gary, Ind., (219) 938-6065.

To register and obtain further information contact the National Rank-and-File Against Concessions, c/o UAW # 879, 2191 Ford Parkway, St. Paul, MN 55116.

S.F. coalition sets fall peace actions

By JEFF MACKLER

SAN FRANCISCO—In response to the bipartisan U.S. war drive and continuing attacks on the standard of living of working people, two important fall events have been announced in the Bay Area. A concert/rally is scheduled to take place on Oct. 26 and a conference for peace, jobs, and justice will take place on Nov. 2.

The conference is designed to deepen the involvement of labor and its allies in the antiwar movement and to initiate plans for a massive Bay Area demonstration in the spring of 1986. Both events will focus on four demands: no intervention in Central America and the

wrote, "We've got to have the strength and character to hold out for as long as necessary to achieve what we believe is right. It is not going to be easy but we will win."

A united and massive response of solidarity with the Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers will send the right message to the steel corporations. That message was summarized by one striker, quoted in the *New York Times*, "We've been trod on for years and we're not going to take it anymore." ■

Sheet metal workers oppose concessions

By BOB CHIPS

LINN, Ohio—The 500 members of Sheet Metal Workers Union local 141 are on strike here against several contractors who want to cut wages by 40 percent. The strike, which began on July 5, is also protesting company demands to replace the skilled workforce with pre-apprentice workers paid little more than minimum wage. There would be no guarantee that these low-wage workers would ever be accepted by the contractor into full apprenticeship status.

A journeyman sheet metal worker



It's not every day that you can see the power of labor in action. Blue collar workers make the city run, and when the janitors in San Francisco stopped working, the posh downtown office buildings became more and more difficult to operate.

On July 17 members of Building Service Employees Union Local 87 voted to settle after a militant 10-day strike against janitorial services contractors here. The workers defeated the companies' attempt to gut the seniority system and reduce minimum-staffing requirements.

community, women's groups, youth, gays, lesbians, the disabled, and the elderly."

Signers of the statement included Al Lannon, president, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6; Walter Johnson, secretary treasurer, San Francisco Central Labor Council; Art Pulaski, secretary treasurer, San Mateo Central Labor Council; Jan McCroskey, Marin County Central Labor Council; David Aroner, state executive director, Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Tom Rankin, research director, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Bill Daley, secretary treasurer, Painters District Council 8; Mary Bergan, state representative, California Federation of Teachers; and Margaret Butz, deputy director, SEIU local 790.

Also included are Charlene Tschirhart, director S.F. Nuclear Freeze Campaign; Matthew Hallinan, Project National Interest; Pat Norman, Alice B. Toklas Lesbian/Gay Democratic Club; Carmen Carrillo, Alameda Board of Education; Carlos Munoz, Faculty Committee on Human Rights in El Salvador (FACHRES); community leader Bob Hernandez; Sister Judy Cannon, Sisters of Mercy; Ed Roberts, World Institute on Disability; Gene Royale, co-chair, S.F. Rainbow Coalition; Howard Wallace, co-chair, Lesbian/Gay Labor Alliance, and others.

A sizable number of trade unionists have already broken with the reactionary AFL-CIO policy of supporting Washington's interventionist policies. Among these are top officials from 23 international unions who have supported the objectives of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador (see July 1985 *Socialist Action*).

Just as activists in the antiwar movement are learning that working people are an essential ally, a number of trade unionists are finding that the success of their struggles also depends on their capacity to build broad alliances with all the victims of exploitation and oppression.

It would be a mistake to look at the developments in the Bay Area as an exception. The natural alliance between labor and the community, which found an expression in the antiwar actions of April 20, will be repeated in city after city as experience demonstrates that the struggle against the U.S. warmakers abroad is no different than the daily battles which confront working people in this country. ■

Caribbean; freeze and reverse the nuclear arms race; jobs and justice, not war; and no U.S. support to South African apartheid.

A Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice organizing committee was formed to assemble the Bay Area forces who agree to build fall protest actions. The committee was initiated by a big majority of the leaders of the April 20 San Francisco demonstration, which attracted 50,000 people.

The goals of the new organizing committee were outlined in a statement distributed at the final meeting of the Spring Mobilization for Peace, Jobs, and Justice. Signed by 24 members of the former Spring Mobilization steering committee, the statement pointed to the need for continuing antiwar mobilizations:

"The need for broadly sponsored, large-scale protest in support of the four Spring Mobilization demands therefore remains more urgent than ever.

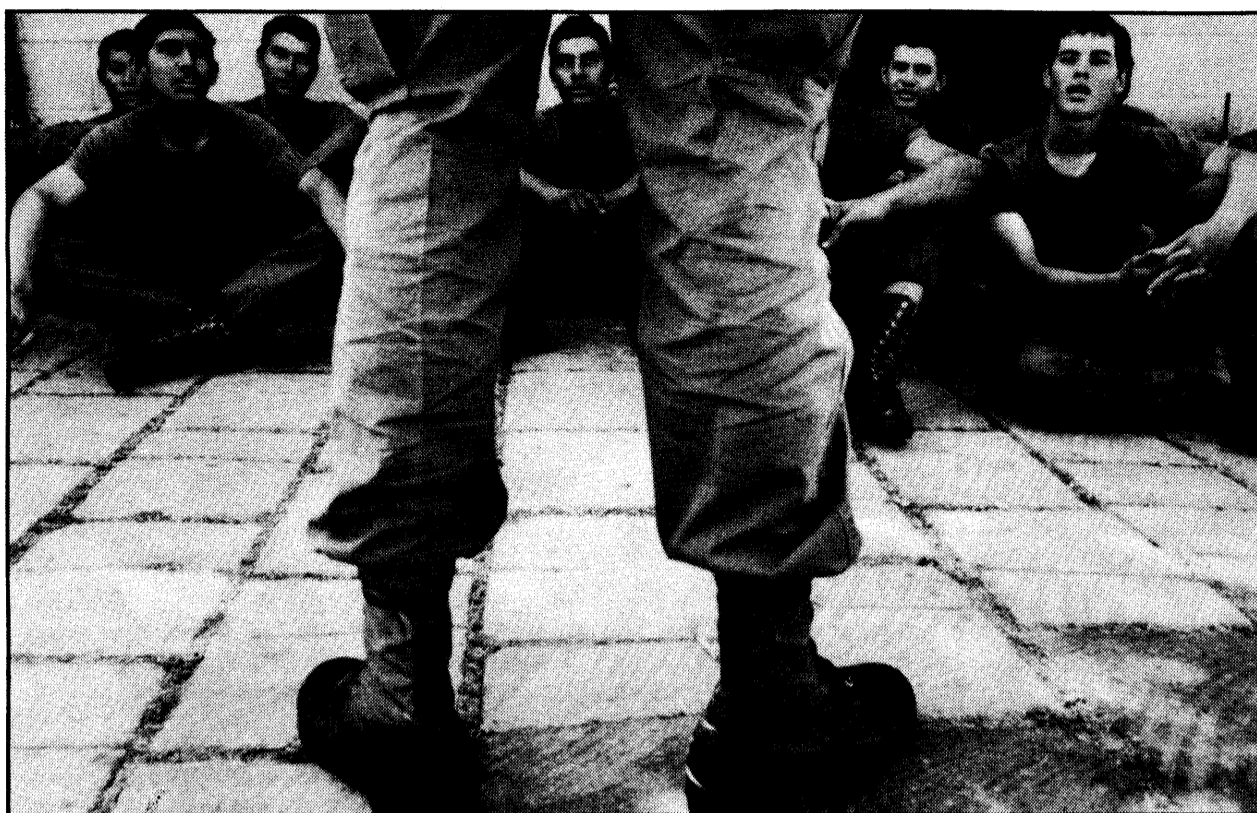
"The Spring Mobilization's success was largely due to its ability to reach new and powerful sectors of the population. It is our central objective to continue this process. We want to expand the involvement of the labor movement, minorities, the religious

makes \$17.60 an hour. This may seem like a large salary, but most only work seven to eight months a year. The average salary comes out to less than \$20,000 a year.

The union faces many problems in the strike, which has led some scabs to return to work. At a recent union meeting attended by 350 striking workers, the leadership explained that both Roofers Local 42 and Teamsters Local 100 were crossing the picketlines.

Since the contract of the roofers expired before the sheet metal workers went on strike, they can recognize the picketlines without legal penalties. Roofers outnumber sheet metal workers by four to one. It would be a lot easier to win better contracts for all the workers if the two unions stood together. ■

Antiwar groups debate negotiations demand



U.S. adviser instructs government soldiers in El Salvador. Antiwar movement must demand a halt to U.S. intervention.

By SEAN FLYNN

The Central American revolution is at the center of political debate in the United States. At stake is whether the people of this region—in particular of El Salvador and Nicaragua—have the right to determine their own destiny free from the machinations of the U.S. government.

In the huge demonstrations that took place in several U.S. cities on April 20 the antiwar movement united around “no U.S. intervention!” as one of the central demands. Yet, despite agreement that the United States has no right to interfere in the affairs of other countries, sections of the U.S. anti-intervention movement have backtracked from this stance.

In a June 27, 1985, statement to the Bay Area Spring Mobilization Steering Committee, for example, Byron Ackerman of the Nicaraguan Information Center proposes that the movement call on the U.S. government to “support efforts for a negotiated settlement” in El Salvador and endorse the *Contadora* process for a negotiated settlement in Nicaragua.

To this end, the Nicaraguan Information Center suggests that the movement adopt the positions taken in a document entitled “Changing Course,” published last year by Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA), an association of liberal scholars and political leaders.

The document, which attempts to offer “an opportunity to avoid regional war and restore respect for U.S. policy,” was endorsed by hundreds of legislators, union officials, and peace activists including Jesse Jackson, George McGovern, Gloria Steinem, and William Winpisinger.

Self-determination left behind

The PACCA document tries to show how “reasonable” a negotiated settlement would be for all concerned. Negotiations are seemingly a more “realistic” goal than total U.S. non-intervention.

But although the document advocates “non-intervention and respect for self-determination,” its call for negotiations leaves the principle of self-determination in the lurch.

Self-determination means that the people of an oppressed nation should have the right to decide their own future. Simply put, the United States—which historically has subjected Central America to economic exploitation and political and military oppression—has no business helping decide the fate of these nations.

Nor can the United States claim the privilege of negotiating the terms under which it pledges to loosen its hold on the region. It follows, then, that for the movement in this country to call on the U.S. government to negotiate would, by conceding the “right” of the United States or its de facto representative to sit at bargaining table, seriously undermine the principle of self-determination.

In an “In Brief” version of their document,

PACCA recognizes that “the upheaval in Central America is caused by popular revolt against unbearable living conditions.”

The synopsis continues, “The United States has too often stood with the wealthy few and their military guardians.”

“Misjudgment” by the U.S.?

PACCA concludes that “present U.S. policy toward Central America is built on a history of misjudgment and intervention.”

The implication is that if the policymakers in Washington were more farsighted the United States and Central America could live in peace. But the “unbearable living conditions” under which the people of Central America suffer are largely the byproduct of U.S. economic penetration.

Central America was forcefully incorporated into the capitalist division of labor as a producer of agricultural products for a world market dominated by the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. The “wealthy few” that PACCA refers to are the comprador middlemen in this imperial system, a system necessarily protected by U.S.-trained military guardians of the region.

Support to the call for negotiations gives credence to the idea that the U.S. has a right to negotiate to protect its “legitimate interests” in Central America.

But these interests—in Asia and Africa as well as in Latin America—are (1) economic profits flowing from this system of exploitation; (2) the political need for “stability” in order to maintain this relationship; and (3) the need for bases and client armies to maintain the military capability to restore order when “stability” is threatened.

Understandably, the “legitimate interests” of the workers, peasants, and oppressed middle classes of Central America require escaping the U.S. yoke.

“Progressive” policy-makers

The PACCA document is presented as an alternative foreign policy. It charges that the present administration “refuses to understand the events in the region” and suggests that more-understanding policy-makers (presumably Democrats) could negotiate a compromise in Central America that would be “fair” to every side in the conflict.

If this is true, the fundamental aim of the movement should be to put a new set of politicians into office. After all, the argument goes, it isn’t the system that is necessarily at fault, but rather the caliber of the leaders occupying the presidency, the cabinet, and the Congress.

It is this logic—toward subordinating the independent anti-intervention movement to the two-party shellgame—which makes the negotiations slogan so dangerous to the movement. Need we recall that Walter Mondale, the “progressive” candidate in the 1984 elections, recommended a blockade of Nicaragua?

Despite its recognition that the Central American revolution pits the oppressed against their national and international exploiters, PACCA refuses to side

with the insurgents. Rather, PACCA proposes “efforts for a negotiated settlement involving power-sharing among the contending forces.”

PACCA believes that a civil war can be resolved if both sides simply agree to a division of the spoils. But where the social tensions have erupted in civil war, only the decisive victory of one side over the other can restore peace.

Will “power-sharing” work?

“Power-sharing” is a utopia which can only provide a temporary lull before the inevitable resurgence of the struggle.

PACCA forgets that such “power-sharing” was already tried in the Salvadoran junta of 1979. The junta fell apart not only because the “wealthy few” refused to give up their privileges, but also because the revolutionaries who later formed the bulk of the FMLN recognized that such a course could not solve the fundamental problems of the country such as land reform, political democracy, and true national independence.

The premise of PACCA’s solution is that the system of imperialist domination can be reformed sufficiently to mollify the workers and peasants while preserving the capitalist system.

PACCA urges a policy of “restraint” on the United States, pointing to the example of President Roosevelt in 1938 who, faced with Mexico’s expropriation of the oil industry, offered that country a long-term, low-interest loan in order to repay the U.S. corporations.

“A potential enemy became a staunch ally,” PACCA states, in giving approval to the fact that compensation was paid to corporations that had robbed Mexico blind for decades.

But Mexico’s subsequent history has confirmed that the country’s fundamental problems were not solved by Roosevelt’s “farsightedness.”

Instead, Mexico became ripe for future invasions of U.S. capital and the resulting further impoverishment of its people. The Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Guatemalan revolutions broke out in an attempt to avoid that kind of future.

The FMLN-FDR’s call for negotiations

The liberation forces in El Salvador have called for negotiations and a coalition government to end the civil war. Shouldn’t that wing of the anti-intervention movement that identifies with the aspirations of the Salvadoran people likewise demand negotiations? Wouldn’t this express our solidarity with the revolution?

Posing the question in this way confuses the tasks of the FMLN-FDR—including, as they see it, taking advantage of rifts in the enemy camp—with the tasks of the movement here in the United States. The latter consists simply of putting maximum pressure on the U.S. government to get out of Central America.

But the fact that the revolutionaries see fit to offer compromises—in short, that their *struggle* continues—confirms that the oppressed and exploited majority of El Salvador continue to be denied the right of self-determination.

Though the revolutionaries in Central America deem it expedient at this time to seek negotiations, we should have no illusions that talks will end the fighting.

During the Vietnam War, Washington agreed to negotiate to deflect public criticism and to demobilize a wing of the antiwar movement that had campaigned for negotiations. Yet for the next five years, Nixon simultaneously bargained and continued the war. He spread the war to Cambodia, in fact, in a vain search for “peace with honor.”

The best way to aid the fighting people of El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala is to unequivocally demand that the U.S. get out of Central America with no strings attached. The withdrawal of U.S. aid will mean the death knell for the counterrevolutionary regimes and armies of the region. ■

panorama
de centroamérica y el caribe

P

Panorama is a monthly magazine produced in Mexico. Each issue provides in-depth analysis of political developments in Central America and the Caribbean. Subscriptions can be obtained by sending a check or money order for \$40 (12 issues per year) made payable to Priscila Pacheco Castillo to: Panorama, Apartado Postal 20-119, 01000, Mexico, D.F.

By CARL FINAMORE

Extreme military, political, and economic pressures continue to be applied by Washington against the people of Central America.

Vietnam-style mass "resettlement" programs, coupled with saturation terror bombing, have become the rule in El Salvador. In the aftermath of the deaths of six U.S. citizens, Congress has allocated additional millions to the Duarte death-squad regime.

At the same time, the Democratic and Republican parties have united to step up the financing of the murderous *contras* in Nicaragua. They are also spending billions of dollars on nuclear weapons and research for the future "Star Wars" program.

In South Africa, the virtual state of siege declared by the racist apartheid regime against the majority Black population has been met with only faint expressions of displeasure by the U.S. government, which indicated its hope for a quick return to "normalcy" in the region.

Under these circumstances, it is imperative for the anti-intervention movement to organize massive and nationally coordinated protests in the fall. These actions can build on the success of the April 20 demonstrations which drew 125,000 people in five major cities.

Yet today the national organizations that helped plan the successful April 20 demonstrations have failed to call for any nationally coordinated fall protests. This is a setback for the anti-intervention movement.

Meeting in New York City on June 29, the national steering committee of the April Actions Coalition voted to reduce its level of functioning to that of a network that would simply communi-



U.S. war threats: Challenges facing peace movement

responsibilities of the network, the small administrative committee has replaced the national steering committee as the functioning leadership body. Thus, local coalitions which had previously played a major role on the steering committee have been removed from active participation.

In late March, it was primarily the local coalitions which successfully prevented the postponement or cancellation of the April 20 demonstration in Washington, D.C., after the administrative committee had twice made such proposals. And at the June 29 meeting, eight local coalitions joined representatives of the 2nd Emergency National Conference held in Minneapolis [see July 1985 *Socialist Action*] to urge nationally coordinated fall actions.

Therefore, the removal of the local coalitions from the leadership not only eliminates important viewpoints within April Actions but politically isolates the network from important regional forces that helped make April 20 a success. To make matters worse, few labor organizations have ever actively participated in the April Actions Coalition and none were present at the June 29 meeting.

A weak justification

The network leaders justify their failure to call fall actions on the grounds that the coalition lacks "financial and other resources" and has "serious shortcomings... in terms of Black, Latino, women, and poor peoples' participation."

But national protest actions, as experience has proven, are the means to help overcome these shortcomings. Financial and other resources are won by organizing an action program. And an aggressive outreach campaign among Black, Latino, and women's organizations helps to gain the participation of oppressed nationalities, women, and poor people.

Unfortunately none of these efforts were considered. Instead, the coalition transformed itself into a network, refused to call national fall actions in its own name, and settled for the administrative committee holding summer and fall "meetings with key forces that need to play a more prominent role in the network."

This is a totally inadequate response

to the coalition's admittedly very real "shortcomings."

It represents a very serious default in leadership and has already sent a discouraging message to the hundreds of organizations that mobilized last spring. In fact, most local April 20 coalitions have either dissolved or ceased to function.

Differences in orientation

The April Actions Coalition's real stumbling block to organizing united and massive fall actions flows from a false political conception of the kind of movement that is needed to stop the warmakers.

The central leaders of the April Actions Coalition—particularly the rep-

"An electoral focus means no mass-action orientation."

resentatives of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the Mobilization for Survival, and the U.S. Peace Council—argue that the antiwar movement will fail unless it has an electoral vehicle. For them this means orienting to the Democratic Party—particularly to the "Rainbow Coalition" section of that party.

Of course, a working-class party controlled by the unions that enjoyed the active support of Blacks, Latinos, women, and other oppressed sectors of the population would be a tremendous boost to the movement against intervention in Central America.

But in the absence of such a party, an electoral focus invariably means abandoning a mass-action orientation in favor of political reliance on one wing of the capitalist class.

In the fall of 1984, these coalition leaders and the large bulk of the peace and solidarity organizations focused their energy on electing Democratic Party "peace" candidates to get rid of Reagan. This meant calling for a vote for Walter Mondale—the same Mondale whose idea for an embargo against Nic-

aragua has now been implemented by Reagan.

In this instance, the attempt to reform the Democratic Party accounted for the paralysis of the anti-intervention movement during the presidential elections. No large protests were organized during this period.

Subordinate mass actions

Following the November elections and the defeat of "peace candidate" Mondale, the leaders of the traditional peace and solidarity organizations were pessimistic about the possibility of organizing massive demonstrations against U.S. policy. They mistakenly interpreted the Mondale defeat as a majority endorsement of the U.S. government's war policies.

But the increased war escalations by the U.S. government and the growing sentiment for national spring actions shared by the 650 activists who attended the 1st Emergency National Conference and by a number of local coalitions put pressure on these organizations and leaders to organize the April Actions.

Still, despite the positive call for spring actions, the April Actions leaders viewed mass demonstrations as subordinate to their overall orientation of reforming the Democratic Party. In fact, in various forms they attempted to dilute or remove the mass-action component of the April Actions call.

For example, coalition leaders opposed a primary focus of mobilizing for the march and rally on April 20, emphasizing instead a four-day program including small civil-disobedience actions and lobbying.

In addition, coalition leaders twice proposed to postpone the April 20 demonstration. They justified these proposals on the pessimistic grounds that the turnout in Washington, D.C., would be small.

The events on April 20, of course, disproved the apprehensions of many of the coalition's leaders. The turnout in Washington, D.C., was much larger than anything they expected.

Indeed, April 20 proved that it is possible to tap the tremendous antiwar sentiment of U.S. working people through demonstrations based on the four themes of the coalition.

Unfortunately, the current network leaders fail to draw the obvious conclusions from the successful April 20 actions by refusing to call for nationally coordinated fall actions.

They fail to understand that only consistent mass mobilizations by the American people can reverse the bipartisan war policies of the U.S. government. Only this approach relies on the mobilized strength of working people and helps advance their self-confidence and awareness of their own power to change government policy.

Escalations will require protests

Despite the lack of a national focus, we can be hopeful that several local areas will attempt to organize large activities on the same date. For example, many leaders of the San Francisco April 20 demonstration have announced plans for a protest concert/rally for Oct. 26 and a conference on Nov. 1. They have urged other cities to cooperate in selecting the same date for activities in order to maximize the impact of the protests.

The 2nd Emergency National Conference Against Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean held in Minneapolis on June 21-23 has also called for actions on Oct. 26. And, significantly, the Seattle, Cleveland, Akron, Los Angeles, Toledo, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Minneapolis local coalitions have expressed support for fall actions.

Hopefully, it will not take the brutal escalations being planned in Washington to convince the whole movement of the need for large nationally coordinated protests.

A united movement in the streets is our best chance of stopping the warmakers. ■

"It is imperative for the movement to organize massive fall protests."

cate information about fall protest activities sponsored by other groups.

These actions include a week of activities around Central America organized by the Pledge of Resistance on Sept. 21-25; a National Anti-Apartheid Protest Day on Oct. 11 sponsored by the American Committee on Africa; an Oct. 19-25 Peace with Justice Week sponsored by the National Council of Churches; and the Nov. 23-25 Grassroots Actions Days called by the African Peoples' Christian Organization, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and others.

While all of these diverse activities have merit, they are certainly no substitute for the united and powerful response the movement is capable of today.

Moreover, reflecting the diminished

Socialist Action Forums:

SAN FRANCISCO

"Direct Report from Cuba: Cuba's view on the international debt."

Speakers: Karen Wald, journalist in Cuba for past three years and author of "Children of Che," and Alan Benjamin, editor of *Socialist Action*. Fri. Aug. 9; 8 p.m., 3435 Army St. #308

MINNEAPOLIS

"How to stop U.S. wars—Central America to South Africa"

Speaker: Carl Finamore, staffwriter *Socialist Action*. Fri. Aug. 16; 7 p.m., Powderhorn Park Community Center, 3400 15th Ave. South.

CHICAGO

"The fight for socialist democracy: The rise of Solidarnosc"

Speaker: Carl Finamore, staffwriter *Socialist Action*. Sat. Aug. 17; 7:30 p.m., Crosscurrents Hall, 3206 N. Wilton Ave.

Why the U.S. used A-bombs on Japan



By JOE RYAN

"Clocks all over Hiroshima were fixed forever at 8:15. The heat emanating from the fireball lasted a fraction of a second but was so intense (almost 300,000 degrees centigrade) that it melted the surface of granite within a thousand yards of ground zero—directly under the burst.

"All over the center of the city numerous silhouettes were imprinted on walls. On Yorozyo Bridge 10 people left permanent outlines of themselves on the railing and the tar-paved surface."

—from "The Rising Sun,"

by John Toland, Bantam Books, New York, 1971.

On Aug. 6, 1945—exactly 40 years ago—a horrible new age was ushered in when a U.S. B-29 bomber dropped the first atomic bomb on the people of Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, on Aug. 9, this horror was repeated when the United States dropped another bomb on the men, women, and children of Nagasaki.

In a fraction of a second, the lives of over 250,000 people were snuffed out. For hundreds of thousands of others—who suffered a slow, agonizing death from the radiation effects of the two bombs—it must have seemed that those who died immediately from the blast were indeed fortunate.

The people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are still suffering from their legacy of being the first victims of a new age. Cancer rates and stillbirths in these cities are the highest in Japan.

The reason for Hiroshima

The final act of World War II, perpetrated against a nation that was already militarily defeated and suing for peace, was also the opening curtain on what the U.S. victors hoped would become the "American Century," a period of complete dominance of the world by U.S. capitalism.

In the last analysis, World War II was fought to decide this question: Which capitalism—German, Japanese, U.S., French, or British—would dominate the world market for exploitation and profits?

Over 50 million people died to settle this question. Hundreds of millions more were left maimed and homeless. Ironically, working people throughout the world, who were asked to make tremendous sacrifices in the fight for "peace and democracy," now live in a world where the threat of nuclear

annihilation is an everyday fact of life.

The dropping of the A-bomb—with no warning whatsoever to the Japanese—was a political not a military decision. It was not done to save the lives of G.I.'s who might be lost during an invasion of the Japanese mainland, as U.S. authorities later claimed.

Recent revelations show that the United States destroyed Hiroshima to demonstrate to the world, especially the Soviet Union, that this country possessed a new weapon of tremendous destructive potential and would not hesitate to use it.

Prior to the first successful test of the A-bomb—at Alamogordo, N.M., on July 16, 1945—the United States had wanted the Soviet Union to join the war against Japan. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Stalin promised Roosevelt and Churchill that the Soviet Union would declare war on Japan three months after the surrender of Nazi Germany.

But the United States changed its strategy once it knew that it possessed a weapon that could end the war almost immediately after it "dropped one or two on Japan," as one U.S. general put it. The United States believed it could use the A-bomb to force a Japanese surrender before the Soviet Union entered the war.

President Truman, who heard about the success of the test at Alamogordo while at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, later wrote with unrestrained glee about the vision of "the end of the war in one or two violent shocks... Moreover, we would not need the Russians."

The last thing that Truman wanted was the Soviet Union invading Manchuria and thus posing an obstacle to American "interests" in postwar China. Such an invasion would only

benefit Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Red Army, who up to then had borne the main burden of fighting the one-million strong Japanese occupation forces.

The U.S. imperialists knew that despite the betrayals and misleadership of Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy—and even despite Stalin's real wishes—the introduction of the Soviet Red Army into Manchuria would unleash the forces of the Chinese Revolution. The Soviet Union in its degenerated form still represented the socialist revolution.

Even before World War II had ended, Truman and the

erately chose Nagasaki and Hiroshima."

Other sources reveal that several U.S. tacticians expressed reservations about the use of the A-bomb. General Dwight D. Eisenhower—who after he became president contemplated using nuclear weapons in Korea and Vietnam—said that dropping the bomb was "completely unnecessary" against an already-defeated Japan. He stated that the bomb was "no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives."

The head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General George C. Marshall, on the other hand,

"Which capitalism would dominate world market for exploitation and profits?"

class he represented were planning World War III! Could it be more than coincidence that the second A-bomb was dropped on Nagasaki exactly one day after the Soviet Union declared war against Japan?

"A shock action"

Former Assistant War Secretary John McCloy, who was present at high-level discussions where the decision to bomb Japan was made, recently revealed that prior to the Nazi surrender the United States also planned to use the A-bomb against Germany. McCloy gives us an illuminating picture of the "humanitarian" characteristics of the U.S. ruling class.

"They were talking about what they call a shock action," he told a reporter for United Press International. "And the reason they wanted a shock action was to bring about a surrender. And that's why they chose a spot that was close to a civilian population. They delib-

avored using the bomb. But Marshall hoped it wouldn't have to be dropped because it would "tip-off" the Russians to the new power possessed by the United States and be less of a deterrent after the war.

For both Eisenhower and Marshall the decision about whether to use the atomic bomb was purely tactical. But several of the scientists who had actually worked on the development of the bomb cited humanitarian grounds for their concern about its use.

Dr. James Franck, a refugee from Nazi Germany and a Nobel-Prize physicist, was one of a group of A-bomb researchers who were against using the new weapon without first warning Japan about its potential destructiveness. They recommended a demonstration in an unpopulated area or sending photos of the Alamogordo test to the Japanese government.

Franck and seven other scientists submitted a memo to what was called the Interim Committee, a body of civilian and scientific advisers who frequently met with Truman and the Military Chiefs of Staff.

The memo stated: "If the United States were the first to release this new means of indiscriminate destruction upon mankind, she would sacrifice public support throughout the world, precipitate the race for armaments, and prejudice the possibility of reaching an international agreement on the future control of such weapons."

Pushed again to the abyss

U.S. presidents from both the Democratic and Republican parties threatened to unleash nuclear weapons no less than eight times since the end of World War II. American working people, unfortunately, discovered how close the human race has been pushed to the nuclear abyss only through the memoirs of former presidents and their advisers.

In an interview in the July 21

issue of *Time* magazine, former President Richard Nixon—the "Mad Bomber" of Hanoi in 1972—revealed that he contemplated using nuclear weapons at least four times. Nixon, who was elected in 1968 because he said he had a "secret plan" for ending the Vietnam War, only now told the public that what he meant was "ending Vietnam!"

Nixon also admitted that he considered using nuclear bombs in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, in the 1971 India-Pakistan War, and during a Soviet-Chinese border dispute. These new revelations can be added to an already long list of instances when the U.S. imperialists seriously contemplated repeating what they did to the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For example:

- Eisenhower entertains using nuclear weapons against Chinese troops during the Korean War in 1953.

- Nixon, as vice president, advocates the use of a nuclear bomb against the Vietnamese liberation forces surrounding French troops at Dien-bienphu in 1954.

- Kennedy alerts and mobilizes for all-out nuclear war during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

- Johnson sends experts to Vietnam to study the feasibility of using nuclear weapons during the siege of Khe Sahn in 1968.

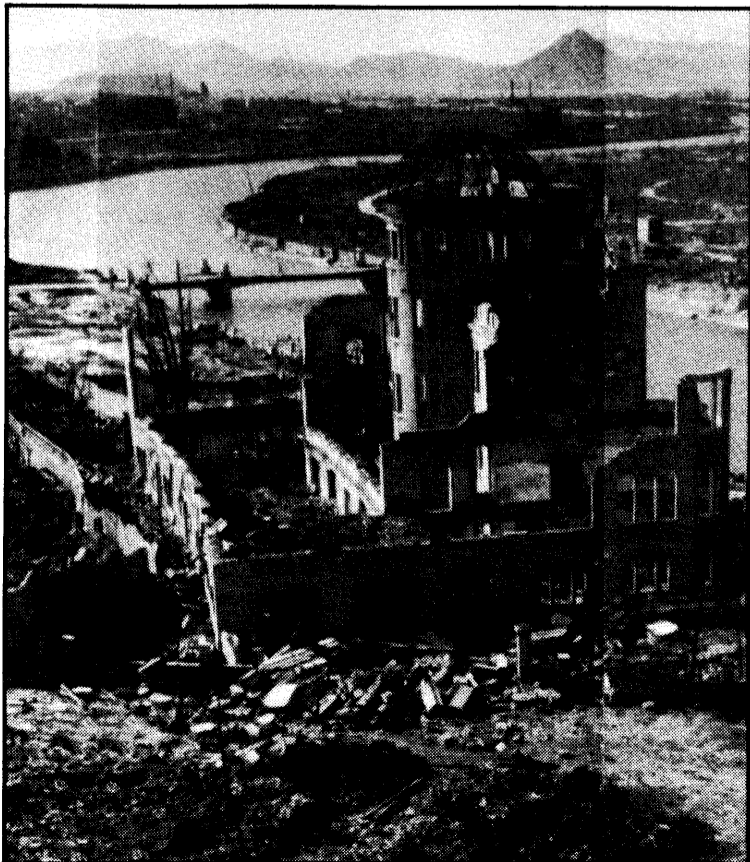
- Reagan asserts that a "limited nuclear war is winnable."

These examples weren't just threats. And in most cases, the American people had no idea they were made until many years later. These options were seriously considered by the U.S. ruling class for the same reason they were utilized against Japan—to protect the interests of a decaying social system.

It can be said with absolute certainty that the only force that stayed the hands of Nixon and his predecessors was the vision of the reaction of working people throughout the world to these acts of barbarism. But the U.S. ruling class continues today to try to ensure its supremacy by means of a newly constructed missile system ringing Europe and the Pacific Basin.

The question of the survival of the human race—today threatened by Reagan and tomorrow by his Democratic and Republican party successors—was posed by Leon Trotsky as long ago as 1934. "History is bringing humanity face to face with the volcanic eruption of U.S. imperialism," he pointed out.

Today—in the words of Trotsky—humanity is faced with capitalism in its death agony, the convulsions of which pose the choice of either socialism or barbarism. ■



The ruins of Hiroshima after the blast.

Japanese Americans seek redress

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

Anyone under the illusion that World War II was a war for democracy would do well to look at what happened to people of Japanese heritage in the United States during the war years.

In 1942, despite the guarantees of the Bill of Rights, Japanese-Americans were rounded up, excluded from the West Coast of the United States, and detained in 10 huge concentration camps until the end of the war.

This was accomplished by the Roosevelt administration using Executive Order 9066. The grounds for the order—for which no shred of evidence was ever produced—were that the ethnic Japanese on the West Coast were a threat to the war effort and a reservoir of support for Japan. The government argued that they could become involved in sabotage and espionage.

Today, important challenges to the legality and morality of

government suppressed important evidence in the first trial. Hirabayashi is attempting to have his conviction overturned.

Hirabayashi's case, like that of Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui—whose convictions for refusal to obey governmental orders were vacated in 1983 because of proven governmental suppression of evidence—has undermined the basis of the 1944 Supreme Court ruling that upheld the wartime internment procedure.

According to Don Tamaki, one of Fred Korematsu's attorneys, these cases have "fatally discredited the 1944 Supreme Court decision... the next best thing to a reversal."

The fight for compensation

Two years ago the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded after extensive hearings that what befell the interned Japanese was unjust, illegal, and immoral.

Recommendations from the commission center on two

Action that the report of the Commission on the Economic Losses of Ethnic Japanese as a Result of Exclusion and Detention, published in 1983, estimated their losses at \$6.2 billion in 1983 dollars.

Tateishi conceded that the \$1.5 billion figure in the proposed legislation is considerably less. But he emphasized the moral as opposed to the financial aspects of the redress bill, pointing out that many Japanese-Americans are reluctant to place a dollar equivalent on the internment trauma.

Yet it is widely recognized that the government's payment of this money would serve as a powerful counter to the 1944 Supreme Court decision.

Anti-Asian racism

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, co-author of "Farewell to Manzanar," the moving personal account of a family's three-and-one-half years in a California concentration camp, told *Socialist Action* that "three prongs" of the background to internment were "100 years of anti-Asian racism" experienced by ethnic Chinese and Japanese in the Western United States as well as "political and economic opportunism."

Houston said that this opportunism was directed against Japanese farmers and expressed by the threat, "Japs out of the Valley."

The farmers were forced by Executive Order 9066 to liquidate their property and mortgages—a significant portion (42 percent) of California's commercial truck farms.

The fact that racism against Asian people was a major factor in this denial of human rights is illustrated by the fact that ethnic Japanese in Hawaii were not subject to the internment.

One internee described the experience as a life "of slow



Woman and child incarcerated in the Tule Lake, Calif., relocation camp during World War II.

"Japanese-Americans were detained in 10 huge concentration camps."

this ugly chapter in U.S. history are being raised in the courts by Gordon Hirabayashi and in Congress by legislation calling for governmental redress.

Government suppressed evidence

Hirabayashi was convicted in 1942 for refusing to obey a curfew order in Seattle. The curfew was passed before the institution of Roosevelt's roundup and internment order.

Now his case is open again, thanks to the discovery that the

demands—compensation of \$20,000 for each of the survivors of the camps (which amounts to a total of \$1.5 billion) and a public apology by Congress and the president.

These recommendations have been written into legislation that is now in subcommittees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) hopes that the legislation will accomplish what the court challenges cannot.

John Tateishi, JACL redress director, explained to *Socialist*

torture."

He stated: "The queerest part of American democracy is that it is torturing its own citizen because he happens to have Japanese blood in him while German and Italian aliens go scot free."

[quoted in "To Serve the Devil," 1971, from Japanese Relocation Papers in the Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley]

Voices of protest

The Socialist Workers Party was one of the very few voices of protest in 1942 against Executive Order 9066. Hayden Perry, writing under the name "Gordon Bailey" in the SWP newspaper, *The Militant*, attacked it as an "indiscriminate and brutal witchhunt."

The SWP attributed the internment of the Japanese to the greed of the corporate agriculturalists for the land devel-

oped by the Japanese-Americans.

Could such a terrifying betrayal of human and constitutional rights happen again in the United States? Without constant vigilance, it certainly could.

Elaine Elinson, Public Information director of the Northern California chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, told *Socialist Action*, "Nothing could stop another American president at another time" from issuing an Executive Order like 9066. Elinson pointed out that the government could use a "national emergency" or war as a pretext for violating constitutional rights.

Our best hope for preventing such a tragedy from recurring is to organize a large movement against the current preparations and acts of war of the United States. ■

Campaign coordinator urges support: 'Referendum seeks to bar nukes from N.Y.'

A campaign to put a referendum on the November ballot is underway in New York City. The initiative is aimed at blocking the Navy's plans to bring nuclear weapons into New York's harbor.

The following interview with Tom De Luca, coordinator of the Ad Hoc Committee for a Navyport Referendum and a leader of the the New York Mobilization for Survival, was conducted on July 23 by Alan Benjamin.

Socialist Action: Could you briefly describe the objectives of the campaign?

Tom De Luca: The campaign seeks to put a referendum on the ballot that would bar the New York City Board of Estimates from appropriating either money or land to support any military facility

that would carry or store nuclear weapons.

It is binding in that it will prevent the city from using city money and land voluntarily. It would not be binding on the Navy.

The Navy's plan is to station a seven-ship Surface Action Group at Stapleton, Staten Island. The group would be led by the battleship Iowa, which carries Tomahawk cruise missiles.

S.A.: What have you accomplished so far?

De Luca: We have collected 60,670 signatures. To put the referendum on the ballot we need the signatures of 30,000 registered voters. Right now the city clerk's office is checking the signatures one by one against the voter roles.

The referendum now goes to

the city council, which may either pass it or agree to put it on the ballot. We don't expect it to do either. So we're collecting another 15,000 signatures, which will automatically place it on the ballot in November.

It is interesting that council members who said for so long they had the support of New Yorkers for this base are afraid to put it on the ballot.

S.A.: Assuming you get on the ballot, what then?

De Luca: In September we will run a citywide campaign through grassroots networks, political organizations, community organizations, religious institutions, and trade unions. A precinct-by-precinct operation up until election day will be our strength.

S.A.: How does the cam-

campaign tie into the issue of Central America?

De Luca: Since the Reagan administration took office, it has been able to increase military spending without limit. Serious political constraints are needed.

The administration hopes that stationing its nuclear missiles will desensitize New Yorkers to the nuclear arms race and to the whole issue of using military means to solve political problems.

A victory in November will be a defeat to Reagan's attempt to bring New York City on board the Reagan juggernaut.

In addition, the battleship Iowa has led several fleets down off Central America. This is part of the Reagan administration's program to intimidate the government of Nicaragua. ■

If the Iowa is berthed here permanently, it is very possible that an invasion of Nicaragua could be launched from New York. New York could become a launching port for military intervention in Central America.

New Yorkers by refusing to accept that role for the Iowa or for their port would also be stating their views on military intervention in Central America.

S.A.: How can our readers get involved?

De Luca: To win in November we are going to need the support of hundreds—thousands—of volunteers. Anyone interested in helping, particularly in petitioning in August, should contact the Mobilization For Survival at (212) 673-1808. ■

SWP revises position on struggle for labor party

This August, the Socialist Workers Party is holding its second regular national convention since the party leadership expelled all oppositionists loyal to the politics and heritage of the SWP and the Fourth International.

One of the significant revisions introduced into the party's program over the past five years—which the party membership will be asked to ratify at this convention—concerns a major departure from the SWP's historic position on the struggle for a labor party in the United States.

We are reprinting below excerpts from two articles by George Breitman and Jean Y. Tussey on the SWP's new line on the labor party. They appeared in recent issues of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* published by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (P.O. Box 1317, New York, N.Y. 10009)—The Editors.

By JEAN Y. TUSSEY

The following are excerpts from an article, "The SWP's Disorientation on the Labor Party," which appeared in the June 1985 issue of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*.

The current SWP political resolution, "The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States" (see *New International*, Spring 1985, pp. 7-97), represents a serious break with revolutionary socialist perspectives and continuity on the crucial question for American workers today, the need for a labor party...

In 1979 the Socialist Workers Party adopted a resolution which clearly explained that the American workers are taking a beating that can only continue and get worse as long as they remain chained, economically and politically, to the false capitalist theory that without private business profits there can be no jobs or democracy.

"Building a Revolutionary Party of



"The movement for a labor party [in the United States] will continue to grow. Any revolutionary organization occupying a negative or neutrally expectant position in relation to this progressive movement will doom itself to isolation and sectarian degeneration."—Leon Trotsky, "The Problem of the Labor Party," April 1938.

Socialist Workers" was the title and focus of the 1979 resolution. It stated:

"A powerful base for a labor party already exists: the unions. They have millions of members, established newspapers, and financial resources.

"A labor party will not come into being simply because it is objectively needed, however, or because it already has a potential organized base. Some section of the union movement, a vanguard, must act to get a labor party started...

"The first steps toward a labor party can occur... as an independent labor campaign based on a particular union or union local, or in a particular city. Yet if such an

initiative has a clear perspective, it will have the potential to set an example that can spread to other unions and other parts of the country...

"A revolutionary working-class party cannot be built in this country apart from the fight for a class-struggle left wing in the unions, which includes the perspective of an independent labor party (my emphasis—J.Y.T.).

"The actual initiation of a labor party would dramatically shift the relationship of class forces in this country, opening the way to more rapid growth of the revolutionary-socialist party."

The January 1985 political resolution

of the SWP presents a totally different picture.

The 1985 resolution records a retreat from the party's revolutionary-socialist perspective and Leninist-Trotskyist contributions for the United States, to strange non-Marxist concepts of spontaneity that provide no clear guide for action to transform the unions nor for building a revolutionary party of socialist workers.

The concept of a labor party is disposed of in a polemic against the "Stranglehold of Electoralism."

"In order to represent a real step forward for labor and its allies," we are told, "independent working-class political action cannot be reduced to a question of organizational separation from the Democratic and Republican parties."

While "support for the candidates of the two capitalist parties is one of the primary forms taken by class-collaborationist politics at election time," a labor party alternative to the two capitalist parties is not too important since "this is only a small part of the trap of electoralism."

Similarly, "the emergence of a labor party with a reformist program in the United States would place a new barrier in the path of independent working-class political action," we are told.

It is untrue that a break from the Democratic and Republican parties through the formation of an independent labor party based on today's unions would not be a major advance in class consciousness by the American workers.

It is wrong... to tell industrial workers in the United States... that a labor party without a clear program for a revolutionary workers' and farmers' government is a bourgeois electoralist trap and an obstacle to "real" independent political action.

It is incorrect to substitute for the transitional program and method the pragmatic and vulgar materialist notion that North American industrial workers will have to continue to take a beating until they are reduced to conditions analogous to those of the Nicaraguans under Somoza or the Cubans under Batista before they will "acquire revolutionary combat experience and their consciousness will be transformed." ■

Marxist view of labor party

By GEORGE BREITMAN

The following are excerpts from an article, "The SWP's New Position on the Labor Party," which appeared in the May 1985 issue of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*.

A new and different line on the labor party is being introduced, not openly and honestly, but through altered emphasis and unacknowledged reinterpretation of parts of previous positions.

One part of the new line is altogether new; nothing like it has been said by the SWP since it became an advocate of an independent labor party in 1938. That is the claim that the emergence of a labor party with a reformist program would constitute a "barrier" to independent working-class political action.

That changes the whole concept of independent working-class political action. Consider what is being said:

If the working class or an important segment of it breaks with the capitalist parties and creates a party of its own, based on the unions and their allies, and their program is reformist rather than revolutionary, then that—according to the authors of the 1985 resolution—is not independent working-class political action.

This means that nothing except a revolutionary party can be said to engage

in independent working-class politics...

For an entire century the most perceptive elements in the Marxist movement, both here and abroad, have agreed on one thing about the labor party question in the United States: that it would be progressive, not a barrier, for the workers in this country to break with the capitalist parties and launch a party of their own, even if its program was inadequate from a revolutionary standpoint.

What Engels said

We can start with Frederick Engels 99 years ago, when there was an upsurge of struggle by U.S. workers, and when he thought... that the workers were possibly on the verge of creating their own political party. In letters to his American comrades, Engels wrote:

"The first great step of importance for every country newly entering into the movement is always the constitution of the workers as an independent political party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party."

("Letters to Americans 1848-1895," International Publishers, 1953, p. 163)

"A million or two of workingmen's votes next November for a *bona fide* workingmen's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinally perfect platform..."

"Anything that might delay or prevent that national consolidation of the workingmen's party—



Cartoon by Laura Gray in the SWP's newspaper in 1944.

on no matter what platform—I should consider a great mistake..." ("Letters to Americans," p. 167).

What Lenin said

Engels was not the only enemy of reformism who had such an opinion. Let us jump ahead 21 years, to 1907, when Lenin wrote a preface to a collection that included the above letters by Engels. Lenin was in full agreement with Engels' position on a U.S. labor party:

"Engels stressed the importance of an independent workers' party, even with a poor programme, because he was speaking of countries where there had formerly been not even a hint of the workers' political independence and where, in politics, the workers mostly dragged along behind the bourgeoisie, and still do..."

("Collected Works," Vol. 12, p. 35).

"In such countries Marx and Engels taught the socialists to rid themselves at all costs of narrow sectarianism, and to join with the working-class movement so as to shake up the proletariat politically ("Collected Works," Vol. 12, pp. 372-73).

For these reasons Lenin favored a U.S. labor party, "even with a poor programme," not only in 1907 but also in 1920 and 1921, at the time of the Comintern's second and third world congresses.

According to Theodore Draper, Lenin suggested then that the CP should work for a labor party in the United States. And he did not insist that it could only be a party with a revolutionary program. ("American Communism and Soviet Russia," Viking Press, 1960, p. 32)

It is hardly necessary to quote Trotsky on this matter since transcripts of his 1938 talks with SWP leaders on why they should fight for a labor party are available in the book "The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution" (Pathfinder Press, 1977).

Such a perspective is obviously quite different from the one introduced in the 1985 resolution. The 1979 SWP resolution [quoted in Jean Tussey's article—The Editors] stimulates active participation in the labor movement to try to actually help form a labor party, while the latest document encourages dogmatic abstention until some ideal form of labor party comes along. ■



By SUZANNE FORSYTH

One of the great achievements of the women's movement has been its commitment to restoring women's history. Women are gaining a new pride in their heritage by the rediscovery of great female thinkers, writers, artists, and activists silenced by patriarchal capitalist history.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman—enormously famous in her own time yet virtually unknown in ours—was both a radical and a feminist at the turn of the century. Though this short article cannot attempt to do justice to her politics, it is meant to introduce Gilman and encourage others to seek out and enjoy her work.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) referred to herself as a "humanist" rather than as a "feminist."

Her works analyze the past from her particular "humanist-socialist" perspective. Her interest in female suffrage and her connection with the organized suffrage movement were peripheral. She spoke extensively, however, for women's groups around the United States and was a prolific writer on subjects relating to the emancipation of women.

Charlotte Perkins was born on July 3, 1860, in Hartford, Conn. Deserted soon afterwards by her father, Charlotte's family lived in poverty. Charlotte became self-supporting at an early age by designing greetings cards. She worked later as an art teacher and a governess. The lessons of her bitter childhood and early forced independence gave her an insight which became the basis for her feminist theory.

The tragedy of her mother's fate, to be a pariah in Victorian society, did not escape Charlotte:

"When the woman left with no man to 'support' her, tries to meet her own economic necessities, the difficulties which confront her prove conclusively what the general economic status of women is." (Women and Economics.)

Gilman always maintained that no woman could ever be free without first gaining economic independence.

The personal is political

Events in her personal life once again fueled her feminism when social pressure and personal confusion forced her to marry. The combined isolation, sexual repression, and dependence inherent in her role as a Victorian wife led Gilman to a nervous breakdown.

She consulted S. Weir Mitchell, a well-known neurologist and "specialist" in women's nervous disorders. His famous "Rest Cure," evidently prescribed to thousands of other women, forbade her to write or paint and limited her intellectual activity to two hours a day.

Rather than cure her, Mitchell's expert advice drove Gilman even closer to insanity. She ran away to California and—in order to survive—permanently separated from her husband. Gilman managed to support herself and her daughter by running a boarding house while launching a career as a writer and orator.

In 1892 her largely autobiographical work, "The Yellow Wallpaper," was published. A terrifying account of a young woman driven insane by a well-meaning husband and Dr. Mitchell's "cure," it is a powerful feminist indictment of the patriarchal medical establishment, marital power relations, and the labeling of rebellious women as "mad."

Economic dependence

Her next major work, "Women and Economics," appeared in 1898 and established her reputation. It is

Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Radical, feminist, theorist

a comprehensive political study of the history, sociology, and economics of women in Western society. Translated into seven languages, the book won her international notoriety.

She believed strongly that women were crippled by their economic dependence on men (as fathers, brothers, and husbands). But though she recognized the home as the primary source of women's inequality, she never challenged the basic institution of monogamous, heterosexual marriage and the nuclear family.

In her theory women's oppression began when men first expropriated the surplus of women's labor in agriculture. This she believed to be the first form of subjection and the basis for all ensuing exploitation.

Thus women were dehumanized and prevented from realization of their human potential. Oppression prevented women from fully developing qualities such as courage, strength, and creativity that society viewed as "masculine" and positive. In "Women and Economics," she illustrated this point by making an analogy to the way people treat cows:

"The wild cow is a female. She has healthy calves and milk enough for them. And that is all the femininity she needs. Otherwise she is bovine rather than feminine. She is a light, strong, swift, sinewy creature, able to run, jump and fight, if necessary. We, for economic uses, have artificially developed the cow's capacity for producing milk. She has become a walking milk-machine, bred and tended to that express end, her value measured in quarts."

A healthy society requires female autonomy

Gilman always stressed the shared humanity of women and men rather than their differences brought about by social conditioning. This was contrary to many feminists of her time who believed women superior to men.

But it was her opinion that men's personalities were distorted by habits of dominance and power. A healthy society would therefore require female autonomy brought about through women's collective political action.

Gilman believed in the socialization of private property and collective organization and social relations. She belonged to the Socialist Party. But her pacifist rejection of violence and faith in the collective abilities of women as an alternative led her to reject the Marxist view of class struggle. Her ideology was closest to that of the English Fabian socialists.

Determined to present socialism as legitimate, alluring, and practical, Gilman produced a monthly 32-page magazine, *The Forerunner*. The magazine's main concern was integrating socialism and feminism. Gilman wrote every line herself, publishing her views on topics from venereal disease to public transportation.

Gilman's novel "Herland" was serialized in the *The Forerunner*. It illustrated her vision of an all-female, egalitarian society. It is generally accepted as

the first feminist utopian novel.

In the Herland utopia childrearing is socialized, as are housecleaning, food preparation, and other domestic tasks. Persuasion and consensus maintain social order. There is no fear of male sexual violence. Motherhood is revered. Male sexuality is non-existent—women reproduce parthenogenically when they desire motherhood.

"Women's work" no longer exists; all work is women's work. There are no economic classes; women are simultaneously individuals and part of a collective.

Feminist theory for social change

Gilman was a great feminist. She became an independent, strong, and creative woman during an extremely misogynist era. She drew from her per-



sonal experience to create a theory for social change.

Gilman's feminist perspective was completely woman-centered. This was her greatest strength. Her analysis focused on phenomenon in relation to women and its effect on their daily lives.

Unfortunately, she was sometimes unable to see past her own experience. She was also caught in the racism prevalent in intellectual circles of her time. Her failure to understand racial and class oppression and their importance to women's oppression seriously hampered her analysis.

Her early blend of socialism and feminism make Charlotte Perkins Gilman intriguing today and an important figure in women's history. Coming out of extremely difficult circumstances, she not only survived but went on to fulfill her human potential—creating meaningful feminist theory in the process. ■

SUBSCRIBE TO SOCIALIST ACTION!

If you like this paper, you'll like the organization of the same name—Socialist Action.

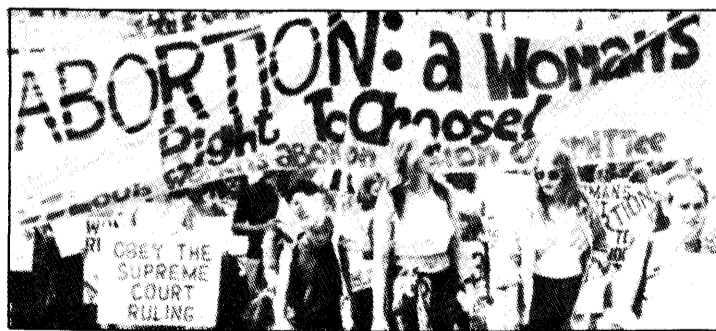
This paper shows you who we are and what we do. We are active in the antiwar movement and in the unions. We are fighters against racism and for sexual equality. We are part of the struggle against capitalist injustice wherever it occurs.

With abortion rights under attack by the government and its two ruling parties, dissatisfaction and anger are building up among millions of women in this country.

Reflecting the widespread sentiment, Eleanor Smeal, the newly elected president of NOW, has vowed to organize a national demonstration next spring for the ERA and to defend abortion rights. Independent mass action in the streets, which Smeal has promised, will mobilize millions of women in defense of their own interests.

Socialist Action will continue to cover the issues confronting the women's movement and will seek to build the mass actions for abortion rights and reproductive freedom.

If you like this paper, we hope you'll subscribe and make a financial contribution to help us continue publishing it. We are counting on your help.



Socialist ACTION

\$6.00—United States
\$12.50—Canada and Mexico
\$14.00—Other countries (surface)
\$30.00—Other countries (airmail)

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____

Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110



'Peace agreement': Threat to Palestinians

By JIM RICHTER

The Palestinian struggle is under heavy attack from all quarters, but the resistance movement has not been broken.

In late May, the Syrian-backed Shi'ite Amal militia carried out an attack on the Palestinian camps at Sabra and Chatila that was at least equal in scale and ferocity to the massacres in those camps carried out by Israeli-backed Christian militia in September 1982.

But the resistance of the Palestinians was truly heroic. In the "Daouk ghetto" in the Sabra camp, for example, it took the Lebanese Army and the Amal militia 12 days to dislodge the poorly armed Palestinian combatants.

It must be remembered that in 1976, just after civil war had erupted and the impoverished masses of Lebanon threatened to take state power, the Syrian army joined with the Maronite Phalange in the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians in the Tel al-Zataar refugee camp in East Beirut.

The Israeli government has also continued to rain terror on the Palestinian refugee settlements in northern and southern Lebanon. Since the withdrawal of Israeli troops in early June, Israeli jets have raided numerous camps, killing dozens of men, women, and children.

Now a new attack is underway against the Palestinian cause. It is the "peace agreement" put forward by Jordan's King Hussein with the support of

PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat.

This peace plan is based on Arafat's acceptance, for the first time since the PLO was founded in 1964, of U.N. Resolution 242, which is based on the recognition of the Zionist settler-state and the rejection of a Palestinian nation on Palestinian soil. The plan also calls for a Jordanian-Palestinian federation—essentially a Palestinian ghetto under Hussein's tutelage.

It was the very same King Hussein who massacred and drove out the Palestinian fighters from Jordan in the "Black September" war of 1970.

The peace plan, if implemented, would represent a tremendous blow to the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination and national liberation; the struggle for which the PLO and Arafat's Fatah were created in the first place.

But the Palestinian masses, despite the decades of persecution and massacres, have not been crushed. The Palestinian people and the PLO cannot be erased. The Palestinian struggle will continue to provide the backdrop for all the convulsions in the region. No plan put forward by the imperialists and their bourgeois Arab allies can offer a solution to the Palestinian question.

The only road forward for the Palestinian movement is the revolutionary struggle for a democratic secular Palestine—incorporating both the Jewish and Palestinian masses—over the entire Palestinian territory. ■

Palestinian people attacked on all fronts

By PAT HICKEY

The following article is reprinted from the June 3, 1985, issue of Socialist Action, a British Trotskyist publication.

The attacks by the Syrian-backed and Muslim militia on the Palestinian camps mark another stage in the collapse of the Lebanese central government in the wake of Israeli withdrawal. It is another step by the Syrian regime of President Assad in its attempts to win control of Lebanon.

It shows yet again the cynical disregard of the Arab bourgeois regimes for Palestinian interests. Although the Shi'ite militias fought the Israelis; this attack on the Palestinians demonstrates that they are not a revolutionary or anti-imperialist force.

Nabih Berri, the Amal leader and Lebanon's justice minister, represents bourgeois-nationalist interests. The Palestinians are being attacked, as they were previously utilized, in the interests of Assad's role in a future Middle East settlement.

When the Israelis invaded Lebanon they had two aims. First, to break the strength of the PLO. Second to establish a Christian-Phalangist pro-Israeli state. The first was achievable, the second was not.

A Christian state no longer corresponds to the political, military, or demographic balance of forces. The main political factor now in Lebanon is Syria.

The Israeli "withdrawal" to the Awali river—which in reality leaves them in control up to the Litani river—has opened the battle for control of Lebanon. This struggle, given the decisive weakening of the Christian forces, is concentrated on the issue of who controls West Beirut, which is mainly Muslim. The Shi'ite Amal has pushed back the Sunni Muslims. The Palestinians, however, have been building up their

forces in Lebanon over the past few months.

They represented a threat to the Amal forces, hence the attack on the camps. The Assad regime has an interest in ensuring that no section in Lebanon assumes dominance. It wants a divided client state, that will ensure Syr-

ia's place among the Arab bourgeoisie in future negotiations. The crisis in Lebanon, with shifting alliances by Syria between Shi'ites, Druze, and Maronite Christian militias will continue.

The losers in all this are the Palestinians. Arafat's policy of relying on the Arab bourgeoisie for the advancement of the Palestinian cause has ensured that the PLO has once again entered a blind alley.

It is surely the crowning irony of the situation that the anti-Arafat Palestinians around Abu Musu, whose alterna-

tive was the alliance with the Syrian regime, have been as much under attack as the pro-Arafat wing in the camps.

Syria's Shi'ite clients have their own interests as well. The result has been that the pro-Syrian faction has also been forced to fight for its life. The conclusion must be that the choice of alliances between bourgeois Arab regimes is no choice.

For the Palestinians, unless their fundamental interests are placed above those of the ruling groups in those regimes, there will be no victory. ■

Setback for Armenian political prisoners

TORONTO—On the eve of the May 2 Ontario election, the province's attorney-general reimposed attempted-murder charges against three jailed Armenian political prisoners awaiting trial in Ottawa.

The recent "preferred indictment" overturned an earlier preliminary hearing ruling that had brought Harout Kevork, Raffic Balian, and Haig Gharakhanian to trial on a lesser "conspiracy to commit murder" count. The charges arose from the Ottawa shooting of Turkish diplomat Kani Gungor in 1982.

The three Armenian activists, partisans of a unified, socialist Armenia and opponents of terrorism, are expected to go on trial on Sept. 23. They have been held in detention since March 12, 1984.

The continuing persecution of the three, denial of bail, and the new indictment are part of an effort by the authorities to produce a scapegoat in their "war on terrorism".

These repressive measures fall in line with the current anti-Armenian hysteria campaign generated by the media and right-wing politicians. Unfortunately, right-wing Armenian nationalists have recently fueled this reactionary campaign.

On March 12 three members of the

so-called Armenian Revolutionary Army seized the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa, killing a Pinkerton guard. Soon after, in the days leading up to April 1, Toronto was convulsed by a massive subway bomb hoax which was put forward by a mysterious group called the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Our Homeland.

Kevork, Balian, and Gharakhanian have nothing to do with these right wingers. They've repeatedly denounced the latest round of terrorist actions. But the three activists are a convenient target for the Canadian authorities, espe-

cially since their socialist views distinguish them from the mainstream.

Many see the harassment of the activists, and of the Armenian community as a whole, as an act of appeasement by the Canadian government toward its NATO ally and nuclear-reactor customer Turkey. The right-wing Turkish government still refuses to acknowledge the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians.

The Committee in Defense of Armenian Political Prisoners is demanding that the charges be dropped and the activists freed, with full compensation for wrongful prosecution and detention.

Contributions to the defense fund or requests for more information should be forwarded to: Committee in Defense of Armenian Political Prisoners, 350 Seneca Hill Dr., Apt. 1703, Willowdale, Ontario M2J 4S7. ■

International VIEWPOINT

Return to 3435 Army St.
Rm. 308, San Francisco,
CA 94110

Subscribe now

International Viewpoint is a biweekly political review analyzing recent world events from a revolutionary Marxist perspective. The latest issue contains a three-part special on South Africa, two stories on the Miskitos in Nicaragua, and articles on the recent elections in Ireland and Italy. We offer a special introductory offer of three issues for \$3. A six-month subscription is \$22, and one year of International Viewpoint is available for \$42. Subscribe now!



Black masses revolt against South African apartheid

By HAYDEN PERRY

The Black townships of South Africa have been in a state of open rebellion against the apartheid regime for the last 10 months. The police have responded with whips, tear gas, rubber bullets, and shot guns. They have killed over 200 Blacks since last September. But they have failed to beat the majority Black population into submission.

On the contrary, funerals for the victims of police massacres become occasions for mobilizing the oppressed and raising their spirit of defiance ever higher. On July 20 in Cradock, in the Eastern Cape region, over 40,000 Blacks attended a funeral for four members of the United Democratic Front who were murdered last June.

Meanwhile armored personnel carriers patrolled the white areas of Cradock and police officers with shotguns stood at street corners. White residents of the town said they had armed themselves in case any clashes spread to areas set aside by law for whites only.

Strikes also broke out at Volkswagen, Ford, and General Motors plants in the Eastern Cape region. A Black consumer boycott was reported to be biting sharply into white businesses in the region. [See editorial on page 1.]

The boycott was called by Black trade unions and other groups to support their demands for a freeze on prices, the withdrawal of military personnel from Black townships, and the dismantling of Black local governments.

Explosion in Soweto

In mid-July police reported 41 incidents of rioting in Black townships covering a belt of South Africa 560 miles long. Outside the coal-mining town of Witbank, east of Johannesburg, police fired shotguns at a crowd of over 1000 protesting Blacks. Tens of thousands of students in the Johannesburg area are boycotting classes to protest inferior schools.

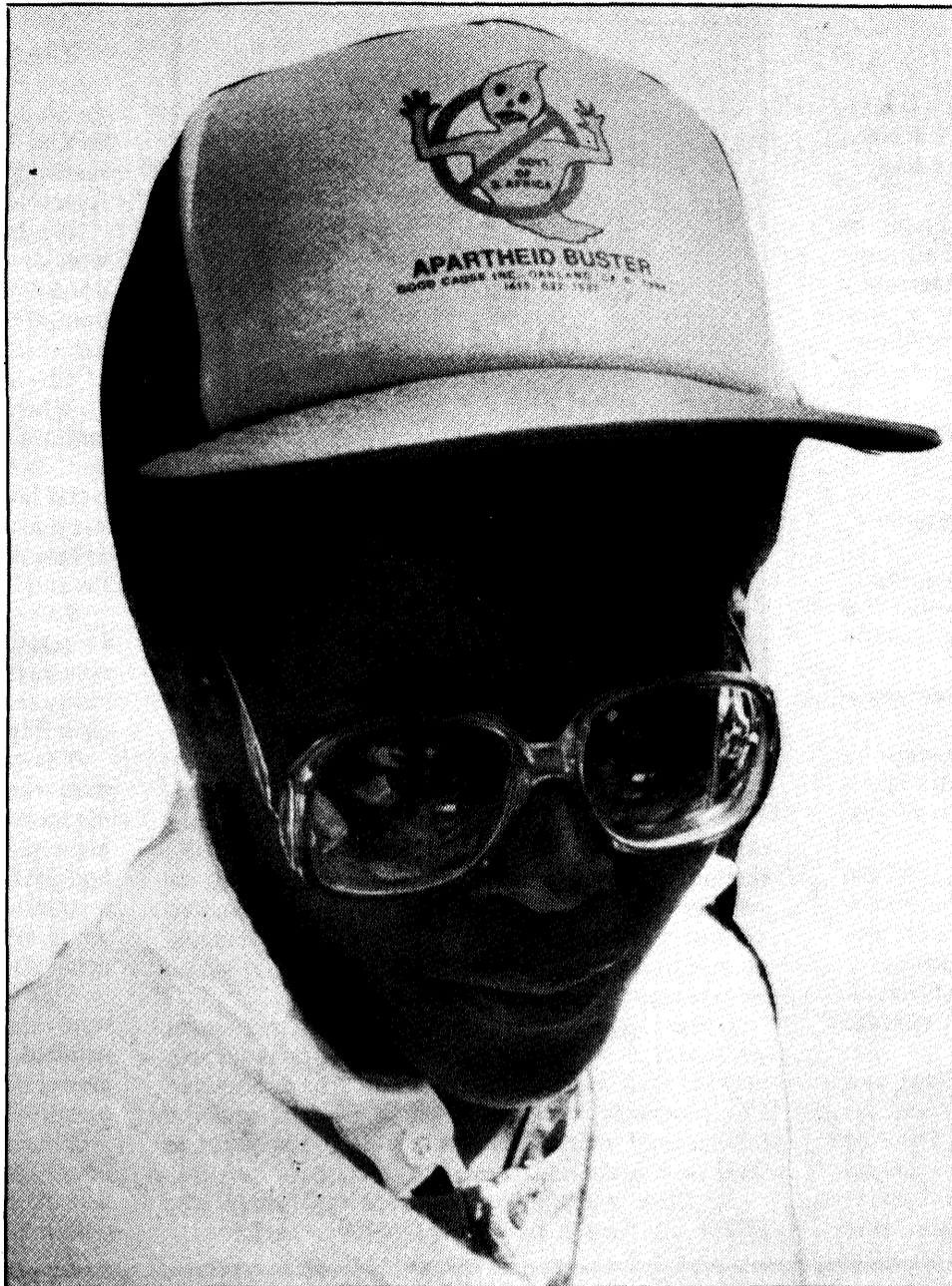
On July 16 the huge Soweto township of 1.5 million exploded as students and other youth stoned tourist buses, set fire to homes of collaborators, and taunted police. The police resorted to shotguns, mobile tear gas machines, and Cossack-like charges on horseback in order to break up the crowds of defiant youth.

The crowds would scatter, only to form again. By nightfall the police declared Soweto "unmanageable."

In desperation the Botha government on July 20 declared a state of emergency in Pretoria, Johannesburg, and 36 cities and towns in the Eastern Cape region. The decree suspends all civil rights for both Blacks and whites. Newspapers are forbidden to report any action the government wishes to keep secret.

Hundreds of anti-apartheid activists have been rounded up and detained without charges.

Anti-apartheid organizations said the state of emergency decree will not end the turmoil. Blacks have been living under virtual state-of-emergency conditions, subject to arbitrary search and seizure, for decades. But this has not stopped them from openly defying the



Socialist Action: Joe Ryan

apartheid regime.

Substandard education and raises in rent were the original focus of Black township uprisings. Now a more basic issue has been raised. Black cops make up 40 percent of South Africa's police force and Black council members and mayors administer white laws in the Black townships. These collaborators and intermediaries enable the white regime to control the ghettos without coming face to face with the oppressed.

Militants have called on the Black mayors to quit and collaborators to resign their seats on township councils. They have added emphasis to their demands by burning the homes and businesses of council members who continue in office. Black cops and informers have been killed or driven out of town.

More than 250 council members have resigned and only five of the 38 councils are still able to function. When elections were scheduled to fill 10 vacancies in Lekoa township in the Eastern Cape region, not a single resident was willing to run. This means the apartheid regime must administer these hotbeds of resistance themselves.

Residents of Langa township, where the council has resigned, found another solution. They formed street and area committees to run local affairs themselves. This presents a serious challenge to Prime Minister Pieter Botha, who cannot tolerate any Black formation he cannot control.

Police garrisons

Despite its overwhelming military strength, the minority white regime reacts with a sense of fear. The Afrikaner-controlled government believes that every concession to the non-white population is a break in the dike that will drown it in a sea of vengeful Blacks.

Today the regime has 7000 armed men rushing from township to township putting out fires that burn ever fiercer. With the facade of "independent" Black councils collapsing, the regime

will have to garrison every township with police and soldiers.

The Botha government is learning from the Israelis. They believe relentless military force must be exerted regardless of international law. On June 11 South African commandos invaded neighboring Botswana and murdered 16 people at 10 locations in the city of Gaborone. The victims included a six-year-old girl.

The murdered people were members of the banned African National Congress (ANC), Botha charged.

The apartheid regime is also learning from the dictatorships in Latin America. Black trade unionists and other activists are disappearing. The resemblance to the activities of El Salvador's death squads is ominous.

There are critics among whites of the tactics, if not the aims, of government repression. A medical panel recently

condemned two doctors for allowing imprisoned Black Consciousness leader Steven Biko to be taken on an 800-mile ride in a truck after being severely beaten by police in 1977. The panel charged that the ride hastened Biko's death.

Another official inquiry accused police of shooting 10 demonstrators in the back without provocation during a funeral procession on March 21 at Langa township, near Uitenhage. The procession, which coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Sharpsville massacre, had attracted 30,000 people to commemorate martyrs of another police killing earlier in the year.

The Human Sciences Research Council, a university research group funded by the government, has released the results of a four-year study of apartheid. The report effectively calls the apartheid policy a disaster and warns the government that "catastrophe" looms unless there are fundamental changes.

Whites who criticize the tactics of the Botha regime are caught in a dilemma. Some believe that the apartheid system must be modified before revolution erupts. They are prepared, if necessary, to share some power with other races. But they believe whites—although less than a quarter of the population—must maintain control. Few have advocated the democratic principle of "one man or woman—one vote."

A program of action

The crisis in South Africa will be resolved by Black people in alliance with their Coloured and Indian brothers and sisters—and white people who support their struggle. Although banned by the government, the ANC is prominent in the leadership of the fight. In a statement issued April 25, the Black organization called for a program of action that would make the townships ungovernable.

The statement said, "The historic conditions which are necessary to ensure the collapse of the apartheid system ... are beginning to take shape in a greater measure than ever before in our history. Yet much remains to be done."

The ANC pointed to recent political strikes in the Transvaal and the Eastern Cape regions and called on the trade union movement to prepare "a long-lasting national work stoppage."

The statement urged the formation of "people's committees on every block" to replace the collapsing urban councils and to make every township a "no-go area" for isolated collaborators or police. It called on Blacks in the armed forces to stop shooting their brothers and sisters in defense of white rule.

The road to freedom will be a long and bloody one, but the oppressed people of South Africa have shown they are determined to follow it to the end. ■

... Emergency

(continued from page 1)

expected to escalate its measures of repression.

The revolutionary proletarian methods of struggle mounted by the South African masses differ profoundly from the "unfair lists" published by U.S. unions. Such boycotts and strikes—carried out without organized, prepared, mass participation of the union ranks—remain ineffective.

Workers in the United States have much to learn from the South African Blacks.

U.S. "neutrality"

A new stage has arrived in the fight for freedom by the Black nation of South Africa. The mass mobilizations of the Black movement are threatening to shatter the entire apartheid regime.

Under these conditions, White House spokesman Larry Speakes felt compelled to criticize the current state of emer-

gency and the "excesses" of apartheid. But the Reagan administration reiterated its refusal to impose sanctions on South Africa.

In addition, a spokesperson for the State Department asserted, "We hope sincerely that the unrest will abate rapidly, permitting the South African government to remove those measures and get on with the urgent business of reform."

The developing anti-intervention movement in this country now has a deeper urgency. International solidarity with the South African struggle for freedom dictates our making every effort toward organizing large protest actions this fall.

We can build the broadest possible movement around the four slogans carried by over 125,000 people last April 20: no U.S. support to apartheid; no U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; freeze and reverse the nuclear arms race; and jobs and justice, not war. ■

Distributors of Socialist Action in Canada:

Gauche Socialiste
C.P. 152, succ. N
Montreal H2X 3N4

Socialist Action Collective
96 Maryland Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1K8

SFAC
P.O. Box 12082
Edmonton, Alta.

Socialist Workers Collective
229 College St., Rm. 208
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4

Story of a Nicaraguan revolutionary fighter

By MARK SCHNEIDER

Fire From the Mountain: the Making of a Sandinista, By Omar Cabezas. Translated by Kathleen Weaver. Crown Publishers, 1985. 233 pp. \$13.95.

No revolution has had as literary a leadership as the Nicaraguan revolution. The Russians had journalists and historians such as Trotsky, Lunacharsky and Preobrazhensky, and from Cuba came a cinematic barrage (not from the combatants themselves). But Nicaragua is blessed with an activist leadership of genuine literary ability.

The Sandinistas have the outstanding poet Ernesto Cardenal and the novelist Sergio Ramirez. Nicaragua's most popular literary form, however, has been the *testimonio*, based on biographical accounts and interviews.

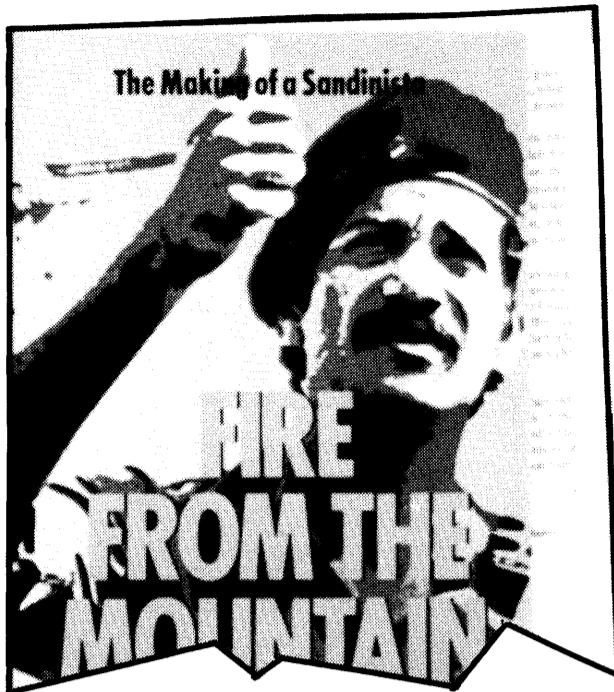
"Fire From the Mountain," is an autobiography originally published in Spanish under the title, "La montaña es algo mas que una inmensa estapa verde."

It is now available in English in a smooth translation by Kathleen Weaver.

The volume boasts an insightful introduction by Mexican author and diplomat Carlos Fuentes and a succinct historical afterword by the French radical historian Henri Weber.

Omar Cabezas is the revolutionary as *picaro* (rogue). His book is a frontal attack on the stereotyped romanticism of guerrilla war. It is a story less of fearlessness and battle than a realistic account of blisters, exhaustion, doubt, and most of all loneliness. It is a testimony to the quiet, patient courage of a man and a people.

Cabezas has many literary strengths, but two stand out. The language is blunt yet vivid, and the author is a master of the walk-on character. These he portrays with arresting detail—a bar owner, an elderly Sandinista couple, the champion pool player of Leon, and the youthful Juan Jose Quezada, who



recruits him to the Frente and later becomes a Sandinista martyr.

This account covers the years 1968-1975, taking Cabezas from his political formation as a campus activist in the northern city of Leon, through to his integration into a guerrilla unit. Eventually he returns to Leon, and then moves to a small town as a veteran military instructor. This is Cabezas' coming of age under the most difficult conditions, which were shared by his entire generation.

Cabezas' initiation into the student movement was spurred by his hatred of the National Guard, and his own humble background. The example of Che Guevarra, recently killed in Bolivia, and the massacre of an FSLN guerrilla unit at Pancasan in 1967 were fresh in his mind.

In 1968, when Cabezas joined the Frente, the FSLN was just a handful of people. In Leon, a

major university center, however, their student group grew rapidly.

Under the leadership of Cabezas and his comrades this growth culminated in a victory in the student elections. In an impressive show of strength, the students linked up with Subtiavan Indians in demonstrations against the regime.

Loneliness and doubt

The larger test came in the mountains, "la montaña" of the Spanish title. The urban youth was painfully transformed into "the new man" described by Che Guevara. He overcomes the initial shock of realizing the weakness and isolation of the guerrilla forces and survives the immediate instinct to quit.

It's been claimed jokingly that revolutions are won by youths too naive to realize that they can't possibly win. Cabezas' account dramatizes the wisdom of that assertion. In the mountains there is hunger, cold, rain, wearying forced marches, and worst of all—loneliness, fear, and doubt.

When Cabezas' guerrilla teacher is killed in an ambush, the effect is devastating. How will the student fare against the murderous National Guard, when his teacher was so easily defeated? But Cabezas and his comrades develop physical and mental toughness and the iron resolve to carry through to the end.

Later, as a veteran instructor at a guerrilla camp, Cabezas and his group are finally pinned down. The conclusion reads like a tense adventure novel as the vastly outgunned Sandinistas seek to escape a Somo-cista ring of steel.

The tale concludes in an encounter with an old man who served with Sandino. The youth has found his roots: "... through him, I had recovered my own history, the tradition, the essence of Nicaragua. I had found my genesis, my antecedents; I felt myself a continuation, concrete and uninterrupted... I had never seen, materially, my umbilical cord—and suddenly it was there."

This is a funny book, and a warm book. Most touching of all are those characters, tenderly recalled, who perished in the struggle and whose names now adorn the streets, buildings, and mythology of Nicaragua.

If ever we have had a "humanizing" portrait of a people with whom the United States is virtually at war, this is it. One wants only a sequel, and the author is reportedly at work on one. ■

... Nicaragua

(continued from page 1)

mined the Nicaraguan ports? Who bombed Sandino airport? Who published the CIA crime manual? So who are the terrorists?"

Will the U.S. send troops?

The war waged by U.S.-backed *contras* has cost the lives of 12,000 Nicaraguans in the past four years, according to Ortega. Forty percent of the state budget is currently spent on the defense effort and inflation has risen to a 125 percent yearly rate. But despite the hardships the war imposes upon the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, support for the revolution remains high.

"Sooner or later the United States will have to realize that they cannot destroy the Nicaraguan revolution with mercenary forces," Ortega pointed out in a July 17 interview with the *New York Times*. "The only thing that would be left would be to use American troops."

The Foley Amendment, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on June 27, lays out certain conditions under which the president can order an invasion. These include the obtaining by Nicaragua of high-performance Soviet planes and the kidnapping or "terrorizing" of U.S. citizens.

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* commented at the time, "In a single feeble stroke, the House has gone on record declaring itself against blitzing Managua and, at the same time, has handed the president a list of conditions so broad that should he need or desire a pretense, he has it in writing."

But the U.S. government knows that the costs of an invasion would be high. Nicaragua announced last month that it is distributing 200,000 rifles to the civilian militia to prepare for direct U.S. intervention.

Furthermore, "the war would not be limited to Nicaragua," Ortega said in his July 17 *Times* interview. "The revolutionary strategy would not be to get the U.S. out of Nicaragua but to make rev-

olution all over Central America."

The "Vietnam syndrome"

The Reagan administration might be willing to risk an immediate invasion if only military considerations were at stake. But the political costs must also be confronted. The administration must attempt to neutralize antiwar sentiment in the United States itself.

This is precisely the goal of Reagan's campaign against "terrorism."

Reagan is using the same technique that President Johnson utilized most

administration's Rambo-like bluster. They are painfully aware that the new antiwar movement that has taken shape in recent years is applying pressure on governments in Europe, Latin America, and the Pacific, as well as the United States.

"Frankly, all the talk about invading Nicaragua is counterproductive," Gen. Wallace Nutting, the commander of U.S. Army and Air Force combat forces in the United States, told the *New York Times* on June 25. "If we invade Nicaragua, not only will we jeopardize

and political moves accompanied by attempts at negotiation for the sake of appearances.

"Power-sharing" with the *contras*?

Reagan's national security adviser, Robert C. McFarlane, vowed on July 18 that the United States would continue to provide aid to the *contra* troops until Nicaragua is forced to establish "a Western-style democracy."

The terms of "democracy" acceptable to the United States were spelled out under the so-called Reagan Plan, which the administration announced last spring. A settlement would include a cease-fire, the dissolution of the National Assembly elected in 1984, and new elections that would enable the *contras* to share power.

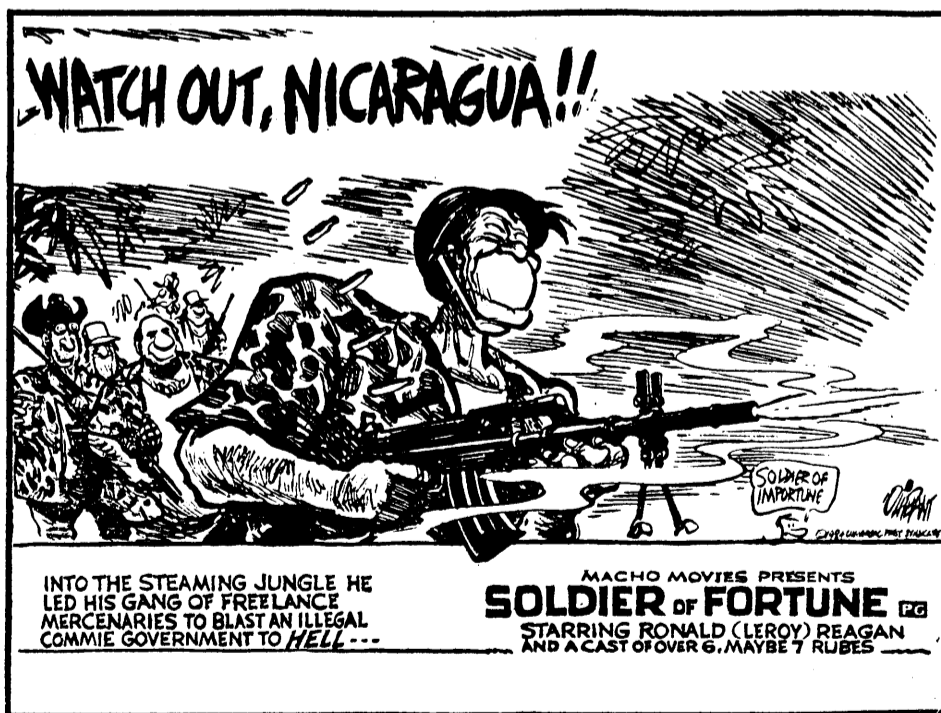
But the Sandinistas have ruled out negotiations with the major *contra* forces, which are dominated by the leftovers of Somoza's murderous National Guard.

"To talk with them means giving them a legitimacy that they do not have, recognizing them as a national political force," Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge said in April to a rally of members of the Sandinista Defense Committees.

Borge continued, "If we were to agree to a dialogue, it would mean agreeing to a return of the National Guard. It would be the beginning of a series of concessions that would ultimately lead to handing over the revolutionary power, the people's power."

The Sandinistas have felt compelled, however, to make some concessions. They sent back a contingent of Cuban technicians and military advisers, for example, and announced the cessation of aid to the Salvadoran revolutionaries.

But the Reagan administration wants a total rollback of the revolutionary process. Since the Sandinistas have refused to concede this, the United States continues its attempt to crush the revolution by military force. People in this country must respond by increased antiwar activities. ■



effectively by fabricating an attack by Vietnamese torpedo boats on two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964. The Vietnamese "provocation" was used as an excuse for the first U.S. bombing raids on Hanoi.

The antiwar movement of the 1960s and '70s was able to expose the government's lies. Opposition to war by the American people, often maligned in the halls of Congress as the "Vietnam syndrome," remains strong today.

Many in U.S. governmental circles are skeptical of the success of the

working relationships within the hemisphere, but we will with a bunch of our NATO allies as well."

Nutting said that his views "echoed recommendations made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the President and the Secretary of Defense."

For the time being, the administration seems to be carrying out a punitive war of attrition, while keeping in reserve the option of a major escalation. The Nicaraguan magazine *Pensamiento Propio* characterized U.S. tactics as the combination of aggressive military, eco-

Bahe Keedinihii is a member of the Big Mountain Sovereign Dineh Nation and the American Indian Movement. The Dineh people (Navajo) are currently being forced to leave their native lands in Arizona. The following interview was conducted by Adam Wood on July 8, 1985.

Arizona Navajos resist relocations

Socialist Action: Why is the government forcing people to leave their land?

Bahe Keedinihii: Relocations have been going on in Northeast Arizona since 1975. About 1.8 million acres of Dineh and Hopi land, all black mesa, are affected.

It's called black mesa because there is a giant coal field there. That is why the relocations are taking place. The government wants access to the mineral rights. There is also oil and natural gas, a good water supply—and a little bit of uranium.

There are 500 or 600 families still on the land. According to the 1974 Navajo and Hopi Resettlement Act, all those remaining on the land by July 7, 1986, will be apprehended and put in the custody of the marshal until they are resettled. The National Guard is authorized to assist the Department of the Interior in physically removing people from the land.

S.A.: What are the details of the Resettlement Act?

Keedinihii: The law covers relocations and splitting up the land. There'd never been a fence out there, ever, until 1975 when the government split up the land and marked the boundaries. A lot of people resisted by tearing down fences in front of fencing crews.

Livestock reduction is also part of the law. They call it "restoration of the ranges."

They use the excuse that the animals "overgraze" the land. The truth is that people had begun to be self-sufficient again. So, the government poisoned the



Dineh (Navajo) family forced to leave their home, which is rich in uranium reserves.

animals through the water supply.

There was also "voluntary reduction."

The government offered money to people who would sell their livestock. No one would sell, so government agents confiscated the animals.

This was in 1978. Resistance by the Indians was responsible for ending the confiscations. Now the government agents just fly over every day and count the livestock.

The purpose of the Resettlement Act is to starve the people out by stock reduction, halting water development, and neglecting the people's needs. It's psychological warfare.

The government says the Navajo and Hopi are quarreling among themselves and that's why this law was passed.

Hopis are in support of our resistance. They know they will suffer, too, in the end. When the mining starts, that's it for the Hopi Nation.

S.A.: How many people have been relocated so far?

Keedinihii: About 250 families have been relocated since 1975, many to urban areas—the border towns off reservations. Most of the people have no job skills. Sheep herding and how to tend their corn fields is all they know. There is nothing for them. A lot of people move back and live underground on the reservation.

S.A.: Where is the resistance coming from?

Keedinihii: Resistance comes from communities helping each other and

joining together. In 1977, Big Mountain was the only area that was resisting. Now other communities also are starting to resist.

We hold small demonstrations with arrests on the lands now, but these are limited. There will be mass action next year, possibly at government agencies, when the government attempts to forcefully remove people.

We have a resistance outpost on Big Mountain. We are on call constantly, covering the land by horse or truck, making sure livestock are safe and people aren't harassed. We watch the main roads for intruding federal personnel.

S.A.: What kind of support are you getting in other parts of the country?

Keedinihii: Since 1977 when the movement started, we've connected with Indian nations throughout the country and we work with non-Indian supporters. Non-Indian support is getting stronger, but we could always use more. We're only a year away from the deadline. We're not just doing this for ourselves, we're doing it for all oppressed people.

The same program of legal genocide has been used before on others. Maybe the Jews were first, then Indians, and Africans. We're trying to get people involved in repealing the law before it destroys two Indian nations over mineral interests.

The Indian people have always been on this land, for many centuries, before the Spaniards, before the Europeans. We are one people, one ceremony. We are the caretakers of Hopi sacred lands as well as our own. The law is trying to destroy that, to divide the different peoples. Our language is different but we are still one people.

For more information or to offer support, write to Big Mountain Legal Defense/Offense Committee, 124 North San Francisco St., Flagstaff, Ariz., 86001. Tel. (602) 774-6903. ■

Film portrays native peoples' struggles

By LORI COLLINS

Home of the Brave, produced by Helen Solberg Ladd. Distributed by Michael Anderson, 402 San Francisco Blvd., San Anselmo, CA 94960.

This excellent film, which documents the resistance of indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere to the crimes

committed against them, recently aired on public television stations. In it, Indians tell from their own point of view how they have united against violations of their rights. The main countries dealt with are the United States, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatemala.

The drums and singing that introduce the film are symbolic of the rebirth of indigenous cultures and traditions. For many years in the United States the drums were silenced by law, and singing and dancing were only done clandestinely. The Red Nations maintained their culture underground, fighting for their right to exist as distinct peoples.

They also fought to defend and recover their traditional lands and resources. Thomas Banyaca, a holy man, talks of the uranium mining in Hopi lands in Arizona and New Mexico. Now that giant energy corporations want the uranium and other Indian-owned mineral wealth, the Indian shepherders must go.

Katie Smith and Roberta Blackgoat, Dineh (Navajo) elders from Arizona, tell of the forcible removal of their nation over the last seven years. More people have been removed from Dineh lands today than marched there from Fort Sumner in 1868, when they were given the land "forever."

The Means brothers—Russell, Bill, Ted, and Dale—of the Great Sioux Nation from the Dakotas, founding members of the American Indian Movement, discuss how they came to fight back, the importance of living in harmony with the earth, and the importance of traditions.

Slave labor

Guatemala and Bolivia have large majorities of Indian peoples. The Quiche are one of the most important of 27 different language groups in Guatemala

being driven off the land.

Some cross the Mexican border into refugee camps. Some go North, like the brother and sister in the film "El Norte," to work as super-exploited labor in the United States. Others go to the cities where there's not enough work. Many are taken into Vietnam-style refugee camps, "strategic hamlets," where they're used as slave labor to build roads.

In the Kollasuyo region of Bolivia, 90 to 95 percent of the people are indigenous, more than in any other country in Latin America. Victor Hugo Gonzalez stresses in the film that neither the ethnic struggle nor Marxism alone can solve their oppression. "Our movement is ethnic and Marxist both," he says.

A Peruvian delegate to the World Council of Indigenous People, an annual conference, is interviewed. We learn that an International Indian Network is being established.

The film misses the opportunity at this point to show that in early 1980, the First Congress of Indian Movements of South America took place in the Peruvian town of Ollantaytambo, near Cuzco. The congress resulted in the formation of the Directorate of the Indian Council of South America (CISA),

whose principle goal is "to coordinate a communications network among Indian organizations on the continent."

The International Indian Treaty Council is shown meeting in the United States. The drums speak eloquently. And the pipes and drums of Bolivians—invited guests—join in, linking North and South in affirmation of their cultural integrity and in defense of their rights, lands, and resources.

There are some weaknesses to this generally good film. With the exception of the short interview with Victor Hugo Gonzalez, it does not deal with the enormous rise of indigenous people in the Bolivian urban and rural working-class movement.

The film also fails to deal with sterilization abuse against Indian women, either in Bolivia, Guatemala, or the United States—a form of genocide.

Still, a wider distribution of this film in the United States might help working people to grasp the connection between sex, ethnicity, and class for success in taking control of their own products and lives. We need to be sensitive to all the different forms of oppression and the special needs and demands that arise from them. ■



Russell Means, a founding member of the American Indian Movement, talks about his fight in the documentary "Home of the Brave."

WHERE TO FIND US

Boston Socialist Action
P.O. Box 1046 GMF
Boston, MA 02205

Cleveland Socialist Action
P.O. Box 6151
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 429-2167

New York Socialist Action
P.O. Box 20209, Ca. Finance
693 Columbus Ave
New York, NY 10025

Buffalo Socialist Action
P.O. Box 275
Buffalo, N.Y. 14207

Los Angeles Socialist Action
P.O. Box 60605
Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, CA 90060

Phoenix Socialist Action
P.O. Box 5161
Phoenix, AZ 85010
(602) 894-0055

Chicago Socialist Action
Box 80 B, 2520 N. Lincoln
Chicago, IL 60614

Minneapolis Socialist Action
P.O. Box 14087
Dinkytown Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414

San Francisco Socialist Action
3435 Army Street, Rm. 308
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-0458

By SOPHIE MASTOR

Farmworkers call new grape boycott

LOS ANGELES—On June 24 over 300 people, including members of a wide variety of labor unions, demonstrated here with the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). The picket line was called to help kick off a new nationwide boycott of table grapes.

I spoke with UFW President Cesar Chavez on the picket line. He told me that only 3 percent of the grapes grown in California are harvested under UFW contracts. This represents a dramatic decline since Gov. George Deukmejian took office in 1983.

Wealthy growers in the Central Valley and Northern California have been assured by the governor's office that they can effectively ignore the state farm-labor laws that were enacted after long years of struggle by the UFW.

Chavez reported that the workers, most of whom are Latino, are now subject to classic union-busting tactics such as the firing of workers who are elected to office by the UFW membership.

At the same time, wages and working conditions are rapidly declining. Chavez worked in the fields with his family as a child and a young man. He remembers vividly what the conditions that necessitated the struggle for a farm union were like—the endless days of back-breaking toil, the lack of decent housing and sanitation, and the brutality of hired foremen.

Over 17 million adult Americans boycotted table grapes in the 1970s. As the growers persist in violation of the law, Chavez emphasized, it is time for another boycott.

Grapes picked under a UFW contract have a black eagle stamped on the packing crates. If you don't see the UFW logo, don't buy the grapes. ■



Socialists elect deputies in Mexican elections

By VAUGHN HOVANESSIAN

MEXICO CITY—The mood here is one of excitement and triumph. From the national election results just posted, the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party), Mexican section of the Fourth International, has won 1.7 percent of the national vote and for the first time has six federal deputies.

This is a tremendous step forward for revolutionaries in Mexico as well as for the Fourth International.

Two of the new members of the Chamber of Deputies are not actual members of the PRT but ran on the PRT slate. They include Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, well-known leader of the National Front Against Repression, and Ruben Aguilar, leader of the Peoples Defense Committee of Chihuahua. The four other new deputies include PRT Central Committee members Pedro Penalosa, Ricardo Pascoe, Efrain Calvo, and Rosaria Peredo.

Initially, the early results posted after the July 7 elections showed the PRT candidates had not won any delegates and in fact had not garnered enough votes to maintain their status as a registered party. Parties are allotted federal deputies depending on the percentage of the national vote they win.

Threat of protest

However, in the face of mounting protest from the PSUM (United Mexican Socialist Party), the PMT (Mexican Workers Party), and the PRT about growing irregularities in the election counts from the various states of Mex-

ico, the PRT was conceded a larger margin of the national vote and six deputies. The Chamber of Deputies has 400 members.

This victory is especially sweet because it is gained in contention with the notoriously corrupt election procedures orchestrated by the ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party). It is a common occurrence here during elections that ballot boxes are stolen or lost. In some cases trucks of soldiers drive from polling station to polling station with troops voting numerous times for PRI candidates.

Prior to the elections, the PRT had organized 1400 of its members and supporters as poll watchers all across the country to better monitor the election process. The government backed down and conceded that the PRT had won a higher percentage of the vote only when it was announced that the PRT with other left parties would launch a large-scale protest against the election fraud.

It is important to understand that the PRT is well known throughout Mexico as a party with integrity, making no back-room deals with the PRI. They are presented in most of the Mexican press as the revolutionary socialist party with principles.

On the night of the victory announcement, this reporter attended a spirited victory celebration attended by hundreds of supporters at the Chabacana headquarters of the PRT.

It was emphasized by speaker after speaker at the event that the new PRT deputies would speak loud and clear for

the interests of the working people and the poor of Mexico. The defense of civil liberties and the struggle for justice against the brutal repressiveness of the police and military is a prime issue for the representatives. The PRT election platform also calls for the cancellation of the foreign debt and for land to be given to those who work it.

In a related development, on July 19, two nights previous to the PRT victory, Mexico City witnessed a grand celebration marking the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. Nearly 10,000 people jammed into the National Auditorium for an evening of song,

dance, satire, and speeches marking the FSLN victory.

Roger Uriarte of the National Union of Nicaraguan Students, in a speech, made a promise when he summed up Nicaragua's attitude in the face of growing U.S. threats against his country: "Should the United States make the mistake of invading Nicaragua, Central America will become the tomb of imperialism."

Continually throughout the evening the audience broke into chants declaring their intention to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Nicaraguans should that country be invaded by the Yankees. This reporter observed that besides the many workers and students in attendance there was a large percentage of the very poor and disenfranchised present and active in the proceedings.

It is clear that in Mexico and in Central America great advances have been made by revolutionaries. The prospects for the future look even better. ■

Hispanic hotelworkers win back their jobs

By DAVE ROBERTS

LOS ANGELES—All the protest strikers of Holiday Inn in Glendale, Hispanic housekeeping and laundry workers who were fired for protesting increased workloads, have received letters asking them to return to work immediately.

The employer, Joseph Perry, had previously stated that the protesters would never be rehired by Holiday Inn. Obviously, the sweet-

heart contract—probably written by the company attorneys—which reduced the wages of the workers, reduced their vacation time, took away their medical insurance, and increased their workload was more than the National Labor Relations Board could stomach.

The Labor Alliance Against Concessions and the Labor Coalition played leading roles in organizing labor support for the Holiday Inn workers. (See *Socialist Action* March 1985.) ■