

U.S. victim describes bombing of Salvador union headquarters, See page 9.

DECEMBER 1989 VOL. 7, No. 12 50 CENTS

## Stalinism crumbles as millions take to streets in East Europe

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The bureaucratic monolith throughout the world dominated by Stalinism is crumbling at an accelerating tempo. The stunning electoral defeats of the Soviet and Polish Stalinist parties earlier this year sent cold shivers down the spines of every one of the repressive regimes in Eastern Europe and Asia. They are running fast to try to regain some semblance of credibility.

The Hungarian Stalinists are frantically rushing to forestall an explosion of protests against their long history of bureaucratic misrule and repression. Desperately striving to evade responsibility for the current economic crisis, they seek to wipe out the memory of their reactionary past by changing the name of their ruling party from Communist to Socialist. This is also intended to underscore their pledge to make dramatic changes in the political and economic structure of Hungary, including projecting "free" elections.

Meanwhile, the Hungarian bureaucracy's open-door policy to capitalist investment, which has gone much further toward the restoration of capitalism than any in Eastern Europe, has brought no improvement in productivity or in living standards.

And this failure to get results is panicking the bureaucracy into more desperate concessions to foreign investors, who are being allowed to "snap-up" sectors of Hungarian industry. The biggest takeover so far has been the \$150 million purchase of control over a Hungarian light-bulb manufacturer, the Tungsram Co., one of Hungary's largest industrial concerns and major export producer.

Andras Gabor, president of Tungsram, said that "Hungary is on the way to democracy and the development of a free-enterprise system. G.E.'s participation in Tungsram gives us the opportunity both to grow our lighting business and to embrace this process of change."

Following the dramatic events in East Germany, even the ossified Bulgarian Stalinists have had to dump their long time "glorious" leader, Todor I. Zhivkov, and have been furiously working to heap all blame on



Tearing down the Berlin Wall: The protesting millions want democracy so that they can make the socialized economy work, not because they want to return to capitalism.

him for their own willing participation in despotic rule.

But rather than being inspired with hope that real changes would be forthcoming, the people massed 50,000-strong in Sofia to declare their non-confidence in the bureaucracy's promises, and to demand more radical democratic change than was promised by the "reformers."

East Germany's example has also triggered an avalanche of mass mobilizations in Prague, Czechoslovakia, that started with hundreds, then thousands, then tens of thou-

sands, and then, by Nov. 20-21, had amassed over 200,000 daily in the streets. The crowds demanded democracy and the ouster of the Stalinist government. [See accompanying story on the upsurge in Czechoslovakia.]

Only Rumania and Albania have not yet erupted, but it's only a matter of time.

And Alexander Dubcek, who led the 1968 Prague Spring and then was kicked out of the leadership of Czech Stalinism by Soviet troops, is now being rehabilitated by Gorbachev as the most likely candidate for "reform" in his desperate efforts to save bu-

reaucratic dominance in Czechoslovakia.

### Ascending wave of demonstrations

A closer look at the upsurge in East Germany is necessary for understanding what has happened and what the future holds in store for the bureaucratized workers' states. And as we shall see, the impact of the events in the East is disrupting the status quo in all of Europe, giving powerful impetus to the coming worldwide revolutionary process.

The new stage of the crisis of world (continued on page 10)

### Czech general strike shakes Stalinist gov't

With an earthshaking general strike, the Czechoslovakian working class has today entered the center stage of history, responding to an appeal from students and from the Civic Forum—the most radical wing of the petty-bourgeois opposition to Stalinism.

At 12 noon on Nov. 27, factory sirens throughout Czechoslovakia wailed the signal for the work stoppage. For at least two hours the streets of virtually every town and city were pounded by millions of workers' marching feet.

The first sketchy reports received as of this writing indicate that the rest of the day was spent in factory meetings to formally adopt demands and elect representatives to carry the struggle of the workers through to the end, at least as far as they can presently see.

The world historic revolutionary upheaval sweeping throughout Eastern Europe has



Reuter

reached Czechoslovakia with a vengeance. The teeming masses who have taken the stage of history in Prague do not start from scratch.

They have picked up and attuned themselves to the unfolding revolutionary logic, which goes deeper into society as it sweeps from country to country and impels each national component to higher levels of consciousness.

The Nov. 27 general strike will not fail to (continued on page 14)

### U.S. military aid fuels Salvador war, repression

By JIM HENLE and JEFF MACKLER

The deepening repression unleashed by the death-squad regime in El Salvador and the courageous military offensive led by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) have demonstrated to the world that only massive U.S. military aid keeps the ARENA Party government of Alfredo Cristiani in power.

The long-hidden horror of everyday life in El Salvador under a succession of U.S.-supported regimes is finally coming to the attention of the broad public in this country. The Nov. 21 *New York Times*, for example, reports:

"In a cycle that continues, the right struck back against the rebels and anyone it perceives as sympathizing with the left, killing

almost anyone who dared organize or even criticize. Studies by human-rights groups in the mid-1980s estimated that by then rightist death squads, which often killed as many as 200 people a week, had slaughtered 40,000."

Today this estimate has grown to 80,000. In the mid-1980s, the death squads operated "unofficially" but with impunity under the Christian Democratic regime of José Napoleón Duarte. Their mentor was ARENA's founder, Colonel Roberto d'Aubuisson, whom former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White described as a "pathological killer."

Today, Alfredo Cristiani is ARENA's top official and El Salvador's president by virtue of the gunpoint elections that President Bush insists were "certified" as legitimate.

Cristiani's party recently sponsored a new (continued on page 8)

# 'You can't fool all the people'

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

It was quite a surprise to see the former mayor of San Francisco, Dianne Feinstein, on the speakers' platform at the Nov. 12 rally for women's choice in Washington, D.C.

Feinstein is running for governor of California and there she was, big as life, masquerading as a genuine feminist. About the only thing I could agree with her on was when she said we should "outlaw politicians who do not support women's rights." So as far as I'm concerned she's outlawed.

We in San Francisco have had quite a bit of experience with Feinstein as far as women's needs go. In 1973, a grassroots effort was made to place an initiative on the local ballot calling for an increase in quality childcare for all children who need it, regardless of income. It included infant care, after-school care, and full-day childcare centers.

Our organization, Child and Parent Action, was made up of teachers and working parents, and was indeed a true grassroots organization. Our office was in the attic of a church and we had no salaried



## Fightback

By  
Sylvia Weinstein

people. In fact, we ran bake sales to pay for the election expenses. We also got contributions from the teachers' unions and others who saw the desperate need for an expansion of childcare facilities.

### Our Initiative won

Our ballot initiative (Proposition M) won in the election with 97,000 votes, and no one was more happy or surprised than we who had worked so hard on it.

Our organization met and decided to begin the push for implementation of Proposition M. In order to

do that, we agreed that we would not become a fake "non-profit" organization of the type that focuses on getting grants for "studies." Nor would we ask for city funds for our organization.

A few days after the election we received a call from City Hall (Dianne Feinstein was a member of the Board of Supervisors) to come and meet with her and other supervisors on "implementing" Proposition M.

After congratulations were received from the supervisors, they began to tell us how they planned

to carry out the wishes of the voters. They suggested that we, (Child and Parent Action) do a "study" on childcare needs. They said that there was about \$86,000 in a special fund and some of it could go towards that study. We answered that we had already done such a study before the election.

We knew at that very moment over 3000 children were without adequate supervision in our city, and those were just the children already on a waiting list. They countered that even if that were true, they still needed a really thorough study—and we could use the funds for a paid staff and an office and even have some left over to pay our election bills.

We replied that we already had an office for free and that none of our volunteers wanted any pay. Also, we had no left-over election bills to pay. We requested that, if they really had \$86,000 in special funds, they use it to hire childcare teachers and to otherwise expand childcare. That was what the voters voted for—not to give money to Child and Parent Action.

Things began to get rather chilly

in the room. Smiles froze on the faces of the supervisors, including Dianne Feinstein's.

### "Didn't lift a hand"

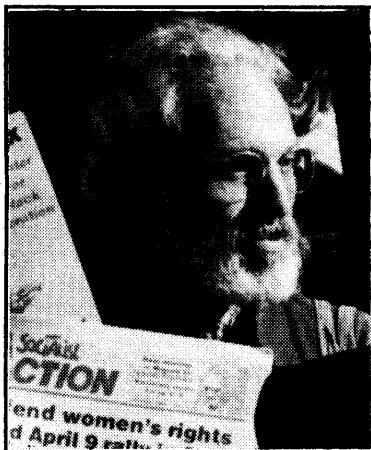
The Board of Supervisors did not lift a hand to give children the needed childcare; instead they decided to place our initiative back on the ballot and work for a "No" vote. Thanks to a heavy campaign by Dianne Feinstein and several other supervisors, our childcare initiative was rescinded.

Childcare was only the first of many feminist issues that Feinstein would work against. So you can see how surprised I was to see Dianne Feinstein trying to pass herself off as a feminist and urging women to work for her election in 1990.

What politicians hope to do is to sidetrack the growing militancy of the women's movement by getting them out of the streets and into wine-and-cheese parties for fake feminists—male and female. The Democrats are especially adept at this trick.

As Mark Twain once said, "You can't fool all of the people all of the time. That's why we have a two-party system." ■

# Lech Walesa beats his drum



## Behind the Lines

By  
Michael Schreiber

The day the Christmas lights were put up in my neighborhood, Lech Walesa came to town. In my mind, the two events seemed closely related. I could almost visualize the Polish leader in a Santa cap or beating a Salvation Army drum in hopes that a well-heeled shopper might toss him a coin.

On his first day in America, Walesa beat his drum in the Oval Office of the White House. George Bush draped a Medal of Freedom around his neck. "One of the greatest dreams of my life has been fulfilled," the former electrician told the president.

On his second day in America, Walesa and Bush went together to speak before the convention of the AFL-CIO. They received an ovation from the delegates. (Union head Lane Kirkland also received a medal from the president.)

On his third day in America, Walesa carried his drum over to the Capitol for a joint session of Congress. There, too, a chorus of "bravo, bravo" resounded through the chambers.

On his fourth day in America, Walesa attended his most important meeting of all—breakfast with a dozen representatives of big U.S. corporations. Exchanging his Santa cap for a white Stetson, Walesa called on the businessmen to "make us your partner" by investing in Poland.

"We are not asking for charity or expecting philanthropy," Walesa assured the corporate heads. Instead,

he dangled before them the magic word "profits."

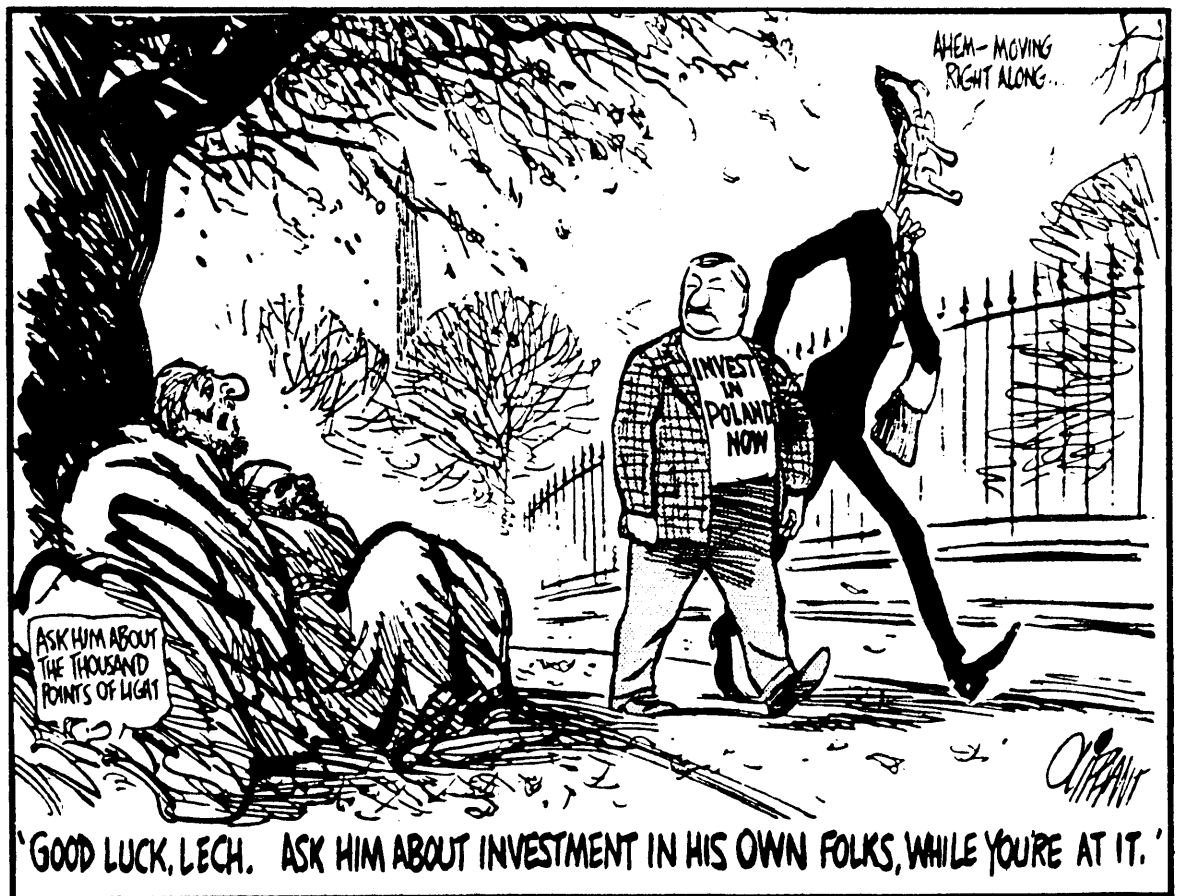
The heart of the new Polish reforms, Walesa told the Americans, is the reprivatization of the huge Lenin shipyard in Gdansk. It will become "the model for other industries," he said—a joint venture between American and Polish entrepreneurs.

A few capitalists have already taken the plunge. One of them is Barbara Piasecka Johnson. A fierce anti-Communist, Johnson inherited most of the Johnson and Johnson pharmaceutical fortune and is worth about \$300 million. Converted to Polish zlotys on the black market, Johnson's wealth would make her a multi-trillionaire.

The Polish-born Johnson has now become Lech Walesa's intimate friend and financial "angel." Last May, while walking with Walesa during the annual Corpus Christi procession in Gdansk, Johnson suddenly offered to buy a large chunk of the Lenin shipyard.

To hear *The New York Times* tell it, the shipyard workers "sing the praises" of their new American boss. Photos of Johnson are sold at the souvenir stand outside the plant gate. Solidarity officials kiss her hand as she steps from her limousine. But there are rumblings of discontent. A recent headline in Solidarity's daily newspaper warned: "Pani [Lady] Johnson doesn't like strikes."

Another Polish capitalist, Jerzy Piskorz-Nalecki, who leased the shipyard next door to Johnson's,



has also threatened: "We will get the unions out of the yards."

The bosses know that it's only a matter of time before austerity measures (layoffs, speedup, and higher prices) cause a new wave of strikes. Before that happens, they're hoping that the Walesa leadership can rein in the ranks of Solidarity.

At the same time, Walesa's "angels" in Washington, D.C., (and Bonn, Paris, and London) stress that more aid is contingent on the amount of economic concessions they receive from the Poles. They won't be satisfied, of course, until capitalism is fully restored in Poland, and Solidarity is completely hogtied by the type of sell-out leadership that American unions have.

For the time being, the capitalists are willing to toss a few coins in Walesa's direction while parading him around Washington like the greatest hero since Santa Claus. ■

## Socialist ACTION

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Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN

Asst. Editors: MICHAEL SCHREIBER  
JOE RYAN

Staff: Paul Colvin, May May Gong, David Kirschner, Hayden Perry, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: KATHY SANDS

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# NOW's 'no arrest' policy: Self-defeating strategy for effective defense of clinics

By JONI JACOBS

Washington, D.C., saw more than its share of anti-choice terrorism last month when Operation Rescue (OR) attacked family-planning clinics on two separate weekends.

Two hundred and twelve members of OR were arrested on Nov. 11 for blockading the doors of the Hillcrest Women's Surgi-Center. The "rescue" was billed as part of a week-long "Veterans' Campaign for Life." Most of those arrested were dressed in battle fatigues or full military dress.

They were countered by more than 1000 pro-choice activists, many of whom had arrived early for the Nov. 12 pro-choice rally. The National Organization for Women (NOW) made a big effort to get activists to come early—and it paid off. Close to 150 activists came from Boston alone; they were joined by pro-choice activists from as far away as Michigan, Florida, and California.

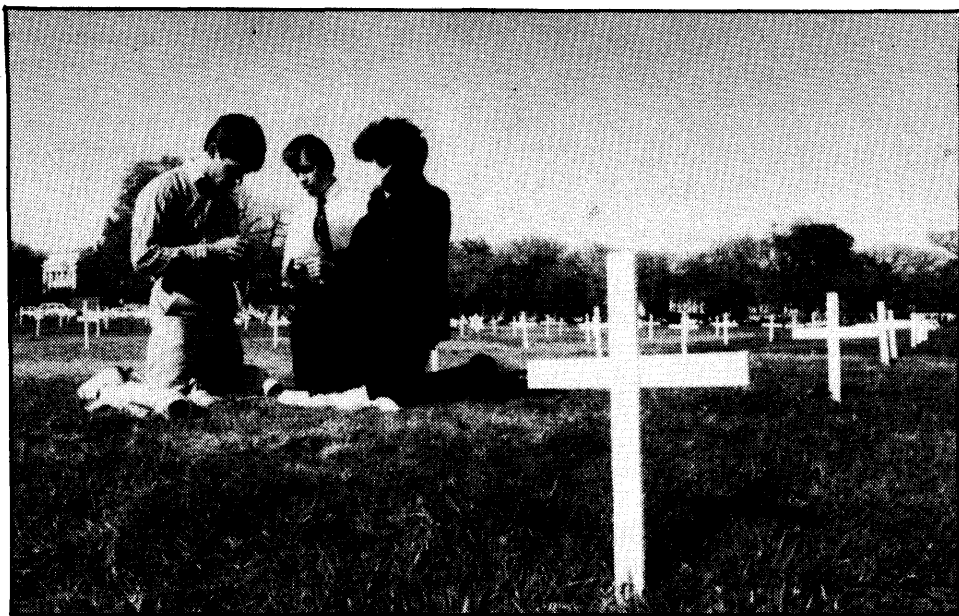
Unfortunately, out-of-state pro-choice activists were not on hand to counter a stronger attack by OR on Nov. 17. More than 700 OR members were arrested at three separate clinics. Because the hit came during normal working hours, even Washington-area activists were not able to fully protect the clinics.

## Police favored Operation Rescue

The Nov. 11 hit was politically significant because of the blatantly pro-OR intervention of the Washington police department and because of a "no arrest" policy introduced by leaders of NOW.

Despite new court injunctions prohibiting OR from interfering with access to family-planning clinics, police allowed OR to blockade the clinic doors by removing pro-choice activists who were protecting the door. The pro-choice activists arrived at the clinic at 5 a.m. and secured the doors under an agreement with the clinic director.

Outrageously, police arrived at the clinic ahead of OR and threatened to arrest the pro-choice activists unless they moved away from the doors. When the pro-choice activists complied, OR members moved in and shut



Catherine Smith/Impact Visuals

Operation Rescue praying in graveyard during Nov. 12 pro-choice demonstration. NOW's 'no arrest' policy will only embolden anti-women movement.

down the clinic. Arrests started shortly afterward, but the clinic was closed for more than three hours.

"Instead of setting up a police line and then asking us to move, police let Operation Rescue take over the door," said NOW's Executive Vice President Patricia Ireland in an interview with *The Washington Post* on Nov. 12. "The only reason that clinic closed was because the police moved us out," she said.

## NOW's "no-arrest" policy

Perhaps more significantly, evidence of a new—and dangerous—policy of not arresting OR came out on Nov. 11. NOW monitors hushed the pro-choice crowd from cheering the arrests of the OR blockaders, saying that the cheers were "pissing off" the police. They stopped chants of "Read 'em their rights and take 'em away."

At a clinic-defense strategy meeting held on Nov. 13, Patricia Ireland outlined a recently developed "no arrest" policy. If pro-choice activists are able to keep the clinic open and

escort patients inside, NOW will not ask the police to arrest the illegal blockaders. If the clinic cannot be kept open, NOW will ask for a "limited arrests" policy. That is, the police will arrest only those necessary to gain access to the clinic.

The "no arrest" policy is supposedly designed to limit the media attention OR receives for their clinic blockades. Ireland also says that arresting OR actually delays the opening of the clinic since the police take hours to cite and arrest each blockader.

The goal of the pro-choice movement should be to mobilize enough people in front of the clinics to stop OR and keep the clinic open. But too often, pro-choice forces do not sufficiently outnumber OR to keep the clinic open. Police response in these situations is usually biased towards OR [see the article by Carole Seligman in the November *Socialist Action*, page 3].

It is unwise for the movement to rely on the police to guarantee us access to our

rights. But it's wrong not to demand that the police do their jobs and enforce the laws that prohibit OR from blockading clinic doors.

Many anti-choice people don't join OR's blockades because they don't want to be arrested. If the pro-choice movement stops demanding the arrests of illegal clinic blockaders, it can only expect more blockaders. Pro-choice activists, who stand for hours at a time, will become demoralized as OR blockades the clinic with impunity.

Not arresting OR will not stop them from receiving media attention. Clinic blockades become media spectacles long before the arrests start. The media has even covered blockades at clinics which weren't scheduled to operate when OR attacked—and when no arrests were made.

## Pro-Democratic Party policy

The worst aspect of the "no arrests" policy is that it alleviates the mayors and city councils—which are mostly Democratic Party politicians—from taking responsibility for enforcing the law. This ties in directly with NOW's focus on electing pro-choice (mainly Democratic) politicians to secure our right to safe, legal abortion.

For example, Marion Barry, the mayor of Washington, D.C., is in the most liberal wing of the Democratic Party—the wing that supports Jesse Jackson. Not only has he done nothing to protect the family-planning clinics in D.C., it was his police department that moved out pro-choice activists so OR could blockade the clinic.

The bias of the police—and the hypocrisy of Democratic Party politicians—should be exposed, not catered to.

Some NOW chapters have rejected National NOW's misguided "no arrest" policy. In San Francisco, for example, the Reproductive Rights Task Force voted overwhelmingly not to use the "no arrest" policy. It also has started a campaign to put more—not less—pressure on Bay Area city councils and mayors to order the local police departments to keep our clinics open.

By ALEXEI FOLGER

BOSTON—For the last year or so, Massachusetts, like many other places across the country, has been a hotbed of activity around reproductive rights issues. Recently, local pro-choice activists were responsible for organizing 25,000 state residents to go to Washington, D.C., for the 300,000-strong Nov. 12 National Mobilization for Women's Lives.

The Boston chapter of the National Organization for Women (which has already earned a national reputation within NOW for the level of its activism and its success in fighting the attacks of "Operation Rescue") was at the forefront of these organizing efforts.

The chapter had come out early in support of the NOW leadership's call for a fall national demonstration. It opposed those in NOW who wanted to postpone such an action (in order to concentrate on electoral politics), and others within the pro-choice community who didn't want a national action at all.

Boston NOW began working on the mobilization shortly after the July 3 Supreme Court Webster decision, setting up a structure of nine committees responsible for different aspects of the organizing (such as campus outreach, leafleting, and phonebanking).

Another important organizing tool was the weekly general organization meeting. These meetings were widely publicized on leaflets and on the NOW hotline and provided an opportunity for new activists to get informed and volunteer to get involved on a committee.

Although NOW was the central force in building the mobilization, there was a concerted effort to reach out to other groups such as union, women's organizations, and campuses. It was clear by looking at the crowd in Washington that it was the students who were most responsible for turning out large numbers of demonstrators.

*Socialist Action* spoke to Nassim Assefi, a leader of the Boston-area college feminist or-

## How we built Nov. 12 rally in Boston area

ganization "Wellesley Women for Choice." Wellesley College filled seven chartered buses and had a delegation of roughly 500 people in Washington, including 16 homeless women from "My Sister's Place" who were sponsored by the group. According to Assefi, this made the Wellesley group the largest campus contingent at the mobilization.

Educating people on campus about the Webster decision proved effective. "A lot of people were awakened by the decision; people who had never been active before began to get involved," Assefi said.

As an example of how participating in a big demonstration helps get people aware and involved, Assefi pointed out that she herself was not politically active before taking part in the march last April. All of the recent demonstrations have been important, she said, because many people have "finally realized that rights they have taken for granted aren't necessarily theirs anymore."

## On-going campus presence

Organizing for the mobilization also helped build an on-going pro-choice presence on the

campus. In the weeks leading up to Nov. 12, the membership of Wellesley Women for Choice swelled to well over 350, making it the largest student organization on campus.

The group also went into "emergency advertising mode," sponsoring "Get psyched/Get involved" banner-making parties and posting over 30 kinds of flyers with eye-catching slogans such as "Are you a woman?" (Wellesley is an all-women's college).

The events at Wellesley College were similar in many ways to what went on at colleges in the greater Boston area and across the state such as Brandeis, Boston University, and Smith. Almost all of these schools now have active pro-choice student groups.

When asked what she thought Wellesley and other campuses would do next, Assefi said, "I'm a little worried that after the mob, people will settle down. We're going to try to keep them excited and active. We're going to organize more for clinic defense."



Scott Adams-Cooper

Protesting Supreme Court Webster decision in Boston. Many of these women went to Washington, D.C., on Nov. 12.

# Britain's ruling rich join attack on women's rights



Julio Etchart/Reflex

By BRENDA BISHOP

LONDON—The struggle to defend women's right to choose is a truly international one. Today, in Britain, the National Abortion Campaign is gearing up for yet another campaign to defend the existing abortion law and to fight the newly arrived Operation Rescue.

In England, Scotland, and Wales, women do not have the right to choose as we know it in the United States. Rather, the governing law, known as the 1967 Act, permits abortion in pregnancies up to 28 weeks. In addition, two doctors must certify that the physical or mental health of the woman or her existing children is at risk, or that, if born, the child would be seriously handicapped.

The majority of all abortions are granted on the basis of the "psychological distress" caused by an unwanted pregnancy. (Although Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom, the 1967 Act doesn't apply there. Thus abortion is still illegal!)

Although abortions are available through the National Health Service (NHS), bureaucratic procedures make early abortions difficult. Numerous women report having to wait eight to 12 weeks for an NHS abortion. In many areas, doctors are increasingly refusing to sign the requisite approval for abortions after 12 weeks, forcing women to go outside their own locality or to fee-generating private clinics.

Anti-abortionists have been directly attacking the abortion law since 1975, without success. The National Abortion Campaign (NAC), which was formed the year of the first attack, supports free abortion on demand, but has been in the leadership of the fight to defend the existing law. It has won critical Labour Party and trade-union support for that cause.

Just last year, a bill aimed at criminalizing abortion after 18 weeks (the Alton Bill) was soundly defeated by a broad-based campaign. Fight Alton's Bill groups—which sprang up in every major town—involved local women, students, community activists, and unionists.

## New government attacks

The attacks women face this year are more diffuse but just as dangerous. The government is expected to seek a reduction in the time limit for abortions from 28 to 24 weeks, on the grounds of claimed developments in fetal viability.

To complicate matters, this restriction is likely to be introduced as an amendment to another government bill which would estab-

lish a regulatory scheme to govern embryo research.

At the present time, the legal status of research performed on embryos outside the womb—most of which is done in connection with *in vitro* fertilization (IVF)—is unclear. The bill would expressly allow such research on embryos up to 14 days old and would establish a licensing authority to regulate this activity.

Many defenders of choice believe some kind of legislation is needed to ensure the continued legality of such research, which is seen as vital to the development of infertility services and to ensuring the health of future babies.

But there are also grave concerns about the bill as it has been outlined. First, adoption of a 14-day limit on research could be used by anti-abortionists to attack the existing abortion law. They have, in fact, announced their intention to do so.

At the same time, the resolution adopted by

the conference concluded that "underlying everything should be a positive campaign emphasizing the changes that are needed to ensure that women have the right to choose abortion and have control over their fertility."

In this way, NAC will be able not only to organize the most effective defense of the existing laws, but will at the same time lay the ground work for further advances in women's rights. NAC's membership, which is growing, emerged from its conference ready to fight.

As a spokesperson for the Prolife Group put it, "After all, if we ban experimentation on embryos then it makes a nonsense of the killing of more fully formed fetuses by abortion."

Second, the new scheme would likely discriminate against lesbians and unmarried women by limiting the licensing of IVF facilities to those which serve only "stable,"

## Irish students leading fight for abortion rights

In Ireland, where neither divorce nor abortion is available to women, even the right to vital information giving women some elemental control over their lives is now seriously threatened.

Abortion has been illegal in Ireland since 1861 under a law imposed during British rule and never removed. Not content with that prohibitive law, the anti-abortion movement launched a campaign which, in 1983, led to adoption by referendum of a constitutional amendment acknowledging "the right to life of the unborn."

But the anti-abortionists have continued their vicious anti-woman campaigns. In 1986, they were able to force the closing of the two major clinics (Open Line Counseling and the Dublin Well Woman Centre) that provided information and assistance on obtaining abortions in Britain as part of their pregnancy counseling services.

The Supreme Court held that such activity was aiding and abetting illegal activity, that is, "the destruction of the life of the unborn." As a result of that case, the few other providers of abortion have, for the most part, censored themselves. Even the media has lim-

ited (if not eliminated) its coverage of anything related to abortion.

Refusing to bow to such pressure, the student unions of the two major Dublin universities have continued to carry out the mandate of their student bodies by printing abortion-service information in student publications. With the closing of the women's counseling services, the universities are virtually the only remaining public source of information for many women in the community.

The students have now become the target of the anti-abortionists' latest campaign. For the second year in a row, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) has sought to secure a permanent injunction against the Union of Irish Students (UIS), Dublin, which would prohibit publication of abortion information.

In October, SPUC was again denied this injunction by a judge who agreed with the students that the case should be referred to the European Court for Human Rights. SPUC is now appealing.

Despite their successes to date, the students are not relying on any court to ensure their ultimate victory, but on their unity and the

married couples and by criminalizing fertilization performed outside of a licensed facility.

There are other threats as well. Women's access to local, quality abortion services is being called into question by a broader plan to reorganize and begin privatizing the National Health Service, which will inevitably result in lost services and increased charges for women.

At the same time, Operation Rescue (OR) has reared its ugly head in England and Scotland, employing its usual tactics of harassing women seeking abortion services and attempting to block clinic doors (though this latter tactic has so far only been selectively tried, with the most publicized "rescue" drawing only 10 blockaders and 30 to 40 praying supporters).

## NAC's uphill battle

At its annual conference, held in London on Oct. 28-29, the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) addressed the question of how the pro-choice movement can mobilize the forces necessary to defeat the array of attacks on women's rights.

These are difficult times to win a fight in Britain, where 10 years of Thatcherism has seen the Labour Party moving steadily to the right. Pro-lifers have been permitted to organize within the party (as LabourLife) and to vote contrary to the pro-choice platform of the party. Certain Labour MPs, who were previously pro-choice, are now reported to be supporting the proposed reduction of the time limit on abortions to 24 weeks.

But NAC sees the 24-week reduction as the thin edge of the wedge, aware that its adoption would embolden anti-abortionists and give momentum to their unrelenting crusade to restrict and reverse women's right to abortion.

For this reason, the NAC conference identified the fight against any time-limit reduction as its top priority. It voted to initiate a new broad-based campaign (similar to Fight Alton's Bill) to mobilize the broadest possible forces in defense of the '67 Act, and to fight for Labour Party support and leadership on this issue.

On the embryo bill, NAC took a stand in favor of embryo research, which results in greater choice for women but is against any time limits and against any discriminatory provision.

NAC also made a commitment to fight Operation Rescue, using whatever tactics prove most effective against the type of campaign they wage. In November, NAC sponsored the first British anti-OR demonstration and rally to affirm that OR's target town of Stockport is pro-choice.

In addition, NAC pledged to support the fight against NHS cuts and to campaign for early introduction of the French-produced abortion pill RU 486 and for abortion on demand in the first 12 weeks (which a prominent Labour MP is discussing, with the support of a small but growing coalition).

The conference clearly recognized that the current attacks cannot be seen in isolation from one another, and that the specific priorities for work will have to be developed in the course of the struggle. ■

strength of their community support. Rallying to the call of the Dublin students, an overwhelming majority of student unions of Irish universities have decided to begin publishing abortion-service information. SPUC will be forced to take on the entire student movement.

Student leaders have pledged to defy any injunction that might be issued, even if it leads to their imprisonment or the sequestration of their operating funds.

In a recent move, the Irish censorship board has asked *Cosmopolitan* magazine, whose abortion services advertisements have become the primary source of such information for Irish women, to remove the ads. Unfortunately, the magazine appears ready to cave in without a fight. If it does so, the students will call for a boycott of the magazine.

The UIS is calling on people in other countries to put pressure on the Irish government (through letter-writing campaigns and embassy picketlines). The case could prove to be a major embarrassment for Prime Minister Haughey, who will assume the presidency of the European Community in January.

Leaders of this struggle acknowledge that the breadth of their support does not reflect a growing sentiment in favor of abortion rights in Ireland. Instead, it is based on defense of the right to information.

Nevertheless, this battle represents a major step forward for women and supporters of choice. It is the first time the powerful anti-abortion forces have suffered a defeat and been put on the defensive.—Brenda Bishop

# Poor, Black, and Latina women hardest hit by attacks against abortion rights

By SANDY DOYLE-O'NEILL

This article is the first of a two-part series.

The old slogan of the labor movement, "an injury to one is an injury to all," should be embraced by the revitalized women's movement.

For many years, poor women—a disproportionate number of whom are women of oppressed minorities—have been denied the right to choose abortion and to exercise any control over their reproductive lives. And once again, as governmental bodies attempt to further erode women's right to choose, these are the women who will be most in danger.

The July 1989 *Webster* decision gave room to the state legislatures to place even tighter restrictions on abortion rights. Three more cases involving restrictions on abortion are pending before the Supreme Court. While such efforts were recently defeated in Florida, the Pennsylvania legislature passed the most restrictive laws in the country.

## Cuts in public funding

During the last decade, cutoff of government funds has made abortion inaccessible to many low-income women. After Congress passed the Hyde Amendment in 1977 (which prohibited federal tax dollars from being spent on abortion), the number of low-income women who had access to abortion fell drastically. From October 1976 to September 1977, 294,600 women had federally funded abortions. In 1987, only 75 federally funded abortions were performed; in 1988, 84 were.

From 1977 to late 1981, exemptions to the restrictions were made if the woman's life was endangered by continuing the pregnancy or if she was the victim of rape or incest. Since late 1981, however, only women whose lives were certified to be at risk were able to have federally funded abortions.

Shortly after the Hyde Amendment went into effect, hospitals reported an increase in women appearing with infections and other signs of self-induced abortions. Just as in the pre-1973 period, however, no one seems to have statistics on the deaths of poor women.

Activists in the pro-choice movement are familiar with the case of Rosie Jimenez, who is the first known woman to die as a result of the Hyde Amendment. Unable to receive a safe, federally funded abortion, Jimenez sought out a back-alley abortionist and died from a septic infection. Rosie Jimenez Day is commemorated by pro-choice activists every year.

Most states have also passed restrictions which prohibit state monies to be used to terminate unwanted pregnancies. While 13 states still fund abortions for poor women, four do so only under court order.

A 1987 statement by the North Carolina American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) says that low-income women who are denied public funding for abortion generally delay the procedure for two to three weeks, thereby increasing the risk of health complications. Eighteen percent to 35 percent of these women carry these pregnancies to term.

In 1987, the Committee to Defend Reproductive Rights (CDRR) estimated that 80,000 women in California alone could not get abortions without some type of government funding. One-third of these women were teenagers.

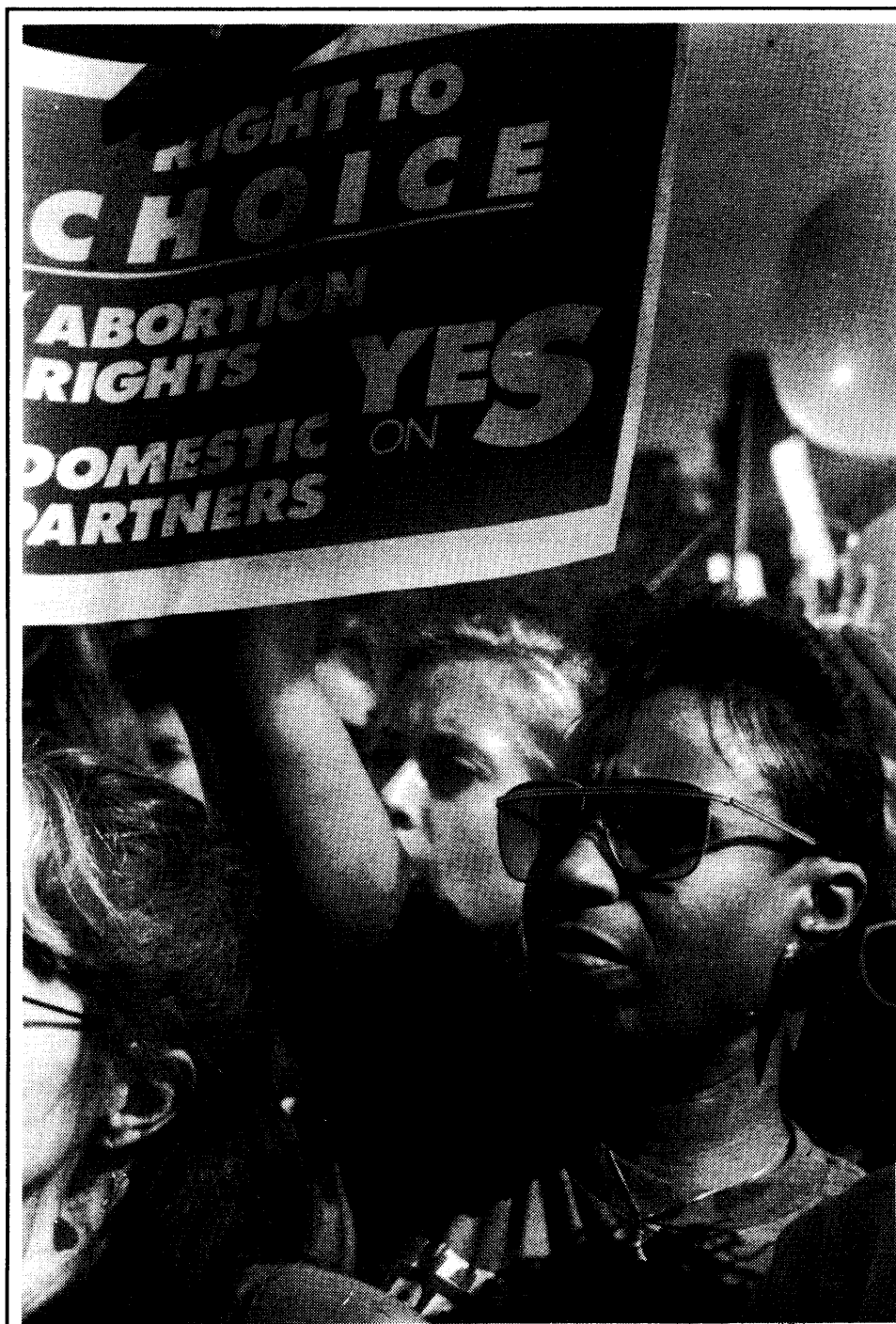
## Limited access to healthcare

By 1980, more and more women were falling below the poverty line. By official standards, two out of three poor adults were women, and over half of poor families were headed by women.

Contrary to popular belief, many poor women do not qualify for Medicaid or other federal aid programs. In 1980, for example, Medicaid covered only 39.1 percent of the U.S. population living below the official poverty line.

When it comes to obstetrical and gynecological care, it is difficult for poor women to find physicians willing to care for them; the number of specialists who treat Medicaid patients or uninsured women is declining nationally.

According to a 1985 study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, four out of 10 obstetri-



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

**'The impact of the *Webster* decision can undermine the right to abortion in several ways. Poor women, young women, and women of oppressed minorities will be the main victims of these restrictions.'**

cians would not accept Medicaid payment, citing concerns over low payment rates by the government and liability issues. The study concluded that the health of mothers is suffering because of a lack of access to prenatal care.

A 1987 study showed that 34 percent of pregnant women receive inadequate prenatal care. Fifty-one percent of pregnant Black women and 47 percent of pregnant Latinas receive insufficient prenatal care. Twenty-five percent to 30 percent of inner-city Black women have no access to prenatal care.

Among other effects, lack of adequate prenatal care greatly increases the risk of a low-birth-weight baby. Each year, 6000 more Black babies die than white babies in the same geographical areas. Low birth weights are one of the major factors in these deaths.

In 1981, the Black infant-mortality rate was 25.5 percent, while the white rate was 14.1 percent. For all women of oppressed minorities combined, the mortality rate among newborns is about twice that of white babies.

## Effects of Court decisions

The impact of the *Webster* decision can undermine the right to abortion in several ways (some of which are listed below). Poor women, young women, and women of oppressed minorities will be the main victims of these restrictions.

1) The Court upheld viability testing procedures for women more than 20 weeks pregnant. They did this despite overwhelming

medical evidence that the point of viability has not changed significantly since 1973. Fetuses cannot survive outside a woman's womb before about 24 weeks.

While fewer than 1 percent of abortions are performed after the 20th week, the women most likely to have late abortions are young women (who don't realize or deny at first that they are pregnant) and poor women (who must wait until they have the money). The fetal testing requirement will cost an additional \$125 to \$450 and can delay abortions by several days.

2) The Court, reasoning that states may legally prefer childbirth to abortion, ruled that states may prohibit public funding for abortions. They may also prohibit public hospitals and their staffs from performing any abortions.

For example, in Missouri (where the *Webster* case originated) 97 percent of second-trimester abortions were performed at one private hospital. Because this hospital leases its land from a public body, it may no longer perform abortions.

About 3 percent of all abortions are performed in hospitals rather than in clinics. According to the National Abortion Federation, most women who must be hospitalized for abortion have health problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and AIDS. These are many of the conditions that plague women of oppressed minorities.

High blood pressure, for example, is 82 percent higher among all oppressed minority

women than among white women. This chronic condition is associated with up to 30 percent of maternal deaths in childbirth and up to 20 percent of perinatal deaths.

Currently, while community hospitals are not required to perform abortions, they can decide for themselves whether to offer hospital abortion services. Almost half of all city and county hospitals and 65 percent of all state hospitals now provide them. If a state legislature enacts a law like the Missouri one, all of these public hospitals can be prohibited from doing any abortions.

## "Life begins at conception"

3) The Supreme Court let stand a preamble to the Missouri law that proclaims that life begins at conception. So-called "right-to-life" forces have long tried to make a fetus's life legally equal to that of a woman's. If both "lives" are equal, the state decides which has priority. This could seriously effect women's lives in several areas.

According to the Legal Defense and Education Fund of the National Organization for Women (NOW), since July 1989 at least 20 women nationally have been ordered by courts to deliver unwanted pregnancies by Caesarean section.

In at least one of these cases, the court based its ruling on the idea that life begins at conception. In other cases, attorneys used child-neglect statutes to compel the surgery—despite considerable health risks to both mother and infant from C-sections.

The women most likely to be involved in these forced Caesareans have been oppressed minority women. Of the 21 requests for court orders forcing this surgery, 81 percent of the women were Black, Latina, or Asian.

## Drug laws target women

Recently, several women have lost custody of their children, either temporarily or permanently, when evidence showed that they used drugs or alcohol during pregnancy. To do this, laws on child-abuse and child-neglect have been interpreted by states to include fetuses.

Several state and local governments are enacting laws to jail pregnant women for drug abuse. Women who are afraid of prosecution, however, are less likely to seek medical care.

A proposed law in Butte County, Calif., for example, would require pregnant women to enter drug-treatment programs or face a mandatory jail sentence. Legislatures continue to pass these laws and courts continue to prosecute women, despite the fact that most drug treatment centers don't accept pregnant women or provide childcare for their other children.

A survey published by NOW in July 1989 showed that of 78 drug treatment centers in New York City, 54 percent turned away addicted women who said they were pregnant. Sixty-seven percent refused to treat pregnant women on Medicaid, and 87 percent refused treatment to Medicaid recipients who were addicted to crack.

As the pro-choice movement fights to keep abortion safe and legal, it must be mindful of the situation faced by poor women and women of oppressed minorities. These women—who are most in need of family-planning services and prenatal medical care—find these facilities to be least accessible to them.

In addition, sterilization programs (as part of racist population-control efforts) have victimized countless oppressed-minority women. This topic will be explored in detail in the next issue of *Socialist Action*. ■

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By HAYDEN PERRY

# S&L scandal uncovers U.S. senators for sale

When gangsters move into a new territory they try to put venal cops and judges on their payroll. These cops "on the take" will warn of police raids, influence prosecutors, and otherwise ensure the smooth running of the racketeers' illegal but very profitable enterprises. The Mafia considers these payoffs just an additional business cost, well justified by the protection received.

More socially accepted entrepreneurs also see the value of political friends in high places. Charles Keating Jr., chairman of American Continental Corp., needed this sort of protection as he embarked on high-flying schemes of questionable legality in 1976.

Paying off a few cops in one city would not give him the cover he needed for his nationwide operations. Keating went all the way to the U.S. Senate to find a lawmaker who would take his money and serve as his man in Washington. Here he found, not one, but five senators who were willing to "go on the take" for Keating and serve his financial interests.

Of course, there was nothing so crude as envelopes being pushed across desks. The payoffs took the form mostly of contributions to campaign expenses. Meanwhile, all-expenses-paid vacations at Caribbean resorts were given as icing on the "take."

Two senators from Arizona, Dennis DeConcini and John McCain; Donald Reigle of Michigan; John Glenn of Ohio; and the Senate patriarch, Alan Cranston of California, became known as the "Keating Five."

These politicians—four Democrats and one Republican—were bound by ties of serious money to the cause of Charles Keating's enrichment. Their collective services cost Keating over \$1.3 million. But they delivered when the crunch came.

## Playing the pyramid game

Crunches were bound to come as Keating expanded his small real-estate development firm in Arizona into the nucleus of a multi-billion-dollar empire. Expansion would take huge amounts of capital. Savings-and-loan companies might be a source of loans. But pleading with loan officers was not Keating's way.

Instead, he bought the company—the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association of California. This gave Keating entree to a mint. He could instruct his loan officers to approve any loan he wished.

The price of Lincoln was \$51 million. It was raised by selling junk bonds that paid high interest together with high risk. The assumption was that the debt would be paid off through rising real-estate values. But Arizona real-estate values plummeted in the 1980s, and Keating's suburban developments became big losers.

Now Keating played the pyramid game, knitting together a tangle of paper corporations to siphon money from one enterprise to another. The tangle was also designed to conceal the flow of Lincoln deposits to the most speculative investments. Federal rules limited such loans by S&Ls to 10 percent of their assets. By 1986, Lincoln was risking \$600 million over this limit.

## "Extraordinary political influence"

In San Francisco in 1986, federal bank examiners, headed by Michael Patriarca, saw what was going on and recommended that Lincoln Savings be taken over by the National Bank Board. Edwin Gray, chairman of the Board in Washington, concurred.

With this threat confronting him, Keating sent a call for help to his men in the Senate. Four of them responded at once, crowding Gray's office demanding to know why



Keating was being "harrassed." Gray suggested that the senators hear the facts from the San Francisco regulators.

Summoned to Washington, Patriarca and staff counsel William Black were confronted by all five of Keating's senators. This panel of five was more than intimidating to the regulators who said they had never heard of more than two congressmen meeting on behalf of even the largest bank.

In spite of this "extraordinary display of political influence," Gray and the men from San Francisco stood their ground. Lincoln Savings must be shut down to protect the depositors, they insisted.

Then wheels began to turn in the White House. In January 1987, Edwin Gray was superseded by M. Danny Wall as head of the Bank Board. Wall's credentials include helping pass the law that deregulated savings institutions. One of his first official acts was to take Patriarca and Black off the Lincoln case and move it to Washington, where all the files were relegated to an unprotected storeroom.

## "One of meanest scams on record"

For the next two years, Keating was free to wheel and deal disastrously. He and his top associates siphoned off an estimated \$43 million in perks and bonuses while corporate losses soared. Keating also had time to cheat elderly depositors out of their life savings through one of the meanest scams on record.

Tellers at Lincoln's 29 branches were told to sell \$250 million worth of American Continental junk bonds to Lincoln deposi-

tors. Elderly depositors were told they could get a higher interest rate if they moved their deposits to these new accounts. They were not told that these junk bonds were not insured. Now 23,000 small investors have lost their life savings.

In April 1989, the Bank Board was finally forced to shut down Lincoln Savings. The two-year delay has cost the taxpayers another billion dollars in bailout expense. The total is estimated to be \$2.5 billion. It is not known how many small depositors might have been saved if the federal government had acted two years ago.

## California officials help out

While federal interference was blocked by the Keating Five in Washington, the state of California was in a position to restrain Lincoln Savings as a California corporation. Here Keating ensured friendly treatment through a \$189,000 contribution to Governor George Deukmejian's 1986 campaign.

To further strengthen ties, Deukmejian's closest political friends were made directors of one of Keating's subsidiaries, TCS Financial Services of San Diego. The financial services rendered were mainly shuffling Lincoln deposits among various failing enterprises.

Lawrence Taggart, the state's top bank regulator, was the cop on the beat. He was supposed to see that depositors' money was not poured down rat holes like TCS Financial. To help prevent this sort of thing, a new federal law was to go into effect on Dec. 10, 1984. To prevent last-minute transfers, the date was

to be a closely kept secret. Only a few bank regulators were supposed to know.

Learning of this, Taggart rushed to warn Keating, who moved another chunk of Lincoln funds to TCS Financial (which had lost \$716,000). A month after betraying the public trust, Taggart moved into the highest paid job TCS Financial had to offer.

Now the Keating scandal is being aired in Congressional hearings. Two witnesses, elderly women who lost their life savings in the debacle, broke down in tears as they charged Cranston with responsibility.

The Keating Five say they have done nothing wrong. But Doncini and Reigle have returned the thousands of dollars they got from Keating. Cranston hasn't returned anything, saying this is just the normal operation of Washington politics.

Cranston is right. He might have added that big money can buy Democrats as easily as Republicans; that politicians say they will represent "all the people," when they mean all the people with the money and political clout to pay for their services.

There will be a lot of talk now about reform. But aside from cosmetic changes, the system will continue. The millions it takes to run a Senatorial campaign are supplied by the wealthy who demand service for money. The ruling class likes it that way.

The Lincoln scandal proves again that workers cannot count on Democrats any more than Republicans to serve their interests. These politicians have already been bought by the millionaires.

# Canadian women fight proposed abortion law

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

Under a proposed abortion law recently introduced by the Tory government, an abortion could only be performed if a physician stated that carrying the pregnancy to term would endanger the physical or mental health of the mother. The Justice Minister specifically stated that social and economic factors would be excluded.

While anti-choice forces are trying to add even more restrictions, the Liberals have stated that this is an unacceptable compromise. The New Democratic Party, the

Canadian labor party, opposes this proposed law.

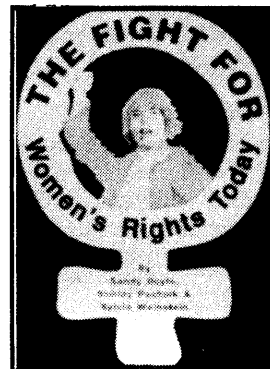
Canadian pro-choice activists are on an educational campaign to explain why this bill is not an acceptable compromise. Cherie MacDonald, spokesperson for the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics told *Socialist Action*: "Saying that some abortions are illegal would open the possibility of third-party suits and government action to prevent abortions. It would intimidate doctors, further limiting access. The experience of two years without an abortion law shows that none is needed."

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was sur-

prised at the extent of opposition to his proposed "reform." Although he had originally promised a new law by Christmas, he has now revised his time table to next spring. Pro-choice activists are optimistic that they can continue winning support and block passage of any new abortion law.

Pro-choice groups have started up on cam-

pusés across Canada. A high school group meets regularly in Toronto. Following the successful Oct. 14 demonstrations, a network of activist organizations—the Pro-Choice Action Network—has affiliates in a growing number of cities. Discussions are now underway for a possible march on Ottawa in February.



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# Minimum wage and capital gains: Two tales of capitalist math

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

This is the way my older brother used to divide penny candy between himself, my sister, and me.

Once in a while, we kids would come into a bit of luck. We would each get a nickel from an aunt or uncle. My brother and I would be designated to go to the nearest grocery store and purchase 15 cents worth of penny candy. You could get quite a bit of candy for that much money in the Depression years. Then Glen, my brother, would be the one to divide it up since he was older and could count.

We would all sit on the floor, and Glen would push the candy to us. One for me, one for Bea (my sister), and two for himself. Although Bea and I couldn't count, we could use the primitive system of watching his mound of candy grow twice as big as ours. We would start to protest, and then he would say, "Okay, okay, I'll do it better." Then he would find some other way to increase his share. Sometimes we caught on to that trick too.

I was reminded of my big brother's accounting system when I read about the recent proceedings in Congress—the capital gains tax cut and that pitiful increase of the minimum wage.

"Capital gains" is the *profits* made from selling stocks at a higher price than when they were purchased. Lowering the tax on this portion of profits further reduces the effective tax rate paid by the rich, which means that an increasing share of the tax burden will be borne by the poor.

A capital gains tax cut was first passed in 1978, giving large stock holders a massive break in their yearly tax bill. It was eliminated as part of the tax "reform" law enacted in 1986 (which exchanged the reduced capital gains tax for other, bigger tax reductions for the rich).

Now both capitalist parties, with President Bush leading the way, are maneuvering to reinstate the capital gains tax break. Although a bill to lower the tax failed to pass the Senate this session, most observers predict it will be resurrected early in the next session of Congress.

## Some crumbs to the poor

President Bush was all set to veto the minimum wage bill. But he was advised by his Congressional henchmen that when it came time to lower the capital gains tax, it would look better to throw a few crumbs to the poor (the better to shovel more gold into the pock-



Peg Averill/LNS

ets of the rich).

It is estimated that some 4 million Americans work at the minimum wage. Congressional researchers say two-thirds of them are women and between 25% and 33% are heads of household.

The minimum-wage package, finally passed in both the House and the Senate, sets a two-tiered floor to wages. For most workers, it raises the minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$4.25 per hour. But workers 19 years old and younger get only \$3.61 per hour for the first six-months "training period" and may be kept at this lower rate for another 90 days if they shift to another employer.

Even supposing you received the generous \$4.25 per hour, you could work 40 hours per week for the princely sum of \$170 per week. Of course, this is before taxes and other deductions. If you stay well, do not get sick, or are not fired, and work for a full 52 weeks a year you will wind up with a whole \$8840.

## A fall in living standards

Now let's look at the real situation for both the rich and the poor in this "free" democracy. The facts provided in "The State of Working America," put out by the Economic Policy Institute in 1988, show how much living

standards are being pushed down:

"Average hourly wages, adjusted for inflation, dropped by 7% between 1979 and 1987. ... In 1987 more than 5 million workers who wanted full-time jobs were forced to accept part-time work, and among all employees, roughly 17% have no health insurance and 40% are not covered by a pension plan.

"Between 1979 and 1987," the Institute points out, "all of the progress reducing poverty since the mid-1960s has been reversed. In 1987, the average family headed by someone between the ages of 25 and 34 had an income 9% lower than their counterpart in 1973."

The only thing that has kept some families from falling into total poverty is the fact that more wives are working. In 1987, only 35% of American families conformed to the Ozzie and Harriet picture of the father bringing in the income and the mother taking care of the home and children.

The figures show that practically all families—including middle-income families—suffered a drop in living standards. The only improvement in living standards has been among the rich. In fact, the rich have gotten much richer!

The distribution of wealth in this country

in 1987 is even more unequal than income. A household's level of wealth indicates its economic security—its ability to weather events such as medical emergencies and unemployment.

"Those with family incomes of \$5000 or less had a median net worth valued at approximately 10% of their incomes," the Economic Policy Institute reports. "In 1983, the latest year for which this data is available, 24% of families had a median net worth of under \$3000." (Most of the "wealth" owned by workers is in the form of equity in their homes or automobiles.)

The report continues: "Between 1962 and 1983, the wealthiest Americans increased the value of their share of the nation's wealth by 90%, for an average dollar gain of more than \$3.2 million per household. During the same period, the top 0.5% increased its share of total wealth by 12% while the majority of Americans (the bottom 90%) actually lost 11% of their share."

"In fact," the Economic Policy Institute points out, "the super-rich 0.5% increased their wealth at a pace that was nearly double that of the vast majority of Americans."

The wealthiest 10% of Americans own 86% of all financial assets (i.e., cash, bonds, stocks, and bank deposits), and 57% of the nation's total net worth.

Congress is getting ready to increase the wealth of the super-rich even more by reinstating the capital gains tax cut.

Since 1981, tax laws have changed twice. Both changes resulted in lower taxes for the rich and higher taxes for working people. The richest 1% of the country's income distribution now pay a federal tax rate six percentage points lower than in 1977. The richest 10% pay a 1.7% lower tax rate. Meanwhile, the poorest 10% pay a 1.6% higher rate and taxes for the middle 80% have remained the same.

## Hunger and homelessness

Despite the "rich and famous" lifestyles thrust upon us on the television tube, there is a specter of hunger and homelessness haunting this nation. More than one in five children under the age of 18 live in poverty. Nearly half of all Black children under the age of six live in poor families. On any given night there is a minimum of 100,000 homeless children—sleeping in doorways, alleys, and parked cars.

In 1987, over one-third of the families headed by women were poor, an increase in poverty by 37.5% since 1973. There were 34.8 million Americans without health insurance who were effectively without access to healthcare services for financial reasons. Nearly one-third (11.1 million) were children.

When I was a young kid, and my brother tried to fool me and my sister with "capitalist mathematics," she and I would protest until we got an even break.

The working class is going broke hoping for an even break from the ruling rich of this country. They must begin to fight for their interests. ■

## Support needed to acquit Israeli peace activist

On Nov. 15, 1989, an Israeli judge agreed to postpone carrying out the 20-month prison sentence issued one week earlier to Israeli peace activist Michel Warshawsky.

This victory came about because of the immediate protests to Warshawsky's conviction, both internationally and in the Israeli state. The judge has set a January 1990 date for an appeal trial.

Warshawsky had been sentenced to 20 months in prison by a panel of three judges. The Alternative Information Centre, where Warshawsky works, was fined \$5000.

The Alternative Information Centre and Warshawsky were accused of providing typesetting services to "illegal organizations" and of holding printed material which belongs to "illegal organizations."

The sentence was based entirely on one booklet, which, according to the prosecution, was oriented to giving guidelines to Palestinian activists on how to "resist" during interrogation and torture by the secret service, and on Warshawsky's refusal to furnish the names of the people who supplied the material to the Alternative Information Centre.

Warshawsky was arrested on Feb. 16, 1987, when Israeli police raided the

Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem, shutting it down and impounding its equipment. The Centre, a collective made up of both Arab and Jewish members, publishes the well-respected *News From Within*.

*News From Within*, widely read by professional journalists, has been one of the few reliable sources of information about human-rights violations in the "Occupied Territories" held by Israel. In addition to publication of this news service, the Centre provided non-profit publishing facilities to movement and community groups.

Although the Israeli judge agreed to Warshawsky's demand to appeal his sentence, there is still a big danger that his conviction will be upheld. It is necessary to redouble our efforts so that the temporary reprieve Warshawsky has won can be transformed into a complete acquittal.

Letters, telegrams, and messages protesting this sentence and demanding Warshawsky's acquittal should be sent to the Embassy of Israel, 3415 International Way NW, Washington, DC 20008; and to the State Department Human Rights Desk, Washington, DC 20520.

Please send copies of the messages to the



Kathleen O'Nan/Socialist Action

Alternative Information Centre, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem, Israel, Tel. 241159. ■

## ACLU wins payments for defense of S.F. socialists

By JONI JACOBS

The city of San Francisco has agreed to pay \$22,000 to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in connection with a lawsuit brought by Socialist Action against the city.

In January 1989, Socialist Action sued the city of San Francisco in U.S. District Court for violating its First Amendment right to political association by requiring it to reveal the names of contributors to its 1988 election campaign. On June 2, 1989, the city dropped its demand for names of financial contributors, and the case was settled. [See July 1989 *Socialist Action*.]

Still in dispute, however, was who would pay the fees of the ACLU attorneys, who expended nearly \$30,000 in time and materials on behalf of Socialist Action. In an agreement reached earlier this month, the city will pay \$22,000 to the ACLU, rather than have the issue decided by a judge at a hearing scheduled for Dec. 29, 1989.

Although the settlement must be approved by the Board of Supervisors, the ACLU expects to receive payment by mid-January 1990. ■

# Outrage sweeps U.S. over mass killings by Salvadoran gov't

By JEFF MACKLER

Incensed by the brutal torture and slaying of six Salvadoran Jesuit priests and two churchworkers, tens of thousands of anti-intervention activists—including labor and church organizations—rallied across the country.

In San Francisco, 1000 Catholics—led by several Jesuit college rectors in the area—rallied at the Federal Building on Nov. 20. They demanded an immediate end to all U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran government.

When rally speaker Father Anthony Sauer, president of St. Ignacious College, announced the 215-to-194 Congressional vote of Nov. 20 which refused to block any aid to El Salvador, the S.F. Bay Area crowd responded with cries of "Shame, Shame, Shame!"

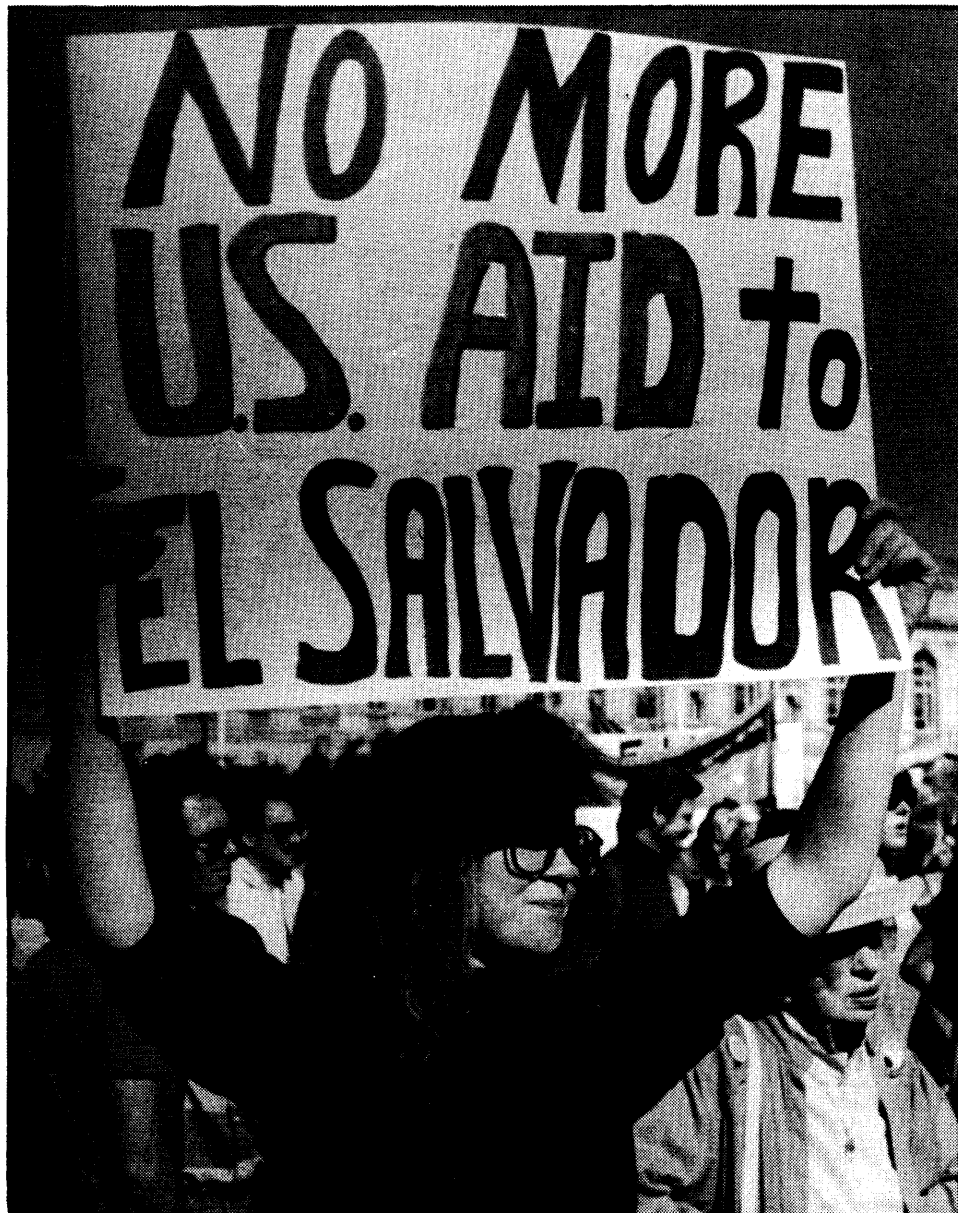
Tessa Rouvrol of San Francisco Catholic Charities reported calls her agency had received from El Salvador describing the government's napalming of children and bombardment of churches.

Backed by the unrefuted testimony of eyewitness reports from surviving Jesuit leaders who managed to escape to the United States, rally organizers placed responsibility for the savage violence on the Salvadoran government, and then on the U.S. Congress and the Bush administration.

Three thousand people demonstrated in San Francisco two days earlier at an event originally called to oppose U.S. support to the Nicaraguan contras. Rally organizers readily agreed to incorporate demands opposing U.S. support to the Salvadoran government. They announced a Dec. 2 conference at Oakland's Laney College to plan further actions and stressed the need to oppose U.S. interference in the Nicaraguan elections.

"El Salvador vencerá!"

About 7000 people rallied in Los Angeles on Nov. 18. In addition to a spokesperson for the FMLN, speakers included a representative of the striking Eastern Airline machinists—who solidarized with the besieged Salvadoran labor movement. A representative of the Nicaraguan government began his remarks with the traditional, "Si Nicaragua venció, El



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Salvador vencerá!"

A Boston rally of 3000 was supported in an unprecedented move by Boston Mayor Ray Flynn, who (in addition to sharing the platform with an FMLN representative and opposing all U.S. aid to El Salvador) declared a

day of mourning for the slain priests. Flynn ordered city officials to fly public flags at half-mast.

Four hundred Boston activists organized a sit-in protest at the offices of U.S. Senator John Kerry. A similar protest was organized

in Los Angeles at the office of Congressman Mel Levine.

In Chicago, two activists were arrested as they queried George Bush at a Republican fund-raising event. They asked, "Why are we supporting El Salvador?" Later, 10 nuns were arrested at the same event.

A 2000-strong Pennsylvania Ave. demonstration at the White House blocked traffic for several hours and ended with the arrest of 98 non-violent protesters.

## Trade-union activity

U.S. trade unionists have also increased their activity in response to the death-squad bombing of the offices of the FENASTRAS trade-union federation, the largest affiliate of the National Union of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS). Ten Salvadoran unionists were killed in the Oct. 31 blast, including FENASTRAS leader Febe Elizabeth Velasquez. [See interview with Mark Anner on opposite page.]

The same day, the offices of COMADRES, (Mothers of the Disappeared) was dynamited. Witnesses observed uniformed soldiers fleeing the scene.

These events were reported in detail by the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, a U.S. labor coalition representing 20 top officers of national unions.

A letter from National Labor Committee staffperson David Dyson urges U.S. unionists to condemn the murders and to demand that the Salvadoran government take action in regard to the "disappearance" of Salvadoran trade unionists Christina Chan-Chan and Francisco Massi, both abducted by Air Force troops on Aug. 19.

Letters to the Cristiani government and to the U.S. officials protesting the bombings were sent by United Automobile Workers President Owen Bieber and by Jack Sheinkman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sheinkman protested the administration's El Salvador policy in a recent speech at the Nov. 17-19 national AFL-CIO convention in Washington D.C.

## ...U.S. war

(continued from page 1)

set of "anti-terrorist" laws that can be used to jail journalists as well as citizens participating in transportation boycotts or other forms of civil disobedience. On Nov. 24, the repressive legislation passed El Salvador's Legislative Assembly by a vote of 45 to 0 (members of the Christian Democratic Party all abstained).

### Bush sends in commandos

But despite the "anti-terrorist" laws—and the use of massive firepower and even napalm to quell the population—Cristiani may well be unable to hold on. As the struggle against the isolated Cristiani regime widens, so does the possibility of direct U.S. military intervention.

The Bush administration responded immediately, for example, to the FMLN Nov. 21 occupation of some 30 blocks of downtown San Salvador, including the taking of a luxury hotel that housed U.S. diplomats and military advisers.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret D. Tutwiler charged that the FMLN had taken U.S. hostages. She also characterized the FMLN as "terrorists, pure and simple," stating that the Bush administration would not negotiate with them. This left the door open for immediate U.S. military intervention.

As it was later disclosed, Bush ordered a group of soldiers from the specially trained Delta Force to "rescue" the U.S. advisers. In fact, there were no hostages. By the time the Delta Force arrived on the scene, the diplomats and advisers had left the hotel.

### Night bombing missions

A number of established Mexican news sources have also affirmed that U.S. pilots are

flying all-night bombing missions in El Salvador. These acts of terror against civilian populations pulverize and incinerate working-class neighborhoods.

They indicate the extreme isolation of the hated Cristiani government, which represents a ruling elite of 2 percent which in turn owns 60 percent of the nation's wealth.

It did not go unnoticed that similar bombings were not employed in the posh neighborhoods occupied by the FMLN during the seizure of the downtown hotel.

Special U.S. units in Panama have been placed on armed alert. U.S. warships patrol the Salvadoran coastline. Expedited shipments of arms have already been rushed to the tottering Cristiani regime, while the United States has prevailed on its puppets in Guatemala and Honduras to place their troops on alert—at the service of Cristiani if the need arises.

If events continue to escalate, the specter of regional war cannot be ruled out—and along with it, direct U.S. military intervention.

### A "negotiated" solution?

On Nov. 22, the FMLN's Radio Venceremos broadcast a call for an immediate ceasefire and negotiations with the armed forces. The statement said that they did not want to negotiate with the Cristiani government, pointing out that the armed forces have traditionally had a *de-facto* veto over all government decisions.

FMLN spokesperson Salvador Sanabria (speaking on the television news program "Nightline" on Nov. 21) did, however, leave the door open to talks with the Cristiani government when he stated that the recent military offensive was designed to force a "political negotiated solution."

Yet other FMLN representatives have insisted that the FMLN will "go on to take El Salvador completely." Accordingly, FDR-FMLN spokesperson Luis Flores told *Socialist Action*, "We are in discussions with

different social forces about the formation of a provisional government."

Flores's reference here was to recent FMLN negotiations with elements in the Christian Democratic Party and other bourgeois forces opposed to the Cristiani government. The current goal of the FMLN is to press for the formation of a new government with these forces—a government based on a mixed (capitalist) economy with guarantees to the private sector.

This is the current version of the view put forward by the FMLN in 1982 when it presented its proposal for a Government of Broad Participation—or GAP, as it became known by its Spanish acronym. The GAP represented a marked retreat by the FMLN at that time when compared to its previous proposals, which looked more to socialist solutions to El Salvador's vast social inequality.

The sometimes conflicting views of FMLN spokespersons on whether their policy includes a negotiated settlement with the Cristiani government are a product of the rapidly changing situation in El Salvador.

It now appears that what began as a major military offensive to compel negotiations has developed into a near insurrection, perhaps surpassing even the projections of the FMLN.

An FMLN speaker at a Nov. 18 rally in Los Angeles explained, for example, that when a temporary truce was declared in a working-class suburb of San Salvador occupied by the FMLN, only 20,000 of the 500,000 inhabitants took the opportunity provided to leave. The rest remained to support the FMLN.

### Building a broad-based movement

As administration officials meet in the White House Situation Room in what the *New York Times* describes as a "crisis atmosphere," anti-intervention activists are beginning to consider large-scale mobilizations to

prevent the sending of any U.S. troops or military supplies to El Salvador.

As the war in El Salvador proceeds, an almost daily flurry of proposals for a negotiated political solution have emerged. Some emanate from the FMLN—others have come from well-meaning people who desire an end to the bloodshed. Still others reflect the diplomatic needs of Cristiani and/or the White House to appear open to peaceful solutions.

It is not the responsibility or even the right of the anti-intervention movement to select among these various proposals. Respect for the fundamental right of self-determination necessarily includes a rejection of the idea that U.S. military power gives it the right to negotiate the future of any nation.

The FMLN has the right to put forward or withdraw proposals which suit its needs as it fights against the U.S.-imposed regime. But the construction of a broad-based opposition movement in the United States should not be tied to agreement with any set of negotiations proposals to end the war.

The best support we can provide to the people of El Salvador as they struggle for their liberation is to build a mass movement which can involve the majority of American working people—whose sons and daughters will be the cannon fodder for any U.S. intervention.

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# American victim describes bombing of Salvadoran union headquarters

The Oct. 31 bomb that exploded in the office of FENASTRAS (National Federation of Salvadoran Workers) in San Salvador killed 10 and wounded 31. Mark Anner, an activist from the United States, was seriously injured in the blast. He had been working as a volunteer with FENASTRAS since August 1988 in the Federation's International Relations Department.

Anner is now on a national U.S. tour for FENASTRAS with a representative of COMADRES, the Salvadoran organization of the mothers of the disappeared. The following phone interview with Mark Anner was conducted by Jim Henle on Nov. 20. It has been edited for style and space.

**Socialist Action:** What is FENASTRAS and what has been its role?

**Mark Anner:** FENASTRAS was formed in 1972. It is considered the largest labor federation in El Salvador by the government Ministry of Labor. It comprises 17 unions and has 25,000 dues-paying members. In 1980, FENASTRAS led a general strike against government attacks.

After a long period underground, FENASTRAS held its first public congress in 1985. This was a watershed in the revival of the mass movement. FENASTRAS was also key in forming the UNTS (National Union of Salvadoran Workers). The UNTS unites unions and peasant cooperatives with other groups.

Febe Elizabeth Velasquez of FENASTRAS [who was killed in the Oct. 31 bombing] was the representative of the private industrial working class on the UNTS Board of Directors. She was the only woman on the Board.

**S.A.:** What was the nature of your work with FENASTRAS?

**Anner:** We helped develop direct links with unions in other countries, from individual unions in the United States to whole confederations in Europe.

We developed several sister-city union campaigns and relations with locals of SEIU, IUE, UE, and others. The Norwegian unions built a day-care center and cafeteria for striking workers and raised funds for the FENASTRAS hall.

In addition to financial support, unions in the United States and elsewhere sent telegrams of protest if Salvadoran unionists were in conflict or captured. We also hoped our work would influence AFL-CIO policy in El Salvador.

Local AFL-CIO unions, because of direct contact, could see the situation more clearly, see the legitimacy of FENASTRAS, which the AFL-CIO leadership denies. We would like to see the AFL-CIO have an emergency review of its policy toward El Salvador because of the widespread violations of trade-union rights there.

**S.A.:** Has international solidarity had any impact?

**Anner:** Yes, definitely. For example, the militant construction workers' union, SOICSCES [a part of FENASTRAS] engaged in a strike against the housing company, COHEFAR. About 500 workers worked 11 to 12-hour days under terrible conditions. On top of this, the company was deducting for healthcare from wages, but just pocketed the money.

The union struck for three months and received solidarity from 18 countries, especially Italy. Different Italian unions that normally don't work together united around support for this strike. They took over the COHEFAR offices in Italy and threatened strikes on their sites there.

**S.A.:** How was the strike conducted in San Salvador?

**Anner:** The workers occupied the site. They knew that if they left, scab labor would be hired immediately. When other strikes were lost, the SUTC union would be contracted to scab. SUTC is an AIFLD affiliate. [AIFLD is the AFL-CIO arm for subverting labor in Latin America.]

What happens is that the military takes over, then SUTC comes in. They charge dues that are 10 times what they should be. But they can always find workers because unemployment is so high.

**S.A.:** What happened in this strike?

**Anner:** The military came three times.



Photo taken moments after explosion at FENASTRAS headquarters.

Each time the workers lit torches and threatened to burn the machinery if attacked. Each time the military backed off. The company cared more for material than for the workers.

The strike was resolved very favorably for the union. There was incredible rank-and-file support, and the international solidarity kept pressure on and helped limit repression.

**S.A.:** You worked very closely with Febe Velasquez before she was killed in the Oct. 31 bombing. What was she like?

**Anner:** Febe was one of the most incredible organizers I have ever met. She was a creative, energetic leader and an articulate speaker. She believed El Salvador didn't need union leaders who sit behind a desk. To be a unionist in El Salvador means to take to the streets.

She never had her own desk and never wrote anything down. I felt like her personal secretary sometimes. She never kept paper or pen. She would pass on papers to me, then take care of things. She would act when it was needed.

Mid-morning Sept. 18, the National Guard rounded up 10 unionists. It was a significant step-up of repression. We found out later that three were tortured; one had his feet burned by cigarettes. Febe felt there was no alternative but to organize a protest. We had to take to the streets. By 3 p.m. there was a march. During the march, two buses were burned in anger against transportation price hikes imposed by [Salvadoran President Alfredo] Cristiani.

The march itself was attacked, 54 were captured. People were beaten and robbed of their personal possessions. Five women were raped, one of them eight times.

Febe, knowing she had been called a terrorist, walked right into the office of the Director of the National Police, demanding the release of the captured. She told him peo-

ple would keep in the streets until then. Nineteen were released immediately, more later. Thirteen are still in, though.

Febe was strong in her determination and in her feeling that she had been selected as a leader and couldn't let people down. She was 27 years old; at 25, she was the general secretary of FENASTRAS. She was a single mother, with three sons, the youngest 6 months.

**S.A.:** You were with her when the bomb exploded in the FENASTRAS office.

**Anner:** At the time of the bombing, we were sitting at a table in the cafeteria. Febe was across from me. Luis Vasquez was to my right. Febe was hit in the head and her skull punctured. Everyone but me at the table died. I was hit on the top of the head, but my skull was not punctured. I was knocked unconscious.

I have 89 stitches in my scalp; my right eardrum was punctured and I have half hearing in that ear. I also had shrapnel lodged in my side which was removed by surgery.

**S.A.:** What happened to you after the bombing?

**Anner:** I was in a public hospital and had lost a lot of blood. This hospital had run out of blood supply. They were wonderful people, but they lacked resources. I was conscious at this point and agreed with friends that I should go to a private hospital.

A woman from the U.S. Consulate wanted me to stay where I was. She said it would be difficult to find me at the other hospital, the Policlinica, even though it's not far away. Security is tight at the Policlinica, but there's a reason. It's not beyond the police to burst in and seize people.

When my father came to San Salvador to see me, a woman from the Consulate made the comment to him that friends had moved me to a unionized hospital, and you never

know when they might go on strike. The workers there are organized into FENASTRAS.

**S.A.:** This wasn't the first time that working with the unions made you suspect.

**Anner:** In May, my name appeared in an ad in the daily *La Prensa*. COPRESA, the Military Command, took out this ad which said that I was interfering in the internal affairs of El Salvador.

In September, I was captured by the Treasury Police. The U.S. Embassy found out about it through protest calls from the United States. This is an example of a very positive result of the solidarity network.

My treatment then improved noticeably. I had been blindfolded and put in military shorts; then I got my clothes and was released to the custody of the Embassy. When I didn't go to the Embassy, but went home, I became questionable in their eyes. In any case, the Embassy considers FENASTRAS a terrorist organization.

**S.A.:** UNTS head Humberto Centeno said this bombing was a declaration of war on the popular movement.

**Anner:** There have been large numbers of bombings recently, but they took place in the evening. The intent was to scare people off. The bombing on Oct. 31, which took place in the daytime when many people were there, changed all that. ARENA [the ruling party] is showing its true colors.

The immediate result of this situation for the popular movement is that it will stay underground. The government has shown the lengths it will go to squelch popular organization and support for dialogue. No one is safe.

The FENASTRAS office is now completely abandoned. Everyone is at home. But FENASTRAS has been underground before and still became a major force in the country. That is why it is a major focus of attacks.

**S.A.:** How have things changed now that the fighting has intensified?

**Anner:** One thing that is now very clear is that the FMLN is a powerful force. Before, the U.S. ambassador referred to them as a dying force with poor weapons. Then he came on TV saying they are a powerful force ... with Soviet weapons.

**S.A.:** What do you think people in the United States can do?

**Anner:** The thing to do right now is to join together around one common campaign. Right now individual campaigns like sister union relations with particular unions can't be carried out because of the repression.

We must demand:

- cease-fires to allow the Red Cross access to the wounded,
- the establishment of neutral zones,
- respect for labor, human-rights groups, and opposition political parties,
- an immediate end to aerial bombardment of civilians,
- immediate cutoff of all U.S. military aid, including aid in pipeline, so the money stops now.
- an emergency resolution to remove El Salvador's favored-nation status,
- and we must push for a return to serious negotiations.

This is probably the most decisive moment in the 10 years of war. It's really key that our protest is known. We have to express our extreme frustration with Congress. They've made their decision to continue funding the Cristiani government; they won't produce change.

The campaign should be carried out on all fronts: telegrams, letters, civil disobedience, protest demonstrations like the ones in Boston and Washington. There are many tactics. Broad powerful rallies are extremely important. Overall, we need a greater intensity in activities, make them broader and as large as possible with more coordination.

Actions can have an impact all over. When I was lying in the hospital in San Salvador, I heard there were protests against the FENASTRAS bombing in 30 cities in the United States. I smiled, probably for the first time. It was the best news I could have gotten.

For people in El Salvador, our actions send a key message that they are not alone, that people are watching. ■

# ... Stalinism crumbles as millions take to streets in Eastern Europe



One face shows the new self-confidence of the masses as they flex their muscles to win socialist democracy.

Kamel Lamma-SIPA

(continued from page 1)

Stalinism began with an ascending wave of demonstrations in East Germany that forced the resignation of top bureaucrat Erich Honecker on Oct. 18. The "hardline" East German Stalinists have been beating one of the most amazing tactical retreats in history—featured by the dramatic opening of the border and a promise to hold elections. But each concession has only whetted the appetite of the masses for the fundamental right to control all aspects of their economic, social, and political lives.

The upheaval in East Germany took off when Hungary opened its border with Austria on Sept. 10 to allow the departure of East German refugees who had jammed the West German embassy in Budapest. Since then, a series of ever-more massive protests forced the East German regime to steadily give ground as it struggled to keep from being swept, head over heels, out of its positions of power and privilege.

On Oct. 16, over 120,000 protestors demonstrated in Leipzig, East Germany's second largest city. Two days later, Communist Party chief Erich Honecker was forced to resign. But the protests continued and grew still more massive. By Nov. 4 there were over half a million anti-regime demonstrators in East Berlin, alone.

On the same day, Czechoslovakia's hardline Stalinists, showing that they were not immune to the panic engulfing the bureaucratic elites of Eastern Europe, opened their border with West Germany to allow additional thousands of East Germans to leave.

By Nov. 9 the flood of East Germans reaching West Germany from Czechoslovakia in the preceding six days exceeded 50,000, and it is estimated that 250,000 have left for the West in the last three or four months.

The effects of this mass outpouring, which included many skilled young workers, threatened to cripple the already faltering East German economy. To stem the hemorrhage, the Stalinists were compelled to practically remove all restrictions on travel between the two Germanys.

The assurance that people could come and go worked—at least for the time being. It was seen by East Germans as a commitment to carry out fundamental political and economic

reforms that would be exceedingly difficult to take back.

It was also an assurance to those who would have left that they still had the option of emigrating if things didn't work out. But most important, the headlong retreat of the Stalinist rulers gives the masses the confi-

dence to stay and continue the struggle for a democratic socialism. It was one of the most powerful mass mobilizations in the East yet. It was distinguished by the action of East German workers, sparking and backing up their mass mobilizations in the streets with a massive general strike that shut



dence to stay and continue the struggle for a democratic socialism.

### Special role of German workers

East Germany has a unique position in divided Europe. Of all the bureaucratized workers' states of Eastern Europe and Asia, East Germany is at the highest level of economic development. (Czechoslovakia also possesses a highly developed economy, but its historical role in Europe doesn't equal that of Germany.)

It has long been recognized that workers in such countries have the greatest inherent potential for revolutionary organization and action.

German workers from the last quarter of the 19th century until the first third of the 20th century had constituted the largest and best-organized socialist workers' movement in the world. It is no accident that the founder of scientific socialism, Karl Marx, was a German.

And neither is it accidental that the first

down virtually all production and transport in East Germany. And as happened in Hungary three years later, it took brutal action by Soviet troops to crush the uprising.

Moreover, East German workers' obvious connection with their counterparts in West Germany means that their influence upon each other is unparalleled. Today, the influence of economically successful West Germany—transmitted through family contacts as well as television—is a factor contributing to the uprising in the Eastern part of Germany.

And conversely, the lessons being learned by workers today in the East are certainly making their impact on their counterparts in the Western part of Germany.

The German working class, in short, has the objective capability of the most advanced forms of class mobilization and therefore is well suited to play a key role in the vanguard of the European working class.

This explains the remarkable shift by the East's Stalinist rulers from "hardline" intran-

sigence to panicky retreat in the face of the increasingly massive mobilizations in the streets of East German cities. The political crisis, which began with tens of thousands of workers and their families fleeing to West Germany, became far more acute when they began to take to the streets, declaring their determination to stay and fight, not flee.

But so far, East European workers have not yet entered the current wave of struggles in their own name, as they had in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, in Poland at the beginning of this decade, and most recently in the coal-mining regions of the Soviet Union.

Up to now, they have certainly participated in the mass marches and rallies—it must be assumed that when hundreds of thousands demonstrate in one city, a significant component consists of workers—but they have not yet entered the field of battle through their own fighting class institutions, such as have been established in Poland and are just being formed in the Soviet Union.

### Response to economic attacks

It's important to note why direct intervention by workers—strikes, strike committees, etc.—has not yet erupted from this recent series of upsurges sweeping through Eastern Europe. In every case where workers intervened in their own name, they did so in response to unbearable economic sacrifices being imposed upon them.

These sacrifices have directly and indirectly been the result of the attempt to solve the problems of shortages and poor quality goods—endemic to bureaucratic planning and privilege—through measures designed to allow market forces to regulate the quantity and quality of commodities produced.

But the panic gripping the bureaucratic regimes derives from the stubborn fact that, for market forces to work, the prices of basic commodities must first be allowed to rise to their real values, according to the laws of commodity exchange. Workers in Poland and the Soviet Union have shown that they will stubbornly resist the resulting reduction in their living standards.

In short, the *de-facto* "social pact" between workers and the bureaucracies in the workers' states—that is, a guaranteed floor to living standards, full employment and the whole panoply of existing social benefits—must be breached before market mechanisms can have the hoped-for effect of increasing the available quantity and quality of basic commodities.

A dramatic struggle to win the workers to their side was opened with the appeal by Czech students and intellectuals for workers to honor a two-hour general strike called on Nov. 27 in support of their demands for democratization.

The bureaucracy is desperately striving to prevent workers from entering the struggle in their own name by charging that the aim of those demanding democracy is really intended to overthrow "socialism"—by which they mean the guarantee of a secure minimum standard of living which workers see as a truly progressive conquest of the workers' state.

But it is Gorbachev's *perestroika* (restructuring) policy—not the millions in the streets to demand an end to bureaucratic rule—which is undermining the conquests of the workers' states. Gorbachev's program is being followed by virtually all Stalinist bureaucrats—"reformers" and "hardliners" alike.

And so far, attempts to carry out this anti-working class policy have stirred-up hornets' nests of strikes in Poland and the Soviet Union, forcing the Stalinist rulers into painful retreats and a marking of time, as they agonize to find a way to stop workers from taking matters into their own hands.

### Destabilizing world capitalism

Clearly, contrary to the wishful thinking of the mouthpieces of world capitalism, the aspirations of the upsurging masses are not at all for a restoration of capitalism.

In East Germany, as we saw in China and

the Soviet Union, the masses in their great majority have already made clear that their demand for democracy is not a euphemism for giving their factories and other enterprises back to the capitalists. Even if this thought pops into the heads of some of the middle class-minded demonstrators, hardly any have yet dared to voice it.

The protesting millions want democracy so that they can make the socialized economy work! The capitalist media doesn't even try to provide convincing evidence that the masses in the East want capitalism.

The fact is that the news media has been unable to come up with a single poster or banner calling for "free enterprise," or any other unambiguous euphemism for capitalism. They are counting on their intensive past propaganda, falsely equating capitalism with freedom and democracy, to lead observers around the world to believe that the rebellious masses in the bureaucratized workers' states mean capitalism when they demand democracy and the ouster of the "Communist" bureaucratic dictatorship.

Just listen to this unusual confirmation of the pro-socialist sentiment in East Germany

revealed in the following extract from a satirical Nov. 15 *New York Times* editorial. Mockingly headlined "Thoughts of Chairman Krenz," the trepidation of the world's capitalists glares through their gleeful chortling at the plight of East Germany's Stalinists. The piece is written as if it is the new Stalinist chairman of the Socialist Unity Party (the name used by the Communist Party of East Germany), Egon Krenz, speaking:

"The West tells me I need capitalism. Wait till it finds out how radical my opponents are. They want more of a welfare state than the Swedes or the Social Democrats in Bonn. Will the common market give more trade credits to real socialists? My critics here want to make socialism work, not arrange a corporate merger with Bonn.

"They're a bunch of real leftists who want socialism—and democracy too. We're not ready for that...."

There are many such reports showing that the capitalist rulers know that workers have a goal going far beyond, and essentially opposed to that of the most radical of the bureaucratic "reformers."

But the Stalinist regimes are not alone in

their worries about the instability of their oppressive political system. Western capitalism knows that it is only a matter of time before their own system slips out of control and the example being set today in Eastern Europe is followed tomorrow in the West.

#### Crises of Stalinism, imperialism

Gorbachev surely counted on capitalist fears of economic collapse when he launched his campaign to restructure the Soviet economy. He hoped to make investment in the East appealing to the world's capitalists.

The attractiveness of Gorbachev's invitation to invest in Eastern Europe's economy, he calculates, lies in the opportunity it provides for postponing the economic collapse looming on capitalism's horizon.

Gorbachev hopes to evoke an obvious parallel with the post-World War II Marshall Plan, which poured billions of U.S. dollars into Europe and Japan, reviving their economies, reviving collapsing world trade, radically and steadily improving the living standards of war-devastated European and Japanese workers, and thus rescuing Europe from the very real threat of social revolution

which was staring capitalism in the eye at that time.

Gorbachev hopes that imperialism will be driven by its own current mounting problems to accept his invitation to Western capital to invest in the Eastern economies.

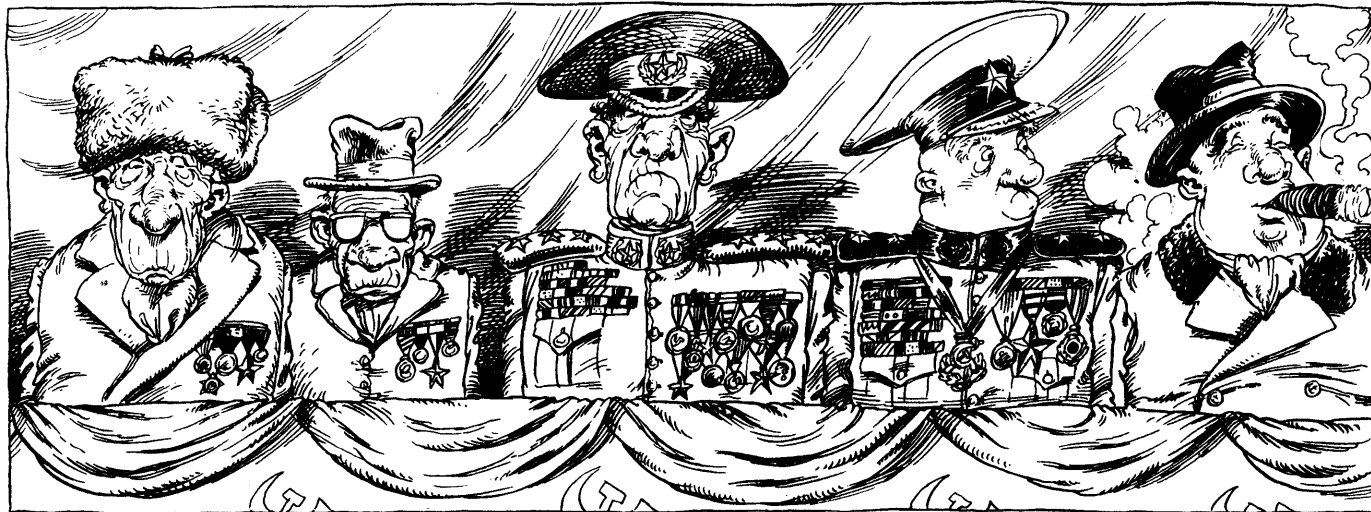
There is no question that massive investments in the East and in China could open another prolonged period of capitalist prosperity, such as that opened up by the Marshall Plan—and thus an extended period of social stability for capitalism. But there are symmetrical obstacles to this neat solution on each side of the border between East and West.

In the first place, the Stalinist bureaucracies headed by Gorbachev are not so foolish as to simply open their borders to capitalist investment and let nature take its course. If the restoration of capitalism is allowed to proceed too swiftly, the danger of an uncontrollable workers' insurrection in the East will be intensified, rather than be reduced. Its impact in the West would be incalculable.

This double-sided danger is feared equally by both capitalists and bureaucrats. And this

(continued on page 12)

# Hungarian Stalinists leading charge for return of capitalism



"Enter comrade capitalist. The old party priviligentsia is trying to move over into the private sector. Is this entirely a bad thing?" — *The Economist* (Aug. 26, 1989)

By ADAM WOOD

While the world's attention focuses on East Germany and Czechoslovakia, Hungary has quietly maintained its position in the front lines of Eastern Europe's drive toward capitalist restoration.

On Oct. 23, Hungary's new constitution was unveiled, declaring that now in Hungary "the values of bourgeois democracy and democratic socialism will prevail in equal measure." This move followed the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers Party's decision on Oct. 7 to reconstitute itself with a new name and a new program favoring a multi-party political system and a market economy.

These events put a label on changes that have taken place in Hungary over the past two decades. Since the 1960s, Hungary's ruling bureaucracy has looked to limited privatizations of the nation's wealth and market reforms to attract Western capital. But the pace of reforms increased dramatically over the past year as the bureaucracy struggled to keep up politically with the economic chaos it had unleashed.

For instance, the Oct. 7 congress which decided to reform the ruling party declared that the party would maintain its factory cells which police the workers and continue the existence of the Workers' Guard which serves as the party's private army. These steps were designed to guarantee the party's domination of political life, despite projected free elections.

Less than a week after the party congress, the Hungarian parliament overturned both of these decisions.

This action by parliament (ratified in a national referendum on Nov. 26) extends to all parties seeking to organize workers. It amounts to throwing the baby out with the

dirty bathwater by abolishing the basic democratic right of workers to organize in the factories and to bear arms.

#### Provoking strikes and protests

The Hungarian bureaucracy is trying to win over intellectuals and workers with political reforms to compensate for a rapidly declining standard of living. A \$20 billion foreign debt, 20 percent inflation, and a wage freeze have combined to futher embitter Hungarian workers toward a ruling party which remains in power today thanks to the Soviet crushing of the independent Hungarian workers' councils' movement in 1956.

Strikes and demonstrations have increased along with overwhelming opposition to the effects of the government's introduction of capitalist economic mechanisms. The average annual income in Hungary now stands at \$2200—half of the same figure for South Korea.

On Aug. 2, 1989, the Workers' Commission of the dissident Association of the Left Alternative called on all Hungarian workers to support a protest march by the mineworkers in the southern town of Pecs. Their call reveals the growing working-class opposition to the bureaucracy's pro-capitalist reforms:

"The process of 'resolving' the economic crisis is taking place against the interests of the majority of the working class. The economic bureaucracy, intent on reinforcing its positions in power, is pushing the privatization scheme in its own interest; it is consciously introducing unemployment, which already affects half-a-million workers.

"The first victim of this policy is the Hungarian mining industry. They want to shut down the mines, supposedly because

they are non-profitable, without offering the miners any new jobs or possibilities for job retraining. Massive unemployment has nothing to do with economic reforms; it only means economic and social catastrophe."

The beneficial reforms of free elections and legalization of independent political parties have not been accompanied with curbs on an incipient exploitative economy. On the contrary, Hungary now has an active stock market and more state firms are passing into private hands every week.

#### "Enfranchising the nomenklatura"

Shouldn't the ruling bureaucracy be threatened by the restoration of capitalism and an end to the nationalized economy? Wouldn't such a development mean an end to their special privileges? Not entirely.

A process has begun in Hungary and other deformed workers' states which in Poland is called "enfranchisement of the nomenklatura." Essentially, the goal is to transform the ruling bureaucrats of these countries—or at least major sectors of the bureaucracy—from administrators to owners of industry; i.e., to create a capitalist class.

The form this process takes in Hungary is a new law which would allow individuals to buy controlling stock of 200 to 300 of the country's largest companies. This Conversion Law gives state managers decision-making power concerning when and whom to sell the company to, and on what terms.

The inevitable result will be a series of managers wheeling and dealing ownership of industry, driven by the prospect of keeping the profits rather than turning them over to the state. The final shape of the law will probably be determined after next year's elections, but the economic plans of the bureau-

cracy are clear.

The biggest hitch in the economic reforms has been the Western capitalists' lukewarm support to these policies. Foreign investors have sought more guarantees that the Hungarian government's commitment to free enterprise is sincere.

But apparently they have now been convinced.

#### GE leads the pack

This year, General Electric bought a controlling interest in the Tungsram Co., a light-bulb manufacturer. (The deal will result in 4000 layoffs.) That transaction is worth \$150 million. General Motors is close to signing a \$200 million deal to build engines in northwestern Hungary. Japan's prime minister will visit Hungary in January, reportedly to discuss plans for an automobile factory.

The capitalists of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan are aggressively probing the openings into the economies of Eastern Europe. Their intentions are not to develop this region into a self-sufficient economic unit free of repression.

Rather, the capitalists seek the extension of the "Third World" into the "Second World." They hope to convert Eastern Europe into a dumping ground for Western goods and a source of cheap materials and labor.

The existence of nationalized economies and a state monopoly of foreign trade has prevented capitalism from exploiting the Eastern European workers' states. The restoration of capitalism in these countries would remove any barriers to imperialist plunder and would lower the standard of living for working people even further.

The bureaucracy in Hungary is committed to the project of dismantling the workers' state. Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth stated boldly on Oct. 9 that he "hope[d] to remain at the head of the government until May 1990 to carry out the economic reforms and fully privatize the economy."

The only force that can fend off the restoration of capitalism is the working class in its massive numbers.

#### Every reason for optimism

There is every reason to be optimistic about the prospects of a workers' political revolution in Eastern Europe. The massive demonstrations for democratic rights sweeping East Germany, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia have been accompanied by strikes in Poland, the Soviet Union, and Hungary in which the workers have supported the demands of the demonstrators and raised their own economic demands.

The bureaucracies are trying to stay ahead of these movements, but the total destruction of the planned economy would lead to actions that would make today's actions seem small.

The element needed to take advantage of the tremendous political openings in Eastern Europe is a revolutionary party with a program of socialism and democracy. Such a party could turn the overwhelming sentiment of the Hungarian workers for democracy and against austerity into resolute political action.

Hungary's rulers have dropped the banner of socialism (which they soiled and trampled upon for four decades). The Hungarian workers are in position to pick it up. ■

# ... Eastern Europe

(continued from page 11)

is why imperialism has not leaped to take advantage of Gorbachev and Co.'s plight. They are for the moment compelled to assist his efforts to restabilize bureaucratic control.

That's the meaning of President Bush, Western Germany's Chancellor Kohl, and other Western leaders' declarations of solidarity with the Stalinist leaders and their hints of substantial material assistance in the offing. Of course, these Western heads of state insist that acceptable terms for both sides first be worked out.

In short, the ruling capitalists throughout the world are profoundly aware that Gorbachev is the best ally they have, today, for achieving their ultimate goal of reconquering Eastern Europe for capitalism.

## Attempts have not paid off

In the meantime things are not going too well for Gorbachev and Co. The attempts to institute capitalist market relations inside Eastern Europe have not paid off in any improvement in productivity or in workers' living standards.

Furthermore, the experience with the wave of entrepreneurs who have enriched themselves by price-gouging has served to generate a nearly universal hostility to this incipient capitalism. After all, it's not as if East Europeans know nothing of the evils of capitalism.

But the cynical lament of bureaucrats and capitalists alike is that if workers can't be made to face the ultimate discipline of unemployment and hunger, there can be no "incentive" to work hard and produce more and better quality commodities.

But Stalinist bureaucrats need to be able to show some results before they can get their workers to accept the austerity that must be in place before a system based on such brutal economic pressures can have any chance of spurring production.

That's the meaning of Lech Walesa's plea to America's capitalists to stop patting him on the back and come up with a program of capital investment in Poland on the scale of the Marshall Plan. The Solidarnosc/Stalinist coalition knows that Polish workers will not accept "reforms" that undermine their living standards.

The only way this Polish ruling bloc can inveigle the workers to accept a little more hunger and hard times is if they can show them tangible evidence that it would be temporary and that capitalist incentives promise to bring real improvements down the road.

## Some obvious differences

Of course, there are some obvious differences between the Europe and Japan of post-World War II and Eastern Europe today which militate against a commitment by imperialism to invest their money in Eastern Europe on a scale approaching that of the Marshall Plan.

In post-war Europe, U.S. imperialism could buy into and strongly influence the business enterprises and the economic infrastructure of these countries with the full protection of the existing laws, the courts, and the law-enforcement agencies of these capitalist states.

Furthermore, there was a broad social base of petty, medium, and large capitalists numbering in the millions throughout Europe upon which they could depend to help them protect their property rights. This is patently not the case in Eastern Europe today.

The capitalists also know that Poland and other countries in the East went on an orgy of borrowing to develop their industries in the 1970s, which ended in disaster for East European borrowers and a possible disaster for imperialist investors.

Poland alone owes \$39 billion to foreign bankers and has not been able to repay its debt on schedule. Prospects for ultimate repayment are equally gloomy. Imperialist bankers don't trust the bureaucrats to make wise enough use of their capital so that they can be repaid, and at a rate of interest called for by the high risks.

Thus, Congress and President Bush have a far more modest aid package in mind, given present circumstances. They are reluctant to give the go-ahead to their class to risk massive investment before "irreversible" guarantees for private property are put in place in the bureaucratic workers' states. They fear any deal that risks giving a boost to an essentially socialized economy that could be reversed and that could leave these states economically stronger and world capitalism empty handed.

For the time being, the objective pressures

to make concessions bears down primarily on the Stalinist regimes. Their current economic crises have precipitated political turmoil which is breaking out of their control. It is no exaggeration to say that history has never witnessed such a widespread objectively revolutionary movement of hundreds of millions of people in such a short space of time!

Neither is it likely that Gorbachev and Co. have yet made a decision to put all their bets on capitalist restoration—ultimately transforming their elite social status from one based on bureaucratic privilege into one based on capitalist property rights.

But the long-term trend of the Stalinist bureaucracy has been toward accommodation to capitalism. And whatever their current intentions may be, the course now being followed will end in the restoration of capitalism if a workers' revolution doesn't first sweep the bureaucrats into the dustbin of history.

## Unified Europe, unified Germany

Participation by West Germany, as one among equals, in the attempt by European capitalist states to create a common market was grounded in the post-World War II divi-

it would open up a new era for European capitalism. They would then become a united economic entity capable of competing on much better terms with Japanese and U.S. imperialism for a greater share of the world market.

But a major stride toward establishing a capitalist United States of Europe is being hobbled by many intractable obstacles. These obstructions to a unified European economy can be boiled down to a reluctance by each imperialism to yield control over its own state apparatus to a super-European state.

Each national capitalism fears domination over a super-state by one of its stronger components, which might then use the new state as its own special instrument to gain extra advantage for itself when national interests come into sharp conflict.

While the Common Market states have been able to go further down this path than some realists expected, they have been able to do so primarily because of the prolonged period of prosperity which has permitted competition between imperialist rivals to stay within moderate limits.

## Coming economic storms

The antagonisms that can be contained during good times are exacerbated during bad times, eventually breaking up the peaceful coexistence of rival capitalist states. A Nov.

European workers proceed toward the establishment of a consciously revolutionary socialist proletarian leadership, one which can carry the struggle to overthrow the Stalinist dictatorships to a successful conclusion.

This latter point is an absolute pre-condition before the bureaucratic caricature of "socialism" in Eastern Europe and China can be transformed into a revolutionary, democratic confederation of workers' states. Without a revolutionary party in the workers' states, world capitalism will be the ultimate beneficiary of Stalinism's current turmoil.

## Conclusion

The political revolution is an objective process set into motion by the incapacity of bureaucratic planning to take the nationalized economies to higher levels of productive efficiency. Bungling bureaucrats compound the drain on the resources of the planned economy by the inordinate share of society's wealth they consume to maintain their highly privileged life-style.

History teaches that revolutionary situations arise from the unconscious movement of history. But revolutionary opportunities are easily lost if there is no conscious leadership built in time that can take the revolutionary class safely through the many pitfalls and traps set for it by those ruling classes and castes that benefit from the status quo.



East German border guards assumed postures of benign resignation to tearing down of Berlin Wall.

sion of Germany. The allied powers' division of Germany after the war was intended in part to prevent such a third resurgence of Germany at the head of a major imperialist economic, political, and military bloc, and to strategically tie it to Western Europe.

But the growing contradictions temporarily hidden beneath the unity of the capitalist world have been sharpened by the possibilities opened up by the collapse of the wall between the two Germanys. The reunification of Germany is now in the cards. It would open the possibility of German imperialism going its own way to take full advantage of its imposing economic power in Europe.

It is even more accurate to say that the utopia of a unified Europe scheduled to be cemented together by 1992 is in danger of being ruptured by new opportunities difficult for West German capitalists to resist. The two Germanys, which already had been major trading partners, will be driven by the force of possibilities inherent in the new situation into an intensified link-up of their economies.

Some authoritative bourgeois spokespersons go so far as to predict that the unification of Germany, like it or not, is inevitable. West Germany's Chancellor Kohl, knowing the fears of his allies, has sought to reassure them by announcing conditions for unity which East German Stalinists can hardly accept; there would be major consternation and opposition from East German workers which could prematurely scuttle such a project.

But Kohl knows that the logic of more flexible terms for collaboration will drive the Eastern bureaucrats into his grasp anyway. He is therefore likely to make a more acceptable offer to his counterparts on the other side of the wall at a more propitious time.

On the other hand, West German capitalism will not fail to demand more favorable conditions for itself from its Western partners for remaining committed to the Common Market. The outcome of these maneuvers are impossible to predict.

The Western European countries, which have set 1992 as their target date for establishing the basic rudiments of a common market, had seemed to be coming close to realizing the goal of a European-wide, tariff-free, integrated economic system.

If they could reach this goal, they believed,

19 *New York Times* commentary by writer Alan Riding summarizes the complex status of European unity in the aftermath of the momentous events in East Germany. He writes:

"Today, not a few Western Europeans secretly wish Eastern Europe had postponed its peaceful revolution until after 1992. By that time, the European Community would have created a single economic market and perhaps put aside its members' differences and set a course toward political integration.

"The community, the thinking goes, would by then be strong enough politically to deal with sudden change in Eastern Europe. Above all, with West Germany firmly tied to the West, any moves toward German reunification could take place in a thoroughly Western context.

"But with Western Europe still unsure about its own shape of things to come, events in Eastern Europe have only sown disarray. France was already facing resistance from Britain and West Germany to its plan to accelerate moves toward economic and monetary union at next month's European Community summit. Now France believes it is more important than ever to extract a deeper West German commitment to integration."

Which way will West Germany go? Will it go toward the Common European market and a later collaboration with its Western allies in the attempt to absorb East Germany, or will it steal a march and seek to unilaterally absorb the other Germany?

In the latter case, this would lead toward the establishment of a "MiddleEurope" German-imperialist-dominated bloc. This would enable West Germany to more effectively compete with the rest of its imperialist rivals. (This certainly is a thought that has crossed the minds of Gorbachev and his East German henchmen.)

But which course capitalist Germany takes depends to a great extent on two important objective factors:

1. How soon will economic conditions in the capitalist world undermine this system's relative harmony and impel each state toward internecine struggle, on the principle of "each man for himself," and;
2. How quickly and how far can East

A mass revolutionary party, one based on the accumulated lessons derived from class-struggle experience throughout modern history, is necessary to transform objective revolutionary possibilities into reality.

We believe that these accumulated lessons, which apply in all three spheres of the modern world (the imperialist countries, the neo-colonial countries, and the bureaucratized workers' states), already exist. These lessons go by the name of "The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution." This document was written by Leon Trotsky, who, along with V.I. Lenin, led the Russian workers to victory in October 1917.

The October Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky taught, was not the end but the beginning of the struggle for a socialist order that could only be realized on a world scale. The Soviet Republic, they explained was essentially the "advance outpost of the coming world revolution."

Stalin became the recognized representative of the privileged bureaucracy which sought to defend its privileges at any price. He soon abandoned the Leninist perspective of world revolution, opting instead for "Socialism in One Country."

After Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky carried on the struggle for world revolution, the only road by which socialism can be reached, and became the principal adversary of the Stalinist degeneration of the first workers' state.

Those who want to understand the revolution unfolding in the bureaucratized workers' states, and beyond, will be well served by studying the illuminating writings of Leon Trotsky, who stood on the shoulders of those outstanding proletarian thinkers and fighters who came before him.

Nothing could be more important to anyone who is aware of the threat to the very existence of civilization, and even life on earth, posed by the continued domination of world society by capitalism.

There is reason for optimism. We are on the threshold of a new resurgence of world revolutionary opportunities. But a revolutionary party which knows how to fight is necessary for victory. When workers are forced by circumstances to begin a struggle in earnest, the revolutionary party and the working class will find their way to each other. ■

# Esteban Volkov remembers daily life in Trotsky household

By ESTEBAN VOLKOV

*Esteban (Sieva) Volkov, the grandson of Bolshevik Party leader Leon Trotsky, recently participated in a speaking tour of the United States sponsored by Walnut Publishing Co. and Socialist Action. We reprint below excerpts of one of the speeches that Volkov presented on the tour.*

I was really one of the most fortunate members of Trotsky's family, because most of my relatives were exterminated, assassinated, or sent to concentration camps. I was very lucky to get out of the Soviet Union.

I left the Soviet Union at the age of five in 1931 with my mother [Zina Volkova], who had to leave to receive medical treatment. She had a very bad case of tuberculosis and she also had serious nervous problems. We reached the Old Man (my grandfather, Leon Trotsky) and his wife Natalya in Prinkipo, Turkey, in 1931.

My mother left my older half-sister, Alexandra, in the Soviet Union. This was not her choice. Stalin ordered that she could only bring the smaller child, me, with her.

After some months of living with Trotsky and Natalya and some European secretaries—Jan Frankel, Jean Van Heijenoort, and Leon Sedov (Trotsky's oldest son)—my mother left for Berlin to receive treatment. I stayed maybe two or three months with my grandparents until Van Heijenoort brought me to Berlin to be with my mother. I stayed for perhaps two months.

Suddenly one day, my uncle Lyova [Leon Sedov] came to pick me up from my school. He told me that my mother was sick and that she was in the hospital. I did not know until one year later, when I was living in Vienna, that she had in fact committed suicide. This period coincided with the coming to power of Hitler in Germany. My mother's suicide was the result of these difficult times and of being forbidden to return to Russia to see her daughter, Alexandra.

I stayed for two years in Vienna in a little home for children which was maintained by a Freudian psychologist. Also in the home, if I remember correctly, was a daughter of Wilhelm Reich—and also a young lady who was a daughter of Freud.

## Leon Sedov is murdered

After two years, I was taken by one of Trotsky's Czech secretaries, Jan Frankel, and we traveled by train to Paris. I stayed in the apartment of Leon Sedov and his French companion [Jeanne Martin].

Unfortunately, the family did not last very long. About one-and-a-half years or two years later, Lyova [Leon Sedov] had a strong appendicitis attack and was placed in the hospital operated by Russian emigres.

Later, it was discovered that one of his closest Russian emigre collaborators, Etienne, was really a GPU agent. [He now lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.] Sedov was recovering very well from the operation when suddenly his condition got much worse, and he died. Now it is perfectly well known that he was poisoned by the GPU [Stalin's secret police].

I lived for several years in Paris with Sedov's former companion—a very sad and lonely woman. It was a very difficult time for a young boy as well. Finally, Alfred and Margarite Rosmer (very old friends of Leon Trotsky) took me to New York by boat.

## Trotsky's household in Mexico

We arrived in New York in 1939, when there was a World's Fair. From there we reached Mexico by train. Suddenly, I was in the middle of a very active household filled with young European and American supporters of Trotsky. It was a very lively environment, which I very much enjoyed after the sad days in Paris.

None of the secretaries and guards were paid a wage, it was all volunteer. It was like a big family, with the Old Man as a kind of patriarch or father of this community of young comrades (most of them Americans).

Trotsky was a very warm person, very friendly, very interested in the personal welfare of all the friends around him. He had a very great sense of humor. We were always joking.

And, of course, he was also a very hard worker, he was very disciplined. He would start very early in his office, he would read his correspondence from around the world, and he would write articles. He was actually working on a biography of Stalin when he was killed.

Usually at night he would have political discussions with comrades. At that time, there were great polemics. One debate was whether the Soviet Union was still a country which should still be defended as a workers' state—or whether it had degenerated to the point where it had nothing to do with socialism.

Trotsky said that the Soviet Union was a "degenerated workers' state" but that, nonetheless, the remaining gains of the revolution made it closer to socialism than any capitalist country. The means of production had been nationalized and capitalist private ownership eliminated. This was a transitional stage.

## Stalin's terrorists attack

During the first months at Coyoacan in the Trotsky household, life was very nice. We usually went out to the country on the weekends to collect cactuses. Trotsky was the first to carry the heavy plants up and down the hills; he did not want any young comrades to help him. Later, we would plant them in the garden.

Soon, however, problems developed. There were always slanderous attacks against Trotsky in the Stalinist press in Mexico—as was true throughout the world. But Trotsky began to notice a drastic escalation of these attacks. They became more frequent and more virulent.

Some months after the heightened campaign of slanders, at 4 a.m., there was an attack by 20 to 25 terrorists. It was led by the famous Mexican painter, David Alfaro Siqueiros.

I was sleeping in the room beside my grandparents. Suddenly, I saw a silhouette in the moonlight; someone pushed open the



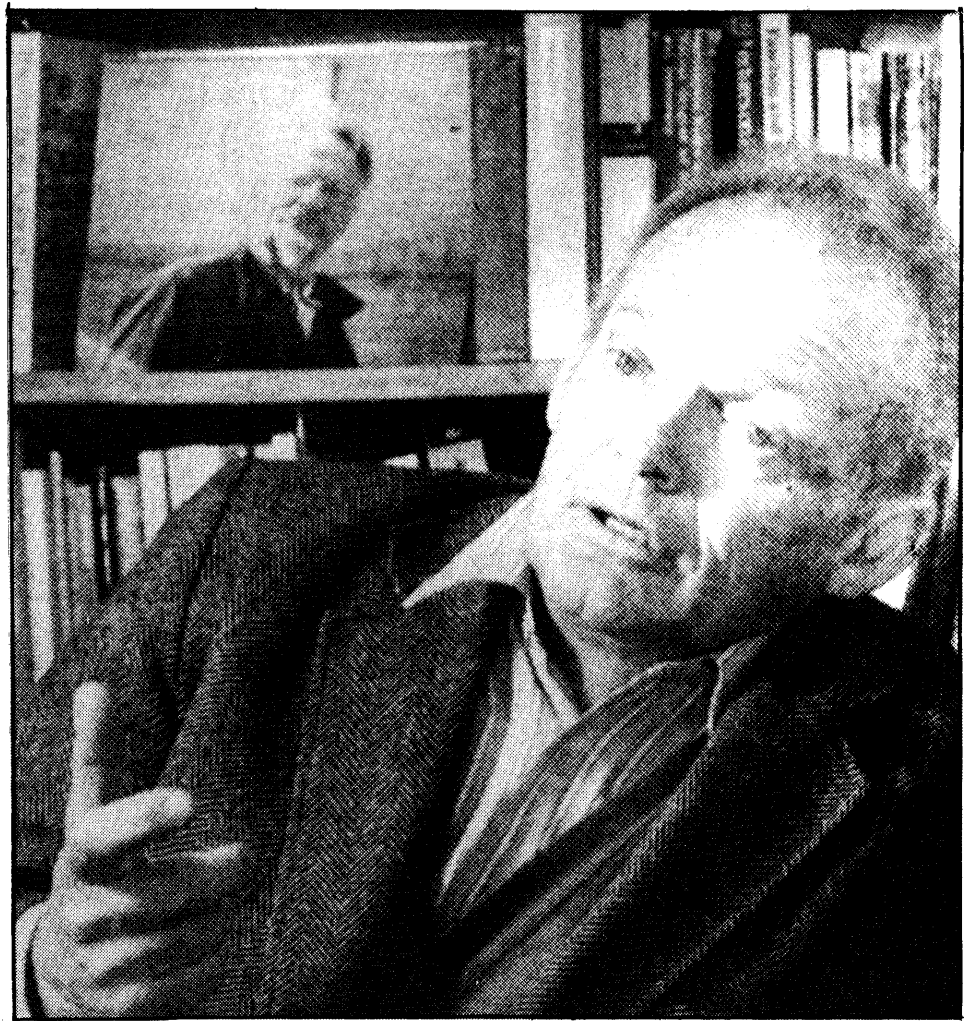
Leon Sedov, 1906–1938

French windows. It made a lot of noise and I was awakened. It was someone in a uniform. Then there was heavy machine-gun fire and the smell of powder. It was like awakening from a sound, comfortable sleep and being thrown into the middle of a battle.

After some minutes of shooting, other terrorists came into the room and threw some incendiary bombs, which made a big explosion. At this point, my fear turned into panic and I jumped from under the bed where I was hiding. [Later, several bullet holes were found in the bed. Fortunately, Volkov only received a minor bullet wound in the foot].

As I was running, I collided with one of the terrorists who was running away. He did not pay any attention to the small boy who was running in the garden. I passed through the library and dining room over on the east side of the house and got out onto the patio and reached the room of one of the guards, Harold Robbins. I stayed there petrified.

Fortunately, the shooting stopped and the terrorists left the house. Some minutes later we heard the voice of Trotsky—full of life and gaiety. He was grateful to be alive. He was surrounded by all of us in the household and we all began to comment on the attack. Everyone seemed to be okay. But then we discovered that one of the North American



Esteban Volkov with a photo of his grandfather, Leon Trotsky, behind him

guards, Sheldon Harte, had been kidnapped. His dead body was found later.

## "We have lived one more day"

After that, life in the house was very tense. The North American party collected a defense fund for Trotsky to fortify the defense of the house. Iron doors were installed. Concrete guard posts with peep holes were constructed above the house. Visits to the countryside were eliminated. We were all expecting another attack.

Trotsky was absolutely sure that Stalin would not stop until he finished the job. Each morning when he would wake up, he'd say to Natalya: "Natasha, we have lived one more day."

There was a young North American comrade, Sylvia Agelof, in the household. She had the great admiration of all of us in the house; she was very friendly and hardworking. She had a companion, Ramon Mercader ("Monard" or "Jacson"), a Belgian journalist who had suddenly arrived in Coyoacan. He did not show any interest in approaching Trotsky, but developed a relationship with the guards. He invited them sightseeing and sometimes lent them his car and other favors. And he often gave me some presents when he visited.

One day, after months and months of doing favors and giving the image of being a very generous man who always wanted to help, Jacson asked if Trotsky could comment on an essay he was writing on the current debate over the nature of the Soviet state. Trotsky thought that he was a friendly man, the companion of a comrade, and someone who was interested in politics. So how could he refuse this little favor?

In the afternoon, Trotsky reviewed the essay in his office. The visit lasted 20 minutes or so, and then Mercader left. Afterwards, Trotsky told Natalya that he felt something strange about Jacson. Trotsky said that his mannerisms were not like a Belgian.

Jacson was supposed to come back for another appointment to review the final version of his article with Trotsky. Soon, he came again in the afternoon. He was carrying a raincoat draped over his arm. Natalya greeted him and said, "You look so pale, you are perhaps working so hard, you don't look well. What happened? You should take more care, you should not work so much. And why are you carrying this raincoat? There is a blue sky."

Jacson said that you can never know the weather in Mexico. He asked for a glass of water, which Natalya brought to him. Then he entered the office with Trotsky. But this



Mercader, alias Jacson, just after his fatal attack on Trotsky

time he intended to complete his mission—which Stalin had ordered.

## "The Fourth International—Go forward!"

Some minutes elapsed, and there was a terrible cry that was heard throughout the house. Trotsky came out of the room filled with blood and without his glasses. Natalya arrived, and he told her: "Jacson, it was Jacson! What we were expecting has happened." He then lay on the floor in the arms of Natalya.

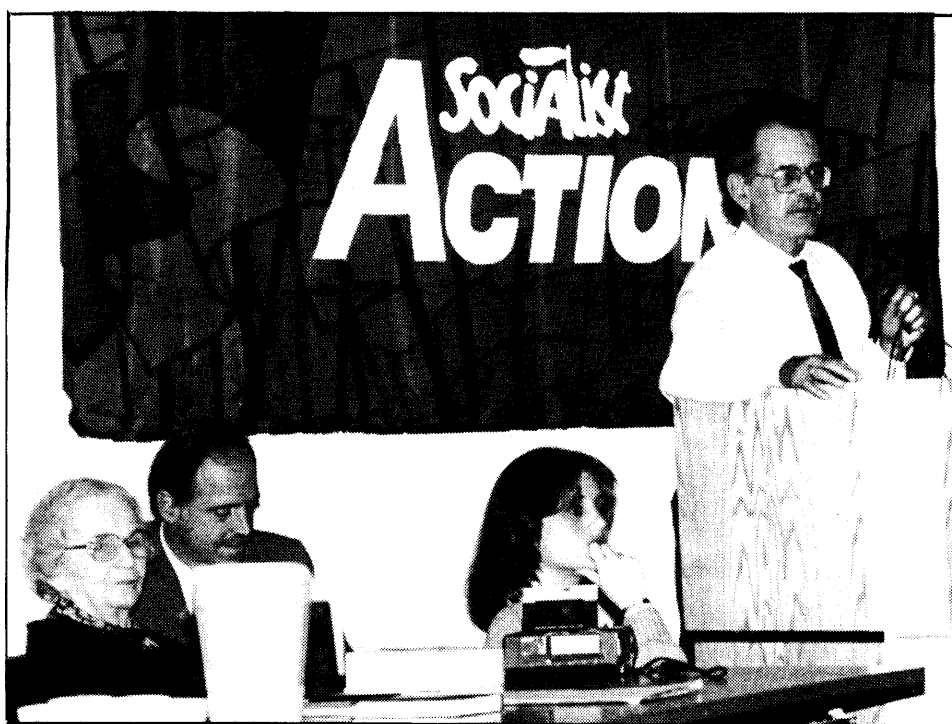
At this time, the guards were beating Jacson very violently. A Mexican guard was even pointing a gun at him from the roof and was ready to shoot him. But Trotsky was able to tell the guards, "Don't kill him, he must talk." And that was probably the reason he wasn't killed.

While lying on the floor fatally wounded, according to Joseph Hansen [chief of Trotsky's guards], Trotsky also said, "I am absolutely sure of the triumph of the Fourth International. Go forward!"

At that moment, I was a little boy returning from school. As I approached the house, I knew something was wrong because of all the commotion outside the house. I entered the room where Trotsky was lying, and Trotsky said to a guard, "Keep the boy away. He should not see this." It is a small point perhaps, but one I think shows the humanity of Trotsky even in his dying moments.

About one hour later, he was taken by ambulance to a Mexico City hospital. He was

(continued on next page)



(Left to right): Nadezhda Joffe; interpreter George Saunders, chairperson Alexei Folger; and Pierre Broué at Oct. 20 Boston Soviet tour meeting

## Veteran Trotskyists conclude successful 12-city tour of U.S.

By CARL FINAMORE

Three veteran revolutionary Marxists—Esteban Volkov, Nadezhda Joffe, and Pierre Broué—successfully completed their October speaking tour of the United States sponsored by Walnut Publishing Co. and Socialist Action. All three spoke in Boston and New York, with Volkov and Broué also speaking in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In addition, Broué spoke in Baltimore, Chicago, and Minneapolis.

Other participants in portions of the tour were Professor Paul Siegel, Ralph Schoenman, Susan Weissman, and Carl Finamore, all of whom recently visited the Soviet Union to request that Leon Trotsky's name be cleared of all the false charges hurled by Stalin and his successors and that the Soviet government publish and widely distribute Trotsky's complete writings. The delegation to the Soviet Union represented the surviving family members of Leon Trotsky.

The October speaking tour of the United States coincided with the mass upheavals in Eastern Europe and drew enthusiastic audiences in every city. Interest in the ideas of the original Bolshevik opposition to Stalin is now greater than ever. The speakers pointed out that this renewed interest was not only an academic, historical curiosity. The ideas of the Left Opposition, they noted, are key to

understanding today's events and charting a course toward genuine workers' democracy.

Several meetings attracted over 150 people, many hearing the Trotskyist program for workers' democracy for the first time. Over 175 autographed copies of "Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead?" were sold. The new Walnut Publishing Co. release contains articles by the tour participants.

Several newspaper interviews were arranged with the speakers including a *Los Angeles Times* article which received national circulation over their wire service. Meetings and seminars were sponsored on university campuses by a number of Russian and Eastern European Studies departments, including Harvard, Columbia, Stanford, University of California (Berkeley), UCLA, and Brown.

In addition to young activists, many veterans of the socialist movement attended the meetings. Often they would comment how pleased they were that millions throughout the world were rebelling against the totalitarian Stalinist regimes, which previously had so easily dismissed the lone Trotskyist voice of opposition.

Now it was the Stalinists, they explained, who were isolated and condemned, not through bureaucratic slanders, deceit, and violence—as the Trotskyists had suffered—but by the verdict of history rendered by a jury of millions of working people mobilized throughout the world.

## ... Czechoslovakia upsurge

(continued from page 1)

register on East Europe's workers and prepare them to pick up the thread now being sewn into the historical process by the Czechoslovak proletariat.

Neither will these events fail to make their impact on the entire world's workers.

It would be wrong to oversimplify the great problems which must yet be solved by Czech and other East European workers. There is no conscious revolutionary proletarian party yet in existence that can lead the workers to victory over the bureaucratic dictatorships that remain in power.

The bureaucracy cannot be displaced by a process of democratization led by intellectuals and other representatives of the radicalizing middle classes. Only the workers can do this.

But the indispensable contribution of students and others trained to take ideas seriously

cannot be underestimated. The turn by Czechoslovak intellectuals to the workers, identifying with them as the decisive force in modern society, opens up two possibilities. Either the workers will be co-opted by the radical wing of the petty-bourgeoisie, or a wing of the revolutionary-minded students and intellectuals will embrace the cause of the workers as their own.

The latter, a revolutionary-proletarian marriage of intellectuals and workers is the road toward creation of a mass workers' political party that can conquer the bureaucratic dictatorships and establish the political rule of the working class.

### What next after the strike?

A longtime dissident, the playwright Vaclav Havel, seems to have emerged as one of the more far-seeing spokespersons of the radicalizing intelligentsia. He was a key speaker at the 500,000-strong rally on the day before the general strike.

Havel articulated the prevailing viewpoint of Civic Forum, for which he spoke, that does not go beyond the goal of reforming the bureaucracy and establishing a parliamentary democracy in Czechoslovakia.

But Havel also went far further in his remarks than any other prominent figure to date. He first posed the question of "what will come after the strike?" He then declared: "The Civic Forum suggests that the strike committees remain on permanent alert and turn themselves into forums that will be the indepen-

## Mainstream press covers tour by veteran Trotskyists

Members of Walnut Publishing's recent cross-country tour on the Soviet Union were interviewed by several radio stations and newspapers. The *Boston Globe*, for example, carried an interview with Esteban Volkov in its Oct. 21, 1989, issue titled "In defense of Trotsky; slain revolutionary's grandson campaigns to clear reputation in USSR."

"I am not so much trying to restore his name," Volkov told the *Globe*. "Trotsky doesn't need it. But I want to restore historical truth."

"Why?" commented the interviewer. "Trotsky would be pleased with the answer. Because, Volkov said, he and his allies believe that Trotsky's books could rekindle the revolution Stalin thwarted."

Tour participant Nadezhda Joffe was also interviewed by the *Boston Globe*. The newspaper pointed out that Joffe spent decades in labor and concentration camps after her father committed suicide in protest against Stalin.

Joffe told the *Globe* that publication of Trotsky's works would be of great importance as the Gorbachev leadership attempts to ban strikes, because "Trotsky's work provides a justification of strikes."

In the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Oct. 28,


1989), staffwriter Stephen Schwartz wrote that "Volkov, who arrived in San Francisco last night for a lecture today, believes glasnost has a long way to go."

"The leadership is hesitant to completely publicize Trotsky's ideas because they are a sharp criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy," Volkov told the *Chronicle* interviewer.

Esteban Volkov was also interviewed in the *Los Angeles Times* (Nov. 2, 1989). Staffwriter Garry Abrams noted: "The murder of Trotsky, apparently on orders of Stalin, silenced one of the dictator's most articulate enemies and a key architect of the Bolshevik Revolution that established the Soviet government. It's generally agreed that the killing gave Stalin even more latitude to rewrite history—to minimize, distort, and often erase the role played by the man who might have succeeded Lenin as leader of the first communist state."

The *Los Angeles Times* staffwriter said that Volkov told him he "wants the past put into the proper perspective not only for his grandfather but for all victims of the Stalin era." Volkov added, however, that "Personally, I would not like Trotsky to become an icon."

### Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead?



A collection of essays in defense of socialist democracy

Edited by Carl Finamore

Essays by Esteban Volkov, Pierre Broué, Susan Weissman, Nat Weinstein, Paul Siegel, Ralph Schoenman, Zbigniew Kowalewski, Gerry Foley, Hayden Perry, and Carl Finamore

*Walnut Publishing's "Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead" (208 pages with photos) analyzes current events in the Soviet Union against the backdrop of the struggle for socialist democracy waged by Leon Trotsky and his supporters against Josef Stalin in the 1920s and '30s.*

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dent representatives of the society throughout the republic." (*New York Times*, Nov. 27)

Whatever Havel thinks or does in the days ahead, these words can only be a reflection of a process already unfolding in workers' forums, and points to the way by which the political revolution in the workers' states can be consummated.

### The way forward

It would be the greatest mistake to imagine that the bureaucracy will not be able to establish forms of "democratization" consistent with its continued bureaucratic rule. Parliamentary democracy permits the bureaucracy to establish an outlet for discontent that

essentially bars workers from bringing their political force to bear. (The majorities won by opponents of Communist Party rule in the Soviet Union and Poland have left the direction of government, the army, the police, and economic management in the hands of bureaucrats.)

Only a system of workers' and consumers' democratic control over production and distribution, in every workplace and in every city, institutionalized in workers' and consumers' councils, can overcome the bureaucratic malaise dragging down the economies in the workers' states, and point the way to a genuine socialist future for the human race. — NAT WEINSTEIN

## ... Volkov

(continued from previous page)

operated on but never recovered. Before the operation, Natalya was at his side, and the nurse came to cut his hair for the operation. He tried to lighten the moment for Natalya by making a joke. There was an old barber from Coyoacan who used to cut Trotsky's hair every month. So Trotsky commented to Natalya that "it seems the barber has come."

After that, his last words were to Natalya, "I love you, I love you." He gave her a last kiss and he disappeared, to take his place in the annals of history.

That is more or less my recollection of those tragic days. But if we see the march of history now, I think that Trotsky is more alive politically than he was 50 years ago.

And Stalin is going to the garbage dump of history.

Developments in the Soviet Union are unfolding in the way that Trotsky forecast. Inevitably, there will be a political revolution to rid society of the Stalinist bureaucratic dictatorship. The working class sooner or later will recover the power that was stolen from them by the bureaucracy.

Gorbachev is trying to overcome this historical march by making various deals and arrangements. But Marxists don't think the bureaucracy has any future. It has no roots in society. It has no ownership of property like the capitalists; it only has the power it gained illegitimately through tyranny—and those things cannot last forever.

In human society, as in any physical world, you need harmony. The Soviet bureaucratic system is not harmonic and it will be destroyed by the process of history.

### International VIEWPOINT

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# Haitian masses rebel against austerity, renewed repression

By MYA SHONE

On Sept. 27, the Haitian mass popular organizations and trade unions brought almost all activity to a stand-still throughout this island nation during a one-day general strike against a new austerity program and payment of the \$800 million Haitian debt.

There was a complete work stoppage in most cities. Shops, businesses, and banks shut down. All public transport ceased. Even air flights in and out of the country had to be cancelled.

The general strike was called in response to the recent accord (September 1989) between the government of Lieutenant-General Prosper Avril and the International Monetary Fund. The Avril government, in an effort to win new loans from the IMF and other foreign banks, had imposed sweeping austerity measures on the Haitian people.

The Sept. 27 general strike was organized by a coalition of 33 political parties, trade-union federations, and popular organizations throughout Haiti. A central role was played by the Haitian Initiating Committee Against the Debt. The Initiating Committee is composed of 15 organizations, including the National Popular Assembly (APN), the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers (CATH), the National Federation of Haitian Students (FENEH), and the Alliance of Popular Organizations (ANOP).

Several demands provided the focus of the strike. The first called for lowering the price of basic necessities, cancellation of the government's accord with the IMF, and reduction of all salaries of top state functionaries.

[The government of Jean-Claude Duvalier had accumulated a debt of \$800 million with the IMF, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank. The debt service to the IMF alone is \$35 million each year, representing 15 percent of the Haitian national budget.]

The second demand was to "End insecurity and respect human rights." Insecurity is the generic term used for organized terror and systematic repression against the popular movement.

## Triggered huge mobilizations

The general strike of Sept. 27 made a great impact in Haiti. It triggered a series of huge mobilizations. Three of the most militant opposition leaders were kidnapped and tortured. [See accompanying story.] In response to the kidnappings and torture, another general strike was called on Nov. 7-8 in which virtually the entire nation partook.

The *Los Angeles Times* described the si-



Haitian workers and peasants are suffering under the Draconian austerity measures imposed by the imperialist banks' International Monetary Fund .

tuation in its front-page story of Nov. 19:

"The arrests of three major political figures late last month and their repeated display on national television—faces bruised and banded and shirts bloodied from apparent mistreatment—triggered general strikes throughout the country Nov. 7-8 demanding their release from jail.

"After these arrests, Louis Dejoie, a leading presidential candidate ... was among nearly a dozen politicians who went into hiding in fear of their lives.

"Dejoie and the three arrested figures had called for civil disobedience and a mass protest march against the military president, Lt. Gen. Prosper Avril, on Nov. 29, the anniversary of Haiti's last bloodily aborted attempt at elections in 1987."

The reaction to Avril's stepped-up repression was immediate within the Haitian community in the United States. Protests marches and pickets took place in Miami, Boston, and Brooklyn in response to a Nov. 3 call issued by the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers (CATH).

The *Miami Herald* reported on Nov. 16: "In what leaders claim is the largest protest in Little Haiti in at least a decade, hundreds of Haitian emigrés have been pushing for the ouster of President Prosper Avril for the past two weeks.

"Every other day, jammed cars and cabs have set out from the Haitian Refugee Center in Little Haiti for the Haitian consulate south of downtown Miami with anti-Avril placards and chants. The demonstrators have been

protesting the treatment of three opposition leaders arrested Nov. 1 in Port-au-Prince.

"This is not only the largest protest in the Haitian community, but the most unified," said Viter Juste. "Every section of the community is involved." Haitians in Miami say the arrests were a sham. They have pledged to continue the protest until Nov. 29 and beyond."

## Free the detained leaders!

The Haitian regime has responded with unrestrained terror to the increased mobilizations of the Haitian people. Its aim is to crush the ability to organize the Nov. 29 national demonstration. The kidnapping-arrests of the three militants are a component of this scheme.

On Nov. 16, police attacked the house of Joseph Maxi, the president of the Haitian League for Human Rights. His organization provides much of the legal defense work for political detainees and victims of the regime. Dozens of members of the "Communauté de Base" (the organization of lay members of the Catholic Church) have been disappeared by the death-squad Ton Ton Macoutes.

On Nov. 17, two militants of the Haitian League for Human Rights were arrested in Thiotte. On Nov. 19, military police killed four militants of the RDNP [the party of the bourgeois-liberal Leslie Manigat] in Port-au-Prince.

The repression, however, has only fueled the resolve of the Haitian people to free the three detained leaders and to get rid of the military dictatorship. Many of Avril's staunch supporters are also taking their distance from the man who promised to restore democracy in Haiti.

On Nov. 19, for example, priests throughout Haiti refused to provide Mass on the day of the armed forces holiday in protest against the detentions and the general repression in Haiti.

International pressure is urgently needed to demand that the government of Lieutenant General Prosper Avril release the three popular leaders, cease the intimidation of peaceful and legal popular organizations, and respect the human and democratic rights of the Haitian people. ■

## Free the 3 Haitian mass leaders!

Two days after a press conference in Haiti calling for a large demonstration against that government [on Nov. 29], three members of the Rassemblement National (National Rally) have been arrested.

They are: Jean Auguste Mesyeux, Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Haitian Workers Union (CATH); Evans Paul, leader of the Confederation of Democratic Unity (KID), and Marino Etienne, member of the September 17 Popular Organization (OP 17).

After their arrest these three leaders were shown on television in Haiti. As we can observe on the video and from photographs, the arrestees were tortured while in military custody. Major Clerjeune of the "anti-gang" unit, in Port-au-Prince announced that the military are looking for 15 more members of Rassemblement National.

In a report issued on Sept. 17, 1989, the first anniversary of the military coup that brought Avril to power, the National Coalition for Haitian Refugees and America's Watch criticized the Avril regime for failing to stop widespread political violence and for slow progress toward democratic elections. It also faulted the Bush administration for restoring aid to the Haitian government despite the ongoing violence.

Similarly, it condemned the administration's failure to speak out on human rights abuses, noting that U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, Brunson McKinley, has "not issued a single protest over human rights abuses since General Avril assumed power."

We can no longer ignore the serious human rights abuses which are occurring in Haiti on a regular basis. It is now clear that despite Avril's vow to implement irreversible democracy in Haiti, irreversible dictatorship is his aim.

—Haitian Refugee Center, Miami, Fla., Nov. 10, 1989.

*François Pierre-Louis, a leader of the Assemblée Populaire Nationale (National Popular Assembly), described the state of the Haitian economy in an interview with Socialist Action reporter Mya Shone. The interview was conducted on Sept. 23 at the International Tribunal Against the Debt in Lima, Peru.*

**Socialist Action:** Could you describe the economic situation in Haiti today?

**François Pierre-Louis:** Since 1986, Haiti has had a new economic situation imposed on it by the United States. The U.S. objective is to open up our market, to free-up duties imposed on U.S. goods when they come into Haiti.

Based on the U.S. government's Santa Fe Report, a strategy of agro-industrial development is being pursued to the detriment of self-sufficient and autonomous agriculture. Certain products that Haiti used to export prior to 1986 must now be imported.

Most of our basic necessities such as flour, cooking oil, rice, and corn have to be imported. But the government has little hard currency to import these items. Hence, flour and sugar are in great shortage now.

The real wages of the Haitian workers have fallen considerably. The annual inflation rate is approximately 30 percent. Given the pitiful earnings in Haiti, the situation is catastrophic.

## 'The economic situation is catastrophic'

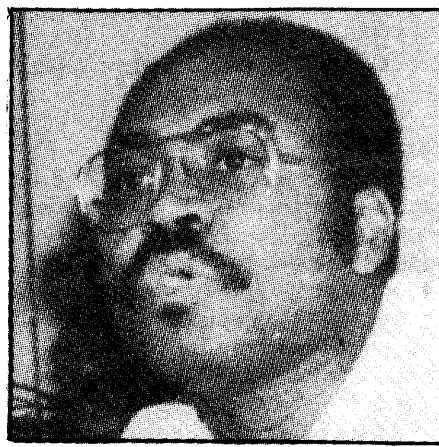
Haiti has 200 millionaires even though it is considered the poorest country in the hemisphere. This minority holds more than 46 percent of the national revenue, while 80 percent of the population live in misery, with an annual income of about \$200.

Haitian life expectancy is only 54 years. The infant-mortality rate is one of the highest in the world: 123 per 1000 births. The maternal mortality rate is 432 per 100,000 live births. Only 37 percent of the population are literate.

The government of Jean-Claude Duvalier was lent about \$800 million by the IMF, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Bank in order to foster so-called development in Haiti. But Duvalier and his accomplices simply stole these funds.

The annual budget of Haiti is \$230 million, of which \$35 million must be paid to the IMF for debt service every year. The September accord between the Avril government and the IMF commits Haiti to pay back the \$800 million that Duvalier stole.

The austerity program enacted to meet the debt payment has meant thousands of

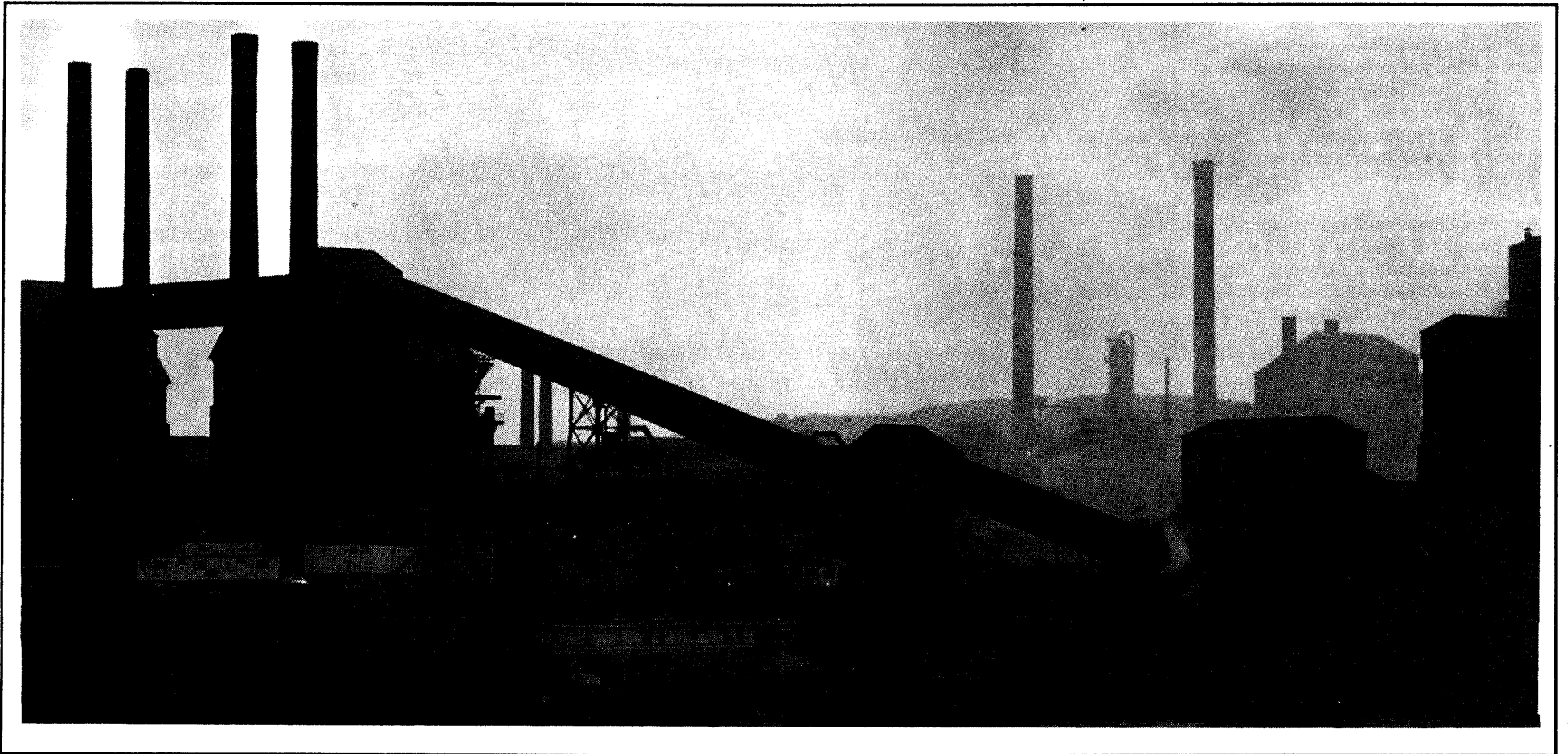


François Pierre-Louis

lay-offs of state employees. Schools and health clinics have been closed. There is no cement, so that all construction has had to be halted.

These new austerity measures have created an enormous panic in the country, resulting in the creation of a black market and even more shortages everywhere. The economy is in terrible shape. ■

# Earth: A planet on the verge of dying?



By LINDA THOMPSON

We are bombarded daily with shocking news of environmental catastrophes. So regularly, in fact, that it has become commonplace. This has generated much debate, protest, and governmental action—or inaction.

But the crisis progresses. And while consciousness regarding ecological issues has been raised by over 30 years of education by environmentalists, the problems have intensified.

The environment has been discovered by a modern industrial society that took it for granted. The contradictions inherent in the capitalist system's unlimited exploitation of limited natural resources are coming to the fore. How, after millions of years of human life on this planet, could the planet be brought to the brink of disaster in less than a century?

It is this question that this series of articles on the environment will attempt to explore. In order to pose a solution, it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the ecological crisis than is currently being offered by either the "establishment" or its environmentalist critics.

## Growth of a movement

It is now 27 years since the publication of Rachel Carson's classic environmental study, "Silent Spring." In this eloquent statement, Carson documented the immense harm that the use of chemical pesticides caused to humans, wildlife, and the environment.

Carson wrote in a long tradition of American writers expressing reverence and concern for the earth, from Henry David Thoreau to writers of the 1940s and '50s. Trying to draw the attention of the American public to environmental concerns, they warned of certain trends that were becoming increasingly dangerous. At the time, the warnings were heard by only a small segment of society.

"Silent Spring," however, was written in the early 1960s in a different historical context than that of the earlier writers. This fact broadened its impact. Any movement is started not because most people have read about a problem but because they have experienced it first-hand.

By 1962, Americans were beginning to see and feel the effects of widespread pollution of the environment. They could see haze over major cities, "no swimming" signs on polluted beaches, unsightly urban sprawl, waste dumps, and threats from nuclear fallout.

A new generation was becoming politically aware and active and was questioning every

## Part one of a four-part series explaining why and how capitalism fouls things up

aspect of American capitalist society.

As the war in Vietnam and the ugly face of racism tore away illusions in the democratic process, people began to question the right of Big Business to profit, no matter what the cost to the working class or the environment.

By 1969, there was widespread political ferment on every front, from the antiwar movement and the civil rights struggle to the first manifestations of a growing feminist consciousness. In 1969, a series of events were to jar the consciousness of Americans and forge the environmental revolution.

Permits were secured to construct the 789-mile pipeline to Valdez, Alaska, under newly appointed Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel. The oil sludge and industrial waste in the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught fire. Los Angeles residents were warned not to engage in any activity that would involve deep breathing. And Santa Barbara, Calif., witnessed a devastating oil spill.

These events plus countless other ecological insults in communities across the country galvanized a movement that culminated in the first Earth Day in 1970.

Pressure from environmentalists had an impact. In 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act was passed. The Clean Air Act was passed in 1970, the Clean Water Act in 1972, the Toxic Substances Control Act in 1976. A host of other federal, state, and local regulations and programs followed. Thus, in the first two decades of the burgeoning environmental movement, impressive legislative victories were rolled up and new governmental agencies and regulatory bodies were established, ostensibly to enforce the laws.

During the 1960s and '70s, public support for environmentally sound policies swelled. But when the cost of the new controls and measures to private industry became apparent, the ruling class took the offensive, arguing that the costs and problems of regulating pollution were too costly for industry and needed to be curbed. In the 1980s, as the ruling-class politicians gave more say to industry and the private sector, the gains of the previous two decades began to be eroded.

Despite more than 30 years of concerted environmental organizing, almost all the toxic chemicals that Rachel Carson warned about in "Silent Spring" are still in widespread use. Some chemicals that have been banned in the United States are allowed to be shipped to the countries of the so-called Third World. A few that have been restricted, like DDT, have been replaced by equally or more hazardous compounds.

A thousand new and largely untested chemicals are introduced onto the market each year. Even as Exxon and Bush are refusing responsibility for the Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, Big Oil and the Interior Department are moving ahead on leasing millions of additional acres for intensive offshore oil development. The areas slated for leasing include the remaining most precious marine environments on the Alaskan and U.S. coastline.

Most recently, President Bush pressed for the passage of a new Clean Air Bill in spite of the fact that the bill of 1970 has never been enforced. Environmental critics have pointed out that the new bill is actually a weakening of the earlier bill. It has been weakened to reflect the interests of the auto industry and other business sectors.

All indications are that the government has no intention of enforcing the new regulations, which are full of loopholes anyway. The most optimistic predict that the provisions will not be met by the year 2000.

## Global threats

George Bush is truly fiddling while we may burn. Superseding any national considerations are three potentially disastrous threats to the earth's atmosphere. The first is the erosion of the thin ozone layer that protects the earth's atmosphere from the sun's radiation.

It is being caused by the use of, among other things, chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, compounds used in aerosol spray cans and insulation. This depletion will cause a serious increase in skin cancer and can have a negative impact on micro-organisms at the base of the food chain.

The second is the "greenhouse effect," or global warming, caused by the burning of CFCs and fossil fuels. This can cause catastrophic climactic change and coastal floods—turning now-fertile farmlands into barren dust bowls. Scientists have come to these conclusions by studying the ozone depletion and atmosphere of the planets Mars and Venus. Both planets are uninhabitable.

The third threat would come from even a small explosion of even a fraction of the world's 60,000 nuclear weapons. This would precipitate a Nuclear Winter with extreme cold and dark, agricultural collapse, and famine.

If private industry and the capitalist government which represents its interests are allowed to proceed upon their present course, it will in fact lead to the annihilation of the human race or its reduction to barbarism. Many are beginning to question the greed inherent in the capitalist system of production that is leading to this particular form of madness.

In order to fully understand this destructive course, it is necessary to review the evolution of humanity's relationship to the environment through the productive process. Once done, it is possible to comprehend the current ecological crisis and to pose realistic solutions.

## Early humans

Organized interaction with the environment has had a long evolution spanning the entire course of the history of humanity.

It is currently believed that our ape-like ancestors were forest dwellers whose main activities for survival consisted of food gathering. Due to either food shortages or climactic change connected with the first Ice Age, they left the forests and moved onto the savannahs, where they became omnivorous and therefore were forced to compete with other predators for a steady food supply and shelter.

This material fact probably set the context that spurred our ape-like ancestors on to social organization.

Frederick Engels pointed out that the shortened pelvic bone made standing erect possible and this emancipated the hands. The central biological organ in humanity's evolution was the hand. The opposition of the thumb to the other fingers played a key role in the transition from ape to human. The thumb gave the hand exceptional powers of grasping and manipulating objects, which led to tool-making.

Thus the new power humans acquired was the power of production, of securing the necessities of life through the making of tools

(continued on next page)



(continued from previous page) agricultural empires had struck.

and joint labor. This ability to labor and to share the fruits led to the social development of the species and set it apart from all others.

The impact of human labor on the natural environment at this point was negligible. The impact of nature on human consciousness, however, was overwhelming. In order to survive, it was necessary to expand all capacities to include intimate knowledge of place, ecosystems, seasons, and weather.

Little importance has been attached by scholars to these life-giving faculties (developed mainly by the female) yet they constituted the rudiments of observation, classification, categorization, and testing which formed the basis of early science and production.

During this early period, four very important factors were originated, according to George Novack, a noted Marxist philosopher, in "The Long View of History." The first was the social organization of food procurement and division. The second was the invention of tools for this purpose. The third was the origin of speech and reasoning promoted by banding together, and the fourth was the natural force of fire, put to social use.

The reverence and importance that these early bands placed on the interrelationships between the environment and all living things is reflected in their world view, art, and religion. They saw themselves as a part of nature, not separate from it.

### Rise of agriculture

The principal epochs in the advance of humanity can be related to major improvements in the techniques of gaining a food supply.

Humanity next entered upon its second great advance around 8000 B.C. with the development of agriculture and the domestication of animals. Food could not only now be collected but could be produced. Fire, the first pre-technical tool (previously used for hunting and cooking), was now used to clear land for planting and grazing.

This food-producing revolution for the first time relieved women and men from their subjection to external nature. This enabled a reliable and massive increase in the food supply, which led to population expansion, the beginning of settlements, and the first division of labor. This represented the first large-scale takeover of land from natural to productive use and vastly altered the relationship between women and men and the earth.

This era encompassed a period of time from the origins of settlements to the rise of hierarchical, agricultural civilizations. These cultures still depended to a large degree on weather, the seasons, and ecological knowledge to insure a steady food supply for an expanding population. Farming and stock raising led to the development of such skilled crafts as smelting and pottery production for the storing and transport of surplus food production.

At the height of these valley empires which existed on every continent, the origin of the arts and sciences, of writing, mathematics, engineering, construction, and administration began. Property was still communally owned and matrilineal tribal relations prevailed.

As in earlier times, there was still an intimacy with and an overwhelming respect and acknowledgment of the forces of nature that was reflected in their art and religion. However, these cultures began to bargain with nature for control of the earth, as exemplified in their religion.

They worshipped representations of a female deity, the Mother Goddess, and asked her to intercede for them to help control the forces of nature. The Goddess was surrounded by—but now dominated—the sun and stars, the moon, and life-sustaining crops.

It was probably at this time that humans first began to experience problems arising from an altered environment. There is scant knowledge of the direct impact of humans on the environment, although this may change as current scholars research ancient ecological questions.

But there are abandoned settlement sites worldwide in antiquity that suggest ecological destruction as a causative factor. It has been suggested that the demise of the Mayan civilization and other centers (Mesopotamia, for example) may be explained by overpopulation, deforestation, overgrazing, and soil erosion.

### Origins of private property

Approximately 3000 years ago, a series of population explosions occurred over large parts of Asia and Europe. This caused a period of large-scale migrations of population which upset the delicate balance with nature that the

Patriarchal cultures developed which had a growing advantage over the sedentary agricultural matriarchies. These advantages stemmed from (1) the population growth of these essentially nomadic people, (2) the growing importance of their herds of horses, cattle, and sheep, as well as of world trade to the economy, (3) the domestication of the camel and the mobility it afforded to the desert cultures, and (4) iron-based tools and weaponry.

It is probably a combination of some or most of these factors—in addition to the drive to increase personal wealth at the expense of the tribe flowing from the exchange of goods—that gave precedence to the patrilineal kinship and private property forms, which had

ing water yields, crops, and pasturage for the future generations. With the rise of commerce and trade and with the increased importance of herding, agricultural production became relatively less important. Communal land tilled by tribal members was replaced by large private holdings tilled by slaves.

With migration and the domination of conquering empires over colonies, absentee landlords began to decree land-use programs and practices that indigenous people might have rejected if left on their own.

### Slavery and feudalism

Slave labor increased the forces of production and made it possible to amass wealth on a scale necessary to further the productive

small-scale peasant plots would make sense. This would make it more possible and advantageous to diversify crops and rotate fields, which over time would restore the fertility of the land.

Under feudalism, peasants got more of their produce than did slaves and they had more access to the land and other means of production. After numerous technological and social advances were made possible by scientific knowledge borrowed from the ancient cultures and the Arabs, feudalized Europe set the stage for the rise of capitalism with its spectacular technological innovations.

### Industrial capitalism

Over 3000 years, through slavery, feudalism, and the rise of modern capitalism, class society established its dominion over most of the earth. With each successive system came new and higher forms of technological advance.

Capitalism unleashed the development of the productive forces of humanity like no other social system before it. Frederick Engels and Karl Marx explained that capitalism fulfilled a historically progressive role because, for the first time in human civilization, it made it possible to produce enough food, housing, clothing, consumer items, etc. to fulfill the needs of all social classes—not just the rich minority.

But soon after the turn of the 20th century, capitalism's historically progressive role ended. Capitalist monopolies took over and wars among capitalist nations for new markets in the semi-colonial countries broke out. Instead of developing the productive forces, new technologies were used to fuel the forces of destruction: the military-industrial complex, wars, the despoliation of the environment, and wanton consumerism.

Justice William O. Douglas noted that it was the ax and gunpowder that initially had the capacity to radically alter the environment. Douglas continued, "Axes and plows are for amateurs. With bulldozers, high explosives, deep drilling, air-compression machines and the like, we have been able to speed up the destructive cycle enormously. We can now do in a decade the damage it took the ancients centuries to accomplish."

Humans now possess the capacity to produce a range of new vehicles for mobility on land, on the water, underwater, in the air, and into outer space which can penetrate every corner of the planet and beyond. It is possible to probe deep into the earth, to shape or destroy land formations, to monitor electronically almost every aspect of the environment, and to interfere with its ecological relationships.

With the advent of capitalism and the Machine Age revolution, the impact on the earth was quantitatively altered. In the epoch of capitalist imperialism, particularly since World War II, this impact has been qualitatively changed.

Pre-war military technology was put to industrial use after 1945. With the expansion of the chemical industry, the nuclear industry, and the massive burning of fossil fuels, all previous technologies that have altered the environment have now been outstripped.

### A shattered promise

The tremendous technological power that humanity now controls places a far greater responsibility on our shoulders than has ever been held before. Science and technology are not the enemy. Science and modern life are simply indispensable to each other. The promise that they hold for satisfying human needs and eliminating disease, hunger, and poverty is real.

This promise is being shattered, however, by the misuse of this technology in the hands of private industry. It is the worldwide corporate giants and their agents in Washington, D.C., who have plunged us into the current environmental crisis.

We can never return to the earlier primitive societies, nor should we want to. The task is not to "return to nature," as some in the environmental movement incorrectly advise, but to seek to live in harmony with it, obeying its laws.

Science and technology can produce either ruthless destruction and alienation or the endless capacity to produce the necessities of life for all who live on this planet.

How this can be accomplished? Can capitalism reform itself and clean up the current ecological disaster? Are the warnings of the environmentalists merely the scare-mongering of pessimists? The next article will examine these questions and discuss the scope and ramifications of the damage that has already been done. ■



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

**'It is the worldwide corporate giants and their agents in Washington, D.C., who have plunged us into the current environmental crisis.'**

been developing over the course of previous centuries.

With the rise of the family, private property and the state, the old checks and balances that communal property ownership had placed on the exploitation of the earth were stripped away. A more aggressive and impatient stance was taken toward their surroundings.

With the rise of commerce and trade and the increased importance of herding, agricultural production became relatively less important.

The earlier ecological mistakes made by the Bronze Age cultures had been offset by the natural interest tribal society had in preserv-

process. It multiplied wealth, comforts and culture, even if only for the few. At some point, however, slavery no longer furthered the development of agricultural techniques, craftsmanship, trade, or navigation and began to generate within itself the forces of its own demise.

Since it exploited large-scale land holdings with slave labor for profit, the systems of slavery and feudalism probably neglected soil conservation techniques—which might have led to the impoverishment of the land.

If this is true, then the return under feudalism to more conservative land use under

# 'If there were a covert operation, would I discuss it ever?'

The CIA has launched an operation to overthrow Gen. Manuel Noriega in Panama, the *Los Angeles Times* reported last month. The use of U.S. troops and other "high-risk" options are being considered. President Bush refused to deny the report. "If there were a covert operation, would I discuss it ever?" he said.

Langley, Va. All the kids will be identified only by a first name and a number (such as Johnny 007). Depending on who is visiting the center, children of parents in CIA "covert" work will be kept separate from those whose parents are in "overt" work. And photographs of wall displays are strictly forbidden.

Phillip Morris Companies, Inc. Why is a giant coffin-nail maker publicizing the historic document of our rights? (It might have something to do with the tobacco industry's efforts to roll back health laws by citing so-called "smokers' rights.")

struction of over 30 power plants of various kinds. But there's much more to be done. The USSR emits at least one-fifth of the sulfuric acid in the Earth's air.

ing in the Rockies!

Just in time for Christmas, toymakers are marketing an environmental test kit (for kids 10 and older). "Investigate pollution in your neighborhood," says the label on the box. "It offers ways for kids to correct a problem." If the government and Big Business won't clean up the neighborhood, let your 10-year-old do it.

The level of the oceans has risen nearly six inches in the last century, after holding steady for 5000 years. Furthermore, scientists report, global warming has caused the rate of the rise to double in the last 20 years. Soon, we can go surf-

Pollution is the No. 1 worry of Soviet citizens, a recent poll reported. Environmental-activist groups are fighting the con-

The Bill of Rights is the subject of a current newspaper and TV ad campaign financed by the

Day-care facilities have just opened for CIA employees in

By MAY MAY GONG

Despite holding a strong hand at the start of their walkout 48 days ago, Boeing workers still lost out when the company played its standard "ace in the hole"—union misleadership.

The new contract, which was voted in by an 81 percent margin, claims few improvements over the original "insulting" offer put out by Boeing. This offer consisted of a three-year package that included a pay increase of 10 percent over the life of the contract, 8 percent and 3 percent lump-sum "bonuses," cost-of-living adjustments covering 99 percent of increases in inflation, and a reduction in mandatory overtime from 200 hours to 160 hours per quarter.

Though the contract that was ratified still held to a 10 percent wage increase, it fattened the lump sum "bonus" by 8 percent, bringing it to 19 percent over three years. Mandatory overtime still wasn't eliminated, but simply "cut back" to 144 hours per quarter.

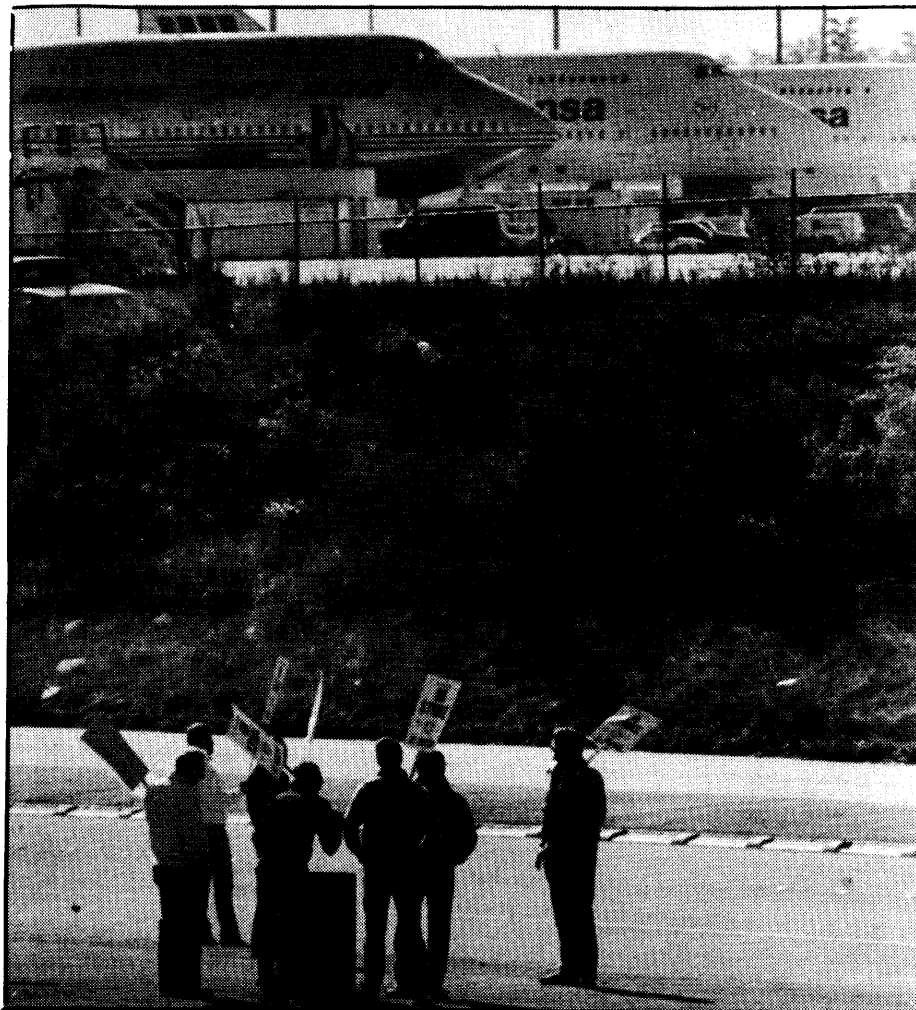
### "Enough overtime for a lifetime"

"What this contract shows is that our leadership didn't work hard enough for us," said Jim Franchebos, who works at the 747 plant in Everett, Wash. Franchebos was outraged that workers would still be required to work hundreds of overtime hours against their will. "I've worked enough overtime to last me a lifetime," he stated.

It is common knowledge among the members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Boeing that the company is in the midst of a record profit-making period, with a backlog of orders for new airplanes worth at least \$85 billion. Aerospace analysts say that the estimated \$2.5 billion lost by Boeing during this strike will amount to nothing "more than a blip" in a few years.

Rather than hiring a sufficient number of people to get the work done safely, Boeing chose to simply implement mandatory overtime requiring machinists to work 10-hour days, six and seven days a week. This is a route commonly chosen by big business, whose myopic vision only lets them see the

# Boeing workers accept contract they would have liked to reject



Jim Levitt/Impact Visuals

profits at the end of the tunnel.

The fact that there are hundreds of thou-

sands of unemployed people seeking work,

the fact that working 60 and 70 hours a week

leaves workers no time for themselves or their families, is all irrelevant to the capitalists.

### "Lump-sum bonus"

The "lump-sum bonus" concept is not unique to Boeing. It is simply another gimmick concocted by big business to swindle working people out of what is rightfully theirs. Bonus payments are less costly to companies. They do not count in the calculation of overtime, travel time, sick pay, vacations, or pensions. As one AFL-CIO official stated, it is nothing more than a "money illusion."

But it is an illusion that corporations will use again and again as long as they are allowed to get away with it. Working people, straddled with house payments, car payments, insurance, medical bills, food bills, etc., will find it difficult to reject a "quick fix" to their financial burdens. Boeing timed their bonus payments to come out just before the Christmas holiday spending spree.

Today about 44 percent of the 6 million people covered by major collective-bargaining agreements receive bonuses or profit-sharing payments. At my workplace, our union is now setting up a committee to "explore non-traditional pay concepts."

This insidious trend must be halted in its steps. Union leaders and activists must explain that the company's concept of "profit sharing" translates to nothing more than "ripoff." As one corporation's jingle puts it, "You work an honest day, you deserve an honest deal." And that means better wages and benefits, not sham bonuses.

## Subscribe now & send a gift sub to a friend

*Socialist Action* has just completed a three-month subscription drive. The final tallies are not in as we go to press, but we have already exceeded our goals.

San Francisco, for example, has sent in over 220 subscriptions so far. This was done despite the earthquake, which prohibited *Socialist Action* teams from going to many sales opportunities in the region.

Most of our new readers signed up for long-term (one-year or six-month) subscriptions. But close to 250 special three-month subs were sold at the women's pro-choice

- 6 months for \$4.
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demonstrations on Nov. 12 in Washington and on Oct. 15 in San Francisco.

If you are one of our new readers, we want to thank you for subscribing to *Socialist Action*. In the coming year, we pledge to continue to provide top-notch journalism from

a revolutionary Marxist point of view. We strive to bring you an analysis of the women's liberation movement, the antiwar movement, and of events abroad that is hard to find in any other U.S. newspaper.

If you are one of the people who recently purchased a three-month subscription, we urge you to subscribe now for a year or more at our regular rates.

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# Poems of resistance during times of exile and repression

Victor Serge, *Resistance*. Translated from the French by James Brook. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1989.

Novelist, poet, political historian of Soviet and Chinese Communism, and member of the Left Opposition, Victor Serge wrote most of the poems in this volume from internal exile in the Ural Mountains from 1936 to 1939.

Like other revolutionist-poets, Serge understood the powerful links between words and deeds, and he summoned poetry to testify. Serge wrote poetry of regret and survival during the repressive years of what he called "revolutionary shipwreck," when the growing bureaucracy within the Soviet Communist Party began the process of deforming the Bolshevik Revolution.

In the face of the destruction wrought by forced collectivization and party purges, poetry, Serge argued, "should arise to scourge the executioners, to exalt the heroism of the tortured, [and] to guard the proud memory of the shot."

Serge lived in exile in the forbidding climate of Orenburg, far from the centers of Soviet political and cultural activity, and also from the Europe of his youth, with its traditions of visionary political poetry. *Resistance* presents the complex fusion of Serge's commitment to the Bolshevik Revolution, his utter disgust at the bureaucratic betrayal of that victory, and his inescapable memory of a European urban culture denied to him in his Central Asian internment: "this legend I am presenting on the frontier of Asia, / on the frontier of Europe, / I who feel like a man torn apart, a Eurasian." ("Frontier")

## Linking peasants to workers

Serge responded to his dislocation by making poems which poetically and politically link the Khirghiz peasants to city workers, and connect his political culture to a global poetic tradition. For example, in "Four Girls," young women fording the Ural River make Serge think of Parisian Baudelaire's language of "order, beauty, calm and voluptuousness."

At the same time, however, the sight of an old peasant woman molding chalk rebukes Serge for his worldliness by the very persistence of her "powerful, tenacious hands that in the darkness work over the desolate whiteness, / severely, obstinately, / Since the beginning of time." ("Somewhere Else")

So, though one strain of Serge's poetry grows from his painful and many-layered exile from France, from Leningrad, and from the Communist Party, another strain builds up a



Trotsky as Red Army commander, by Yuri Annenkov, 1924

fabric of solidarity with his Left Oppositionist comrades and with people in struggle across the world.

In "On the Ural River," for example, his poem becomes a passageway connecting Soviet women in the fields to those in France and Greece who "stomp ripe grapes" but "don't know they have sisters here."

## Politics in a romantic style

Serge is a political poet in a romantic style: We feel the presence of stars in a night sky everywhere in Serge's poems, offering an image of unity for the Left Oppositionists

isolated in Central Asia, along the Steppes, and as far north as cities like Vorkuta, where today miners continue the struggle against the bureaucracy.

Serge's stars mirror the deformation of the revolution: "O rain of stars in the darkness/ Constellation of dead brothers." The catastrophe of the workers' state is "our decapitated dawn, our nights with its star askew, / with its inexplicable Milky Way torn to pieces." ("Confessions")

But even though the stars indicate vast distances, they also guide the separated revolutionists as if they were fragments of a ship sailing north, whose "ardent voyage contin-

ues, / the course... set on hope" ("Constellation of Dead Brothers"), aiming to find "in the northern lights/ in the glow on the glaciers, / a simple, intimate and loyal word." ("Hands")

The exiles can look up and see the stars, binding them to each other and to comrades beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union: "I, vaguely think/ alone before the steppe, / Of all those the world over from whom I am not separated — / Of the unemployed in Amsterdam, of Tom Mooney in his/ California prison..." ("History of Russia")

## Vision radiates outward

The volume hovers between the despair of exile and Serge's refusal to admit any ultimate defeat. His vision radiates outward from the Northern frozen glaciers to all the terrain of the earth:

"I saw the glaciers of Elbrus, Kazbek, / and more distant, icier, clearer, / Ararat, Pamir, Everest, the Andes / and more distant, icier, clearer, / above the gently oscillating green fields the dazzling summits of the realest mountains."

In this poetry all of the oppressed, living and dead, form one massive community in struggle, "forming the one choir that murmurs in our shared veins / our singing veins." ("Hands")

In the contemporary bit of historical dialectic that we call *glasnost*, we have just seen a hopeful exchange. In late 1988, Victor Serge's son, the painter of Vlady Kibalchich, went to the Soviet Union to urge the political and literary rehabilitation of his father, the return of his father's confiscated manuscripts, and to speak to the Soviet Writers' Union [see *Socialist Action*, April 1989].

This year, in the United States, City Lights Books, long known for its visionary poetic internationalism, has given us a chance to read Serge's poetry in English. Reading these poems, we hear new echoes and resonances in the words of Serge's poem "Cassiopeia": "standing on the earth, nothing / separates us anymore, reunited as we are by the risen stars and this sign between us..."

Annie Janowitz is an assistant professor of English at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass.

## Our readers speak out

### Mini-State

Dear editor,

The current position of the Palestine Liberation Organization (and the objective of the *Intifadah* in the West Bank and Gaza Strip) is the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel.

It seems to me that the creation of an independent Palestinian state would be an historic advance in the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. ... The role, then, of Marxists within Israel would be to fight for Israeli recognition of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to help build a movement for withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967.

Once two states were established, a determined struggle would have to be waged within the Israeli state to prevent the Israeli militarists from attacking the Palestinian state. ... This does not negate the longer-range objective of a joint Arab-Jewish state that is both secular and based on the working class.

Once a Palestinian state were established, steps like academic and cultural exchanges, work on common economic projects, the struggle for peace between the two states, trade-union coordination and solidarity, and citizen-to-citizen informal contacts and political discussion could all lead to the eventual creation of a unified workers' state where Jews and Arabs could live as equals.

One more point: Although there

is a section of the Fourth International within the Israeli state (the Revolutionary Communist League) which has distinguished itself in the struggle against Zionist oppression, it is my impression that there is no corresponding Palestinian Trotskyist group in the occupied territories or in the Palestinian diaspora.

I would advance the view that merely calling for a democratic secular state (without specifying the working-class character of such a state) is an insufficient basis for consolidating a Palestinian revolutionary Marxist organization.

Dan Rosenshine,  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

### Response

D.R. raises an important point that is being hotly debated among revolutionists in Palestine. From its inception, and for well over a decade, the PLO advocated the formation of a democratic and secular state in all of Palestine; it categorically rejected a "two-state" solution for Palestine.

"The very existence of the oppressor state of Israel, based on the expulsion and forced exile of part of its citizens, even from one tiny village, is unacceptable to the revolution," affirmed a 1970 PLO resolution. "Any arrangement accommodating the aggressor settler-state is unacceptable."

Under intense diplomatic and military pressures, the PLO subsequently adopted the position described above by the reader—though

it is far from clear that this "two-state" solution is the objective of the *Intifadah*, as is claimed.

The *Intifadah* has revealed the immediate aspiration of the Palestinian people to liberate zones free from Zionist control. It would be wrong, however, to equate this sentiment with the "two-state" program currently advocated by the PLO leadership.

Countless reports—and even surveys—reveal that a large bulk of the Palestinian fighters in the West Bank and Gaza refuse to recognize the Israeli settler-state's "right" to exist in its pre-1967 borders. They view the establishment of liberated zones on the West Bank and Gaza as a first step toward the full liberation of all of Palestine.

Setting up a Palestinian "mini-state" in the West Bank (and possibly Gaza) as proposed by the advocates of the "two-state solution" could only take place under terms dictated by the Israeli government and the imperialists. In exchange for the establishment of such a rump state, the PLO and the Palestinian people would be required to recognize the Zionists' "right" to the land within the pre-1967 borders of the Israeli state. That is the hitch.

Recognition of the Israeli state would retroactively invalidate the right of resistance of the Palestinian people. It would legitimize the murderous conquest of Palestinian land and permit the Zionists to contend that 40 years of Palestinian "intransigence" was responsible for

all the suffering in the region.

Rather than aid the fight for a democratic secular Palestine open to both Jews and Arabs, the "two-state solution" would represent a giant obstacle in its path.

For more background on this subject, we recommend Ralph Schoenman's pamphlet "The Hidden History of Zionism" (Walnut Publishing, \$4 including postage and handling).—the editors

### Faster delivery

Dear editor,

We've received your *Socialist Action* regularly since 1986. From the period of 1970 to 1982, our section was closely collaborative with the Socialist Workers Party (USA). Today the Trotskyist heritage of the SWP is with *Socialist Action*. But the difficulty is that *Socialist Action* reaches us very late by sea mail. So we fail to translate it into our Gusarats-language journal and equip our cadres when the events occur.

In the situation fast unfolding in Eastern Europe and other workers' states, we would like to be informed promptly. The role of *Socialist Action* is on a par with *International Viewpoint*, which we get by airmail. We request that you also send *Socialist Action* by airmail.

M.D.,  
Inquilabi Communist Sangathan  
(Indian Section of the  
Fourth International),  
Gijrat, India

### USSR

Dear editor,

Your coverage of recent events in the USSR is excellent, as is the historical perspective you give on the Bolshevik past. Your historical pieces are excellent. You have carried articles on Trotsky (of course), Lenin, and even Zinoviev—all of which were most useful to me.

As one reader, I would humbly request that you do a piece on Bukharin. Next to Lenin and Trotsky, he was one of the giants of his time. Yet, aside for Cohen's book, I can find nothing on him in print (aside from an article in the ISO paper) and have not found any of his works in translation. An article on him would help bring this important figure to the awareness of your readers.

Steven Robinson,  
Riverside, Calif.

### Correction

In the article "Bush's drug program: Build more prisons" by Jeffrey Goldman (*Socialist Action*, November 1989), we identified the author as "a member of Greenpeace." This was a mistake; he is not a member. The views expressed in the article are those of the author only. We apologize to Jeffrey Goldman and to Greenpeace.—the editors

# 300,000 in D.C. say 'No!' to attacks on abortion rights

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

National Organization for Women (NOW) President Molly Yard declared, "We will not go back," as she opened the Nov. 12 Mobilization for Women's Lives. This determination to maintain safe, legal abortions brought 300,000 women, men, and children to Washington D.C.

After filling the grassy area in front of the Lincoln Memorial, the huge crowd lined the entire length of the Reflecting Pool stretching back to the Washington Monument and overflowed into the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial grounds.

Signs dotting the rally identified contingents from as far away as California. The most popular signs proclaimed: "Keep abortion legal" and "Who decides, you or them?" The crowd was overwhelmingly youthful, with large contingents of high school and college students. Delegations came from over 400 colleges in 38 states.

A cross-section of the U.S. population participated, showing the clear majority support for reproductive rights. Republicans for Choice, religious groups, and businesswomen's professional clubs joined feminist and socialist organizations in sending delegations.

Although 16 national or international unions endorsed the rally, little was done to organize large-scale participation. Scattered signs identified garment workers, machinists, hospital workers, government workers, teachers, and chapters of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW).

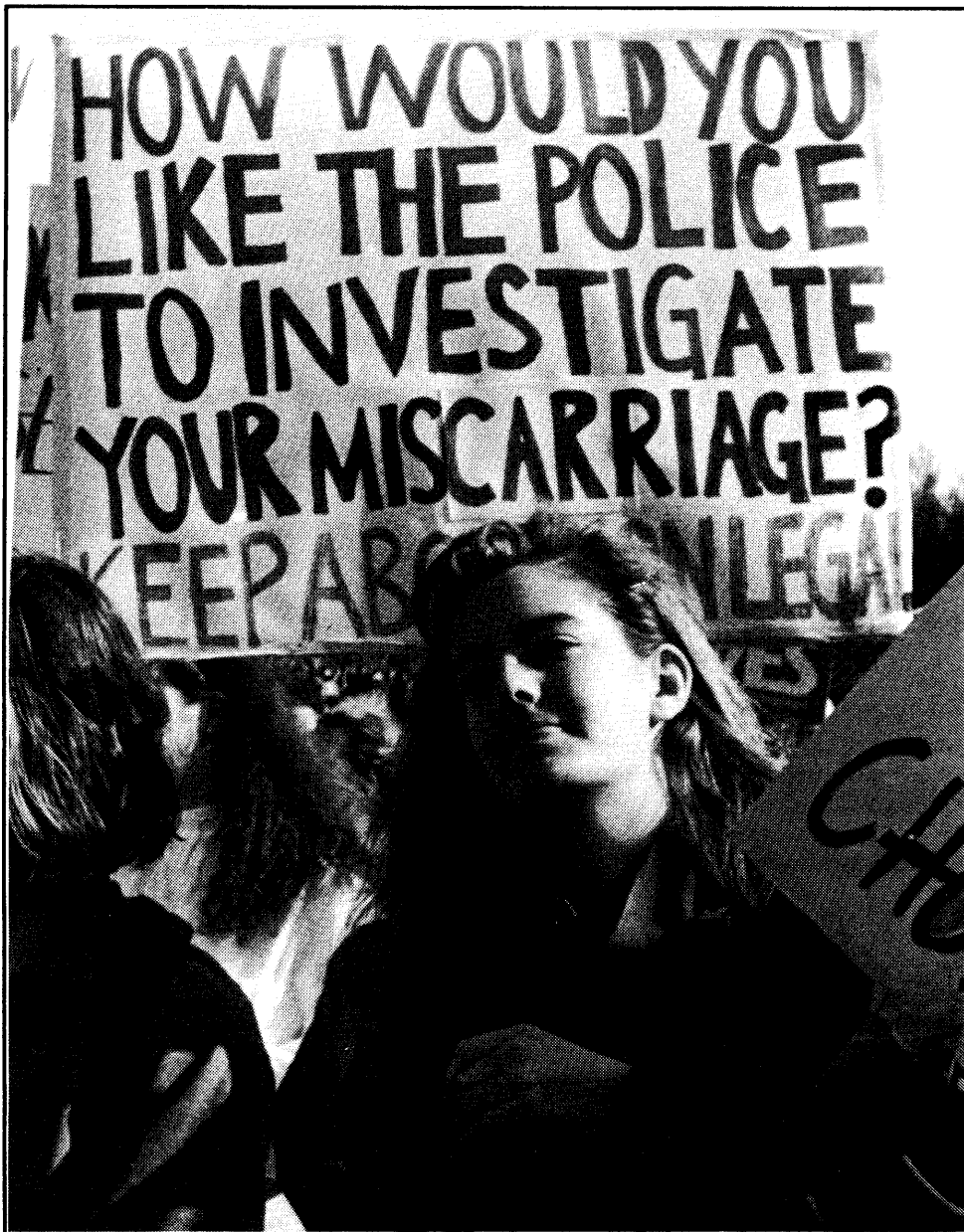
CLUW President Joyce Miller began her speech by leading the crowd in a chant of "Pro-union, pro-choice!" She stated, "Reproductive rights in a health issue; it's a civil rights issue; it's a privacy issue; but most of all, it's a family and work issue. Women workers can never gain equality in the workplace without reproductive rights. It's more than a choice of pregnancy. It's a choice of a decent job at decent wages."

"We won't stop until we win"

Many civil rights groups and organizations representing Blacks, Latinos, and other oppressed minorities endorsed the demonstration. However, even though poor and minority women suffer most from denial of Medicaid-funded abortions and are most likely to fall victim to back-alley butchers if access to safe, legal abortions is further restricted, these groups did not attempt to mobilize their memberships.

Pointing to the relationship between the civil rights movement and the women's movement, Southern Christian Leadership Conference President Joseph Lowery stated, "We know what it means to be denied rights." He pointed out that many anti-choice politicians have advocated cutbacks of essential social programs. These politicians "think life begins at conception and ends at birth," Lowery said.

Demonstrations were also held on Nov. 12 in France, Poland, Israel, and Puerto Rico to



Tina Beacock/Socialist Action

*'The crowd was overwhelmingly youthful, with large contingents of college and high school students. Delegations came from over 400 colleges in 38 states.'*

express support for the Washington rally and demand safe, legal, accessible abortions in every country of the world. An international delegation also participated in the Washington march. This was led by over 100 people from English Canada and Quebec—primarily from Toronto, Kingston, and Montreal.

Cherie MacDonald, spokesperson for the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, addressed the Washington rally on behalf of the international delegation. She explained: "In Canada, our leaders are determined to lead us backward. They're now debating a law saying a physically and mentally healthy woman can never have an abortion."

"The women of Canada are saying no and joining our sisters around the world who are saying no to all anti-abortion laws. Throughout the world, we are mobilizing for our lives, and we won't stop until we win."

**"Pro-choice" candidates**

Large turnouts the previous month at pro-choice demonstrations in San Francisco; Columbus, Ohio; Trenton, N.J.; and Tallahassee, Fla., increased the confidence of participants that the anti-choice minority's efforts to curtail abortion rights can be defeated. Unfortunately, the election of such "pro-choice" candidates as Lawrence Douglas Wilder (Virginia), Jim Florio (New Jersey), and David Dinkins (New York City) was widely misunderstood.

Many activists have mistakenly concluded that it is possible to achieve positive change by electing "good" Democrats. In reality, these politicians have only declared them-

selves "pro-choice" because of the mobilization of hundreds of thousands in the streets— independent of both the Democratic and Republican parties—in defense of women's rights.

Despite the motion passed at this summer's NOW convention to explore the possibility of a third party, the clear message sent from the speakers' platform on Nov. 12 was to work for the election of "pro-choice" Democrats (and in a few cases, Republicans).

The majority of speakers at the rally were elected office-holders or Democratic candidates for 1990. Molly Yard pointed favorably to the politicians in attendance as she told the crowd, "We're dead serious about electing pro-choice candidates—including the women gubernatorial candidates who spoke today."

Referring to the election results in New York City, New Jersey, and Virginia, Eleanor

Smeal (president of the Fund for the Feminist Majority) led the crowd in chants of "Abortion Rights—three; George—zero." She then added, "And this is just the beginning, going into 1990. We'll remember in November."

While many participants are confused about the possibility for positive change by supporting Democrats and Republicans, many are also convinced that more visible actions are necessary. They know that despite Mayor-elect Dinkins's promise to enforce the laws against clinic blockaders, only large turnouts of pro-choice supporters have succeeded in preventing Operation Rescue thugs from closing down the clinics.

Membership in NOW and campus pro-choice groups continues to grow. Many areas are already mapping plans for demonstrations in January to commemorate *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

**Nov. 12 rallies—coast to coast**

Pro-choice activities were also held in some 150 other cities on Nov. 12. Many of these were deliberately counterposed to the national Mobilization by groups that argued against a national focus, saying the fight has now shifted to the state legislatures. However, where these actions were publicized, they attracted sizeable numbers of people.

In the largest demonstration ever seen in Jefferson City, Mo., 14,000 marched and rallied demanding repeal of the anti-abortion law that the U.S. Supreme Court upheld in the July *Webster* decision. Over 20 organizations joined to build this action, which saw buses from cities, towns, and college campuses throughout Missouri converge on the state capital.

In Chicago, 2000 pro-choice demonstrators rallied outside the Cook County Hospital demanding safe, legal, and accessible abortions. When this hospital stopped providing second-trimester abortions, it effectively denied access to safe abortions to many poor women in northern Illinois. Other cities with sizeable demonstrations included Los Angeles [see box on this page]; New Orleans; Seattle; San Francisco; Austin, Tex.; and Portland, Ore.

The large numbers who participated in the April 9 March for Women's Equality/Women's Lives and the Nov. 12 Mobilization for Women's Lives points to the possibility of building a powerful national movement that could assure "we will not go back."

Rather than dissipating our energies in futile state-by-state lobbying efforts and campaigns for candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties—the two parties which have continually denied women their basic human rights—we must maintain a national focus.

Local actions must be part of a national campaign to assure reproductive rights for all American women. As Molly Yard has explained, we cannot limit our support to abortion rights in *some* states any more than we can limit our support to voting rights in *some* states.

Efforts must be made to actively involve more trade unionists, oppressed minorities, and students. With this approach, we can mobilize the pro-choice majority to make sure we move forward, not backward. ■

**More coverage of women's rights**

"How we built Nov. 12 in Boston Area" — page 3.

"What strategy for defense of abortion clinics" — page 3.

"Attacks on women's rights in Britain & Ireland" — page 4.

"Oppressed minority women: Victims of abortion restrictions" — page 5.

**100,000 demonstrate in L.A.**

LOS ANGELES—About 100,000 pro-choice activists demonstrated here in the country's second-largest rally on Nov. 12 for a woman's right to choose an abortion. Organized by the Greater Los Angeles Coalition for Reproductive Freedom, the rally featured a line-up of celebrities, including Norma McCorvey, the real "Jane Roe" in the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision. "After 16

years," McCorvey told the crowd, "the abortion battle has turned to war."

The event drew people of all ages, including many families. Many of those attending told *The Los Angeles Times* that they had come to make sure that abortion remained legal, and that they did not want to see the clock turned back to the days when women died from botched illegal abortions.—M.D.