Contents

THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES, Marvin Mandell 5

MUMIA TIME OR SWEENEY TIME, Dave Roediger 11

DISCUSSION: KOSOVO/A, SELF-DETERMINATION AND INTERVENTIONISM, Manuela Dobos, Stephen R. Shalom, Joanne Landy 16

JEWISH FUNDAMENTALISM AND ISRAELI APARTHEID David Finkel 30

EAST TIMOR AND THE UNITED STATES: AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLAN NAIRN 39

AN EXCHANGE: SOCIALISM AND THE MARKET Roy Morrison, David McNally 53

SYMPOSIUM: ORGANIZED LABOR FROM GOMPERS TO SWEENEY Stanley Aronowitz, Jane Slaughter, Peter Rachleff William B. Gould IV, Michael Goldfield, Staughton Lynd Kim Moody, Michael Hirsch, Paul Buhle 66

THE "CHINESE QUESTION" AND AMERICAN LABOR HISTORIANS Stanford M. Lyman 113

CHINESE IMMIGRANT WORKERS AND THE CONTEMPORARY LABOR MOVEMENT, Herbert Hill 149

REVISING THE HISTORY OF COLD WAR LIBERALS, Julius Jacobson 166

BOOK REVIEWS, Christopher Phelps, Ernest Erber 174

STANLEY KUBRICK'S "EYES WIDE SHUT," Kurt Jacobsen 184

TRIBUTE TO LOUIS RIGAUDIAS 1911-1999, Horst Brand 188

INDEX VOLUME VII (NEW SERIES) 190

Max Wohl 1908-1999

We mourn the loss of Max Wohl, a lifelong socialist, a sponsor and devoted supporter of NEW POLITICS who died on October 27. Max came to the socialist movement early in life and never deviated from his belief in socialism as humanity's best hope for eliminating social and economic injustice and racism. He was active in the Workmen's Circle, serving for many years as volunteer executive secretary and contributed a great deal of time to the American Civil Liberties Union as a volunteer staff member. Max leaves behind his wife of sixty-six years, Sylvia Epstein Wohl.

NEW POLITICS on the Web!

NEW POLITICS is on the web! Point your browser to: http://www.wilpaterson.edu/~newpol.

On the web site you will find:

* Chronological, topical, author, and book review Indexes to back issues of NEW POLITICS.
* The full text of more than 100 NEW POLITICS articles (more articles are being added all the time).
* Information on how to submit articles, letters, and ads to NEW POLITICS.
* Subscription information.

Subscribe Now

Enclosed is $20.00 for a subscription to NEW POLITICS.
Add $4.00 for all foreign subscriptions (including Canada).
Supporting subscriptions: $30.00. Institutions: $30.00. Checks payable to NEW POLITICS in U.S. currency only, drawn on a U.S. bank, or use Postal Money Order. For payment by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express) give number and expiration date.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State ..... Zip Code .....

VISA ..... MasterCard ..... AmEx .....

Expiration Date .....

NEW POLITICS P.O. Box 98 Brooklyn, NY 11231

Running for the Gold: The Presidential Primaries

Marvin Mandell

> *Three dogs are fighting over a bone, and you ask which dog I am for. I am the bone.*
>
> MAX NOMAD

> *A plague on both your houses!*
>
> SHAKESPEARE's Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*

EVERY YEAR THE MISS AMERICA PAGEANT SELECTS A WINNER on the basis of talent, appearance, poise, and intelligence. Every four years the American ruling class selects candidates to run for the Presidency. The goal is to keep the world safe for investment. Forget intelligence; the other criteria are certainly relevant. Talent would lie not in playing a Chopin étude or in belting out a Broadway tune but in being articulate, with ability to deliver lines crafted by wordsmiths after having been tested on focus groups. Poise is equally important. Remember 1972 when Edmund Muskie was ditched after choking up because someone slandered his wife? As for appearance, while the candidates do not don bathing suits or, as a rule, evening dress, their charismatic appeal is important. The kingmaker judges are aided by packs of reporters, who, trying to become Woodwards or Bernsteins, scurry around sniffing for Monkey Business (remember Gary Hart and Donna Rice?) and often are obliged by a candidate like Bill Clinton who tells them what kind of underwear he is wearing and whether he inhaled or penetrated (no to both). In my view the judges had their greatest victories twice in my lifetime — with Kennedy and Reagan, both of whom were very successful in pulling the wool over people's eyes while doing such vital services for the very rich as leading the way to lowering the income tax on the top bracket. (Before Kennedy got to work on this, the tax was 90 percent on the top bracket; by the time Reagan finished this job — in 1986— it had been knocked down to 28 percent. Of course both had the support of Congresses with Democratic majorities.)

Before examining the current primary campaigns, I should like to call attention to a small act in the Reagan presidency that, I think, is very revealing of the role of American politicians and may shed some

MARVIN MANDELL *is a member of the editorial board of* NEW POLITICS.

light on the selection process. Martin Anderson, a Reagan aide, has written that one night he drew up a disarmament proposal. He showed it to Reagan and was startled when his boss asked where the footmarks should be, that is, where he should stand when announcing it to the press. Anderson had expected that his very tentative proposal would be passed around to dozens of military and civilian experts, and, if adopted in any form, would be revised several times. Instead, Reagan was eager to demonstrate to the world his poise, his talent, and his appearance.

Granted, Reagan was an actor, but most politicians know well that neither the national interest, nor their own conscience, nor their constituents' needs are their main guides. Money talks. And quite loudly.

I said, "Forget intelligence," perhaps too glibly. Surely the candidates (or at least their advisors) need a kind of intelligence — cleverness — to steer between the Scylla of the financial sponsors and the Charybdis of the electorate. It's a cycle. They must convince the primary electorate to support them and that, in turn, will encourage sponsors to shell out more funds, which, of course, will be spent to win over more voters. One issue will illustrate the adroitness needed to navigate these shoals: taxes. As the Steve Forbes campaign has demonstrated, a top priority among the rich is to lower taxes on the top income bracket, currently pegged at 39.6 percent (at least on paper). Very few people beyond the top 1 percent of wage earners would vote for that. So the adroit politician proposes first, to simplify the tax code and second, to wage war on all taxes. In 1986, public opinion polls revealed that most people disapproved of the massive overhaul of taxes proposed by Senators D. P. Moynihan, Bob Packwood, Bill Bradley (a member of the Senate Finance Committee) and others. But these politicians went all out to show that it would simplify the tax code and reduce taxes for all. Results: first, the tax on the top income bracket was lowered dramatically from 50 percent to 28 percent, whereas people on the bottom received only a 13 percent cut; second, that means that billionaires were now taxed at the same 28 percent rate as the middle class; third, all this resulted in quadrupling the budget deficit by the end of the 80s. In fairness, it should be noted that Bradley, perhaps in expiation of his role in the 1986 tax act, was a principal defender in 1993 of Clinton's proposal to raise the tax on the top bracket from 31 percent to 39.6 percent.

Negotiating between financial sponsors and the electorate is only part of the necessary navigation; one must also steer between voters in primaries (usually strong-minded single issue blocs) and in the general election. When specific hot button issues, like gay rights and abortion, surface, the candidates duck behind clouds of vagueness. This vagueness is the reason most sentient people — excepting confirmed political junkies — are bored by campaign rhetoric.

Blake said, "The weak in courage are strong in cunning." Successful American politicians and their advisors are masters in cunning.

THE U. S. HAS THE LOWEST VOTER TURNOUT OF ANY MAJOR DEMOCRACY. The League of Women Voters often chastises us for that, as though we are neglectful of our civic duties. It seems obvious that the reason people — especially those of low or middle income — don't vote is that they do not believe that the issues, the parties, and the candidates will have any impact on their lives. Let us look at some of the issues that would touch our lives:

- an end to the drug war, a losing war, perhaps by decriminalization of the sale and use of drugs;
- a big cut in war production;
- a single payer plan which would provide universal health care;
- universal, federally subsidized child care;
- a raise in the minimum wage to at least $10 per hour;
- equal funding for all public schools, regardless of property valuation;
- election campaign reform;
- removal of the cap on income taxed for Social Security (currently $72,600) so that the rich pay S. S. tax on all their income;
- reform of the tax structure to counteract the obscenity of CEOs paying themselves over 400 times as much as their average worker;
- forgiveness of debt of developing countries;
- clean air and water;
- affordable housing;
- restoration of a safety net for the poor;
- free college education, as in most European countries;
- complete overhaul of the World Trade Organization so that it regulates labor and environment matters.

Some of these depend on others. A reduction in the war budget and a reform of the tax structure would free up funds for free college education, affordable housing, and universal, federally subsidized child care. (Short of this, the state of Georgia provides free college education for all students with an average of at least "B" and pays for it from proceeds from the lottery. Western European nations pay for it with equally regressive taxes: the Value Added Tax and the gasoline tax. But it could be done without regressive taxes, as the GI Bill of the '40's and '50's demonstrated.) Needless to say, none of the mainstream Presidential primary candidates is addressing any of these issues in any meaningful way.

Of the issues that some of the candidates have raised, perhaps the most important are health care and campaign finance reform.

Currently, over 44 million people, including over 11 million children, do not have health insurance. Bill Bradley proposes a nearly universal health care program, which would cost at least $65 billion annually. Since the budget is unified, this could easily, in hard times, come out of the Social Security surpluses. Moreover, the proposal does nothing to solve the coming Medicare crisis; if anything, it exacerbates it. Only a single

payer plan, similar to Canada's or the United Kingdom's, would get rid of unproductive insurance companies and Health Maintenance Organizations, with their huge costs, and would be able to rein in profit-gouging by drug companies, for profit hospital corporations, et. al. But none of the primary candidates is proposing it.

Both Bradley and John McCain (one of the Keating Five) have proposed campaign finance reform, Bradley by supporting public funding of national campaigns and McCain by trying to put an end to soft money. The significance of these proposals is proven by the intensity of the anger of the Republican leaders. Both proposals are welcome, but limited: Bradley's plan for public funding is for the national election, not the primaries; McCain's doesn't go beyond soft money. In any case, as we have seen in the past (remember the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974?), the rich know how to circumvent campaign finance laws. The American Civil Liberties Union supports them in this because it regards spending money to elect someone as an exercise in free speech. What it is protecting, in my view, looks more and more like a plutocracy rather than a democracy. The election circus, with its escalating costs and time period, must be ended. In the United Kingdom, there is a spending limit of 4,965 pounds (plus a few pence for each elector), and the parliamentary elections last between 3 to 4 weeks. No more.

To his credit, Bradley voted against Clinton's 1996 Welfare Reform, continues to denounce it vigorously, and, in the most notable action of the current primary campaign, he has raised the issues of race and class (the latter the bigger surprise, since, as indicated above, he worked hard, while on the Senate Finance Committee, to lower the tax on the top income bracket). He has come out for eliminating mandatory-minimum sentencing, and he wants to reduce the penalties for crack cocaine use. Both these actions would reduce injustices meted out to mostly black men. But again, what is needed is a more radical action: an end to the unwinnable drug war and a release from prison of all those convicted of victimless crimes. The argument is made that the drug dealers have victims — the users — but why are they to blame more than cigarette or alcohol manufacturers and dealers? Have they caused more deaths? Certainly not. The American Cancer Society estimates the number of annual deaths in the U. S. due to tobacco to be 400,000. In 1995, the total number of deaths due to all opium-related drugs was 2,118 . If any of the politicians running in the Presidential primary dared to publicize these two startlingly contrasting figures, it is not inconceivable that polls would then reveal a huge increase in the number of people wanting to put an end to the drug war.

Some will say that Bradley has evolved since his actions on the tax committee or his support of funding for the Nicaraguan contras in 1986. Speaking out for tough gun laws has not won him any friends in the National Rifle Association. But he is also supporting school vouchers, at

least on an experimental basis. The popular demand for school vouchers is a predictable consequence of the white flight from the public schools that began in the mid-70's and also of the increased pressure of the religious right to get public funds for their parochial schools. What is wrong with giving students a choice? Nothing — if it were a real choice. But poor kids are not going to be given enough of a voucher to get into elite schools. (Buckingham, Brown, and Nichols, a private school in the Boston area, charges over $18,000 annually.) And will private, federally funded schools be forced to take all students, including those with special needs? Hardly. This is a scam. A better way to address the education problem is to remove school funding from the property base so that all schools receive equal funding. The parents of public school children in Scarsdale and Shaker Heights are not demanding vouchers because their schools, unlike inner-city public schools are adequately funded.

Thus far in the campaign political scientists and the media tend to write off Pat Buchanan supporters as gay bashing, anti-feminist, anti-modernist yahoos (which many of them are). They have paid little attention to the class or classes that Buchanan, more than any other candidate, has attracted by his pseudo-Populist demagoguery. In addition to the manufacturing workers who fear loss of their jobs to overseas competition, there are the small shopkeepers who fear that the lower profit margins caused by cheap imports will leave standing only giants like Walmart and Sears Roebuck; and there are the small farmers who are threatened by unfair competition due to agribusiness' access to cheap immigrant labor. These fears are legitimate, and Buchanan — despite his America First nationalism, his xenophobia, his minority baiting — has been the only candidate to challenge, at least rhetorically, the rapacity of multi-national corporations. Of course he does so presumably on behalf of *American* workers, not on behalf of exploited workers (mostly women and children) in the developing countries. Albert Gore, the leading Administration cheerleader for GATT, out of which came the World Trade Organization, has not questioned the W. T. O.'s role in inflicting misery and pollution in the global sweatshop. Nor has Bradley, nor, of course, either of the "compassionate" conservatives, Bush or McCain.

The American public has seen candidate after candidate turn Left during the primaries, only to act differently when in power. This is proof, of course, that candidates know what voters want, and then, when in power follow their financial backers' bidding.

What makes plaguing both houses difficult today is that the Republican Party, by opposing ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty among other actions, has moved steadily toward becoming the Party of Death, while the Democratic Party has remained the Party of Equivocation. Surely, Ted Kennedy and Paul Wellstone are lesser evils by far than Jesse Helms and Tom DeLay (appropriately a former exterminator), but (1) the primaries offer no such clear cut contrasts among the four major

candidates, and (2) there is no overriding issue as there was in 1972. A plausible argument could have been made for voting for George McGovern then, given his commitment to end the Vietnam War. But no one running in the primaries today has addressed even one of the issues listed above in terms that a progressive can support. If someone were running for a single payer health plan, for an end to the drug war, for something like the British system of election campaigns—these proposals might propel people into the voting booths. Alas, no one is.

SOME WILL GRANT THAT, DUE TO THE FUNDING of the major candidates of both parties, there is not much more than a dime's worth of difference among them. For the forseeable future we must work at the grass roots level to revitalize the labor movement which, after great expectations for reform under the new, "dynamic" Sweeney leadership, continues its classic, ossified stance of mindless support for the Democratic Party, giving the nod to Al Gore at its September Convention. We have to breathe some life into the nascent Labor Party which, for the most part, is absent from the political scene just when an independent, progressive third party is essential as a genuine alternative to the two major parties. It is only such an alternative, joined with movements of people of color, feminists, gays, environmentalists and pacifists that can engage our enthusiasm.

Traditionally, at the close of the Miss America contest, the winner dissolves into tears, then walks down the runway and waves to her adoring fans of the world. Perhaps, at the end of the Presidential primaries, it is we, the people of the world, who should sob and, while walking down the sometimes mean streets, raise our arms and cry out, with the poet Stevie Smith, "I was much further out than you thought, and not waving but drowning."

Mumia Time or Sweeney Time

Dave Roediger

As New Politics *prepares to go to press, critical developments in the struggle for Mumia Abu-Jamal's life and freedom are unfolding. After the October 4, 1999 refusal by the Supreme Court to hear defense appeals, Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Ridge signed a death warrant setting Abu-Jamal's execution for December 2. On October 26, Federal Judge William Yohn, Jr. temporarily stayed execution pending a hearing. The defense hopes to raise both procedural and evidentiary issues but does so in a disadvantageous context in which bipartisan death penalty "reform" legislation prioritizes haste and retribution over examination of the record.*

IN FEBRUARY 1995 BAY AREA TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION LOCAL 21, what labor historians call a conservative craft union, resolved in favor of full freedom for the African American political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. In a letter to Pennsylvania's governor, Local 21 argued that Abu-Jamal was "an innocent victim of a racial and political frameup" and branded his possible execution a "disgrace."

Still more remarkable was what transpired during the filming of a recent segment on Abu-Jamal's case by the ABC television newsmagazine 20/20. ABC let Abu-Jamal know of their plans to appeal to prison authorities in order to arrange an on-camera interview with him from Death Row. The feature promised to break the scandalous silence of the national media regarding the case and the still more comprehensive blackout of Abu-Jamal's side of the case. With the possibility of making what was likely a last public appeal to save his own life, Abu-Jamal replied that he would of course be delighted to speak to ABC. He added, however, that no interview could take place while the network's technicians, organized in NABET (another craft organization), remained on strike. He added precisely, "I'd rather die than cross that picket line."

Those who produced the segment on Mumia, from star reporter Sam Donaldson on down, apparently had no qualms about scabbing on the

DAVE ROEDIGER *teaches History and chairs the Program in American Studies at the University of Minnesota. His recent edited books include* Black on White (*Schocken),* and *Covington Hall*'s Labor Struggles in the Deep South (Kerr).

strike. Nor did they choke on presenting a more or less pat recapitulation of even the most discredited police testimony in the case. Helping to sign the death warrant of a fellow journalist, 20/20 registered the utter abjection of "crusading journalism" in the U.S., crusading for network management, crusading for the police, crusading for the death penalty.

Although it will likely never grace the infotainment airwaves, the story symbolized by Local 21's support of Abu-Jamal and by his incredible support of NABET, is a blockbuster commanding the serious attention of those of us trying to build a new labor movement. Abu-Jamal's pro-labor journalism and activism, from Death Row with his days and columns grimly numbered, has been extraordinary. It has included not only a striking analysis of the importance of the recent strike by Philadelphia's transit workers but also support for U.S. longshore unionists under threat of repression because of their militant refusal to service the *Neptune Jade*, a job action undertaken in solidarity with beleaguered British dockworkers in Liverpool.

Impressive labor support for Abu-Jamal has likewise developed, especially in the Bay Area, Chicago and New York City. In the April 1999 demonstrations around Abu-Jamal's case in Philadelphia, New York City's Workers to Free Mumia mobilized labor contingents and Local 1199 of the Health and Hospital Workers appeared in force. In the San Francisco march on the same day, 200 to 300 International Longshore and Warehouse Union members headed the crowd of 20,000, wearing union caps and carrying an ILWU banner. They chanted, "An injury to one is an injury to all. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal." The San Francisco Labor Council endorsed the April action as did that of Alameda County and the California Federation of Labor. Organized teachers, postal workers, writers, transit workers, carpenters, hotel and restaurant workers and boatmen have likewise raised protests on Abu-Jamal's behalf. So too have the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (Region Six), the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the recently formed Labor Party. Internationally, "Justice for Mumia" endorsements have come from the Congress of South African Trade Unions and its powerful food and metal workers affiliates, the Transport and General Workers Union in London, a section of the General Confederation of Workers in France, organized British and Irish journalists, public employees in Canada and Australian telecommunications workers.

Most important by far, on April 24, 1999 the ILWU shut down all Pacific Coast ports, 30 of them, from Seattle to San Diego, in solidarity with Abu-Jamal and in support of the demonstrations on his behalf. The work stoppage, which came as a result of rank-and-file initiatives, occurred over heated management opposition and lasted the entire day shift. It was, according to ILWU president Brian McWilliams, the first officially sanctioned coastwide "stop-work" on the behalf of a domestic political prisoner ever. Messages of solidarity with the ILWU's job action came from longshore workers in England, Cyprus, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Japan. Rio de Janiero's 100,000-member teachers' union, which had itself stopped work in a two-hour show of support for Mumia on the previous day, also sent greetings.

THE EXTENT OF TWO-WAY SOLIDARITY between Abu-Jamal and the labor movement deserves publicity for the ways in which it gives the lie to recent slanders against the Free Mumia movement. According to these slanders, Abu-Jamal's cause has

irrationally attracted the support of a cultlike following of naive musicians, New Leftovers and internet geeks, who find it easier to champion the defense of a charismatic ex-Black Panther than to agitate around "real" class issues. (In an utterly overwrought *Nation* column, the populist film director Michael Moore recently offered a particularly distressing version of the charge that Mumia supporters are unserious.} That the Free Mumia forces enjoy significant labor support cuts against any such efforts to characterize the campaign as superficial and sentimental.

Moreover, labor support often finds its justification in the clear realization that police violence and race/class-based justice are workers' issues, and in hard-headed analyses of the importance of building community/labor coalitions, Larry Adams, president of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, has written:

> Mumia is us. We are Mumia. . . .Trade unions exist for the right to defend democratic rights of working class people, due process, fair and equal treatment, freedom from police brutality — all of which is being denied Mumia in this effort at a legal lynching.

ILWU Local 10 executive board member Jack Heyman has emphasized that support for Abu-Jamal connects his union to both "the struggles of minorities here and the dockworkers' movement internationally." At the pro-Mumia demonstration in the Bay Area, he asked the 20,000 assembled, ""If the ILWU goes on strike, will you be there for us?" The response was resoundingly affirmative.

However, the point which I wish to make in the balance of these pages goes quite beyond the argument that labor support for Abu-Jamal is significant, inspired and inspiring. My further claim is that labor's solidarity with Mumia, and his with labor, best locate the terrain on which our boldest hopes for a new labor movement ought to be grounded. My friend George Lipsitz, inspired by both hiphop and R & B, has insisted that "What time is it?" ought to be a central question for anyone writing and thinking about class and race. For me, it is "Mumia Time" when new potentialities for the U.S. labor movement are under consideration.

This position is admittedly a pretty lonely one. For intellectuals writing about, and to some extent struggling alongside, U.S. labor, there has been little hesitancy over the last several years in telling what time it is. It is, for most, John Sweeney Time. From the 1996 Teach-In with the Labor Movement at Columbia University, to the founding of Scholars, Writers and Artists for Social Justice as a labor support group, to Stanley Aronowitz's *From the Ashes of the Old*, Sweeney's accession to the presidency of the AFL-CIO has been seen as the symbol of change, as the source of new space for progressive activity in the labor movement and as the grounds for a return to solidarity with labor by left-liberal academics. Thus *Audacious Democracy*, the volume of essays growing out of the Columbia Teach-In, proclaims in its introduction that Sweeney's election constitutes the "best sign that the labor question is alive and well."

To the extent that such a view restores hope and encourages the growth of concrete acts of solidarity with labor struggles, it is to the good, and the position that Sweeney is no Lane Kirkland is unassailable. Nonetheless, the "It's Sweeney Time" position remains a problematic one. Sweeney's "America needs a raise" platform turns out to be pretty thin gruel if we want to maintain, with Aronowitz,

that the AFL-CIO is headed by "an insurgent." Deeply nationalistic, Sweeney's demand hearkens back to Samuel Gompers at his most economistic and narrow, not to the labor heroes who have held that workers need freedom, justice, and time to live. Even Aronowitz's *From the Ashes of the Old*, the best of the "Sweeney Time" writings, partly reflects this narrowness. The labor anthem on which the book's title plays envisioned bringing forth a "new world" from the old's ashes, but Aronowitz instead describes the possibilities of building a somewhat stronger and more influential union movement from the ruins of the Meany-Kirkland leadership. Sweeney's poor record on union democracy has meanwhile tempted some of his supporters to toy with idea that workers' democracy is overrated in any case, and expendable.

USING SWEENEY TO MARK LABOR'S TRANSFORMATION AND POSSIBILITIES also coincides with a troubling nostalgia. Eric Foner and Betty Friedan, for example, voice hopes for a relatively unproblematic return to labor's former glories in their *Audacious Democracy* essays. In the words of the former, the unions are poised to be "once again a voice both for the immediate interests of . . . members and the broader needs of of working- and middle-class Americans." Such backward gazes fix on a long, mythic period in which, as Steve Fraser and Josh Freeman put it, class was the "primordial social question" — one whose "capacious embrace" could "absorb . . . the fate of women and children, racial and ethnic hatred."

What, if instead, we took the remarkable solidarity between Mumia Abu-Jamal and the labor movement as the symbol of what a new labor movement promises? What if it is Mumia Time rather than Sweeney Time? Such a choice would mean several things. Most significant initiatives on Abu-Jamal's behalf have been local ones, albeit with a great awareness of international connections. In most cases, pro-Abu-Jamal activities have been forwarded as a result of rank-and-file initiatives within locals, not as projects of the labor leadership. To think in Mumia Time rather than in Sweeney Time thus challenges us to entertain the possibility that the promises of a new labor movement cannot be envisioned if the focus remains national institutions and labor's officialdom.

To emphasize that it is Mumia Time also opens critical questions concerning the state and labor. While the largest initiatives and greatest claims of success by the Sweeney leadership have centered on the election of more Democrats to national office, significant labor support for Abu-Jamal registers a deepening suspicion of state power. These mobilizations identify with an accused cop-killer who is utterly unsparing in his in excoriation of the complete corruption and unspeakable crimes of the government and of its deep complicity with corporate power.

Most impressively, the extent to which Abu-Jamal knows that he needs to identify with the labor movement, and that some in the labor movement know that they need to support him, signals what the working class movement is becoming and can be. In 1995, in a demographic shift which escaped the attention of mainstream, labor and radical journalists, organized labor became for the first time a movement in which white males are a minority. The Bureau of Labor Statistics counted 8.33 million white men in unions and 8.93 million African American, Latino and white female members. Crossing the 50% threshold produces no magical transformation, of course, especially while the leadership remains overwhelmingly white and male. Nonetheless,

the trend is of real significance.

WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS AMONG THE MOST PRO-UNION SEGMENTS of the U.S. population, and with white males projected to constitute just 37% of the labor force by 2005, unions cannot survive, let alone grow, as an institution dominated by white men. The white male identity politics — taking forms ranging from hate strikes against the employment of workers of color, to anti-Asian rioting, to family wage campaigns, to the more pervasive inability to see that a "class" politics articulated so largely by white men could neither "absorb" nor even recognize questions of racial and gender justice — need not so crushingly burden the labor movement of the future. White trade unionists will often be a minority or near-minority in locals — the position from which they have historically moved in the most egalitarian directions. At the same time, the sharply limited but real protections which a white male membership base accorded the unions will apply less and less. The savage attacks on organizing by undocumented workers and on the diverse, pro-gender equity public employee unions presage a time when labor will represent those who are in every sense outsiders.

If it is Sweeney Time, rebuilding a Democratic Party majority and refurbishing labor's image as a voice representing the U.S. middle class gives us a clear agenda and plenty to do. If it is Mumia Time, we would enter far more uncharted territory, in which we acknowledge that the labor movement cannot simply be rebuilt but must and can be built on new foundations. We would search, locally and internationally, for ways to embrace and nurture workers' organizations which draw their poetry from the future and which express what Abu-Jamal has set out to capture in his journalism — "the voice of the voiceless." The fight to keep Mumia's own voice from being stilled, now more urgent than ever, is labor's fight.

Abu Jamal's defense requires urgent action and strong support, financial and otherwise. Donations may be made to National Black United Fund (Please make checks payable to National Black United Fund/Mumia) at 40 Clinton Street, 5th Floor, Newark, NJ 07102.

Discussion on Kosovo/a, Self-Determination and Interventionism

Following the Kosovo/a exchange in the last issue of New Politics, *we received an article from Manuela Dobos. Steve Shalom and Joanne Landy then submitted short pieces continuing the previous discussion (neither having seen the other's contribution). We present here the comments by Dobos, Shalom and Landy.*

A Left-Interventionist View

Manuela Dobos

FOR THOSE WHO ADHERE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF SELF-DETERMINATION, resistance to fascism and basic human solidarity, a bottom line for socialists, simply and exclusively opposing U.S. intervention anywhere is not the way to defend those principles. The enormity of what has happened and will continue to happen in the former Yugoslavia makes it impossible for socialists to stand idly by, or take seriously self-styled anti-imperialists who simply deny it and call it war propaganda.

Only a military campaign could have stopped the Serbs back in 1991. But because U.S. and European leaders refused to arm the local populations against Serb aggression, and then refused to fight it themselves, the task of stopping genocide only grew harder over the next eight years. Any setbacks Serb forces have suffered since came only from military attack. Therefore, I believe we had to demand 1) arming the organized resisters to Serb (and later Croat) aggression but also 2) getting the U.S. to intervene militarily on the side of those victims. I have found the argument against U.S. intervention to be too weak to justify abstaining from meaningful action in solidarity with those who suffer such persecution and with those who are fighting back.

According to the anti-interventionist argument, the U.S./NATO have only their own imperialist motives for any international action. They will never act out of concern for the victims of genocide, and any military action they undertake will only be aimed at advancing their global power. All this is supposedly manifest in the war the U.S. launched against Serbia instead

MANUELA DOBOS *teaches East European history at the College of Staten Island, CUNY. She has written extensively on the former Yugoslavia where she has lived and worked, most recently from 1997 to 1998.*

of negotiating, beginning with the Rambouillet ultimatum in February 1999 – and in the catastrophe that this caused the Serbs to bring down upon the Kosovars.

The U.S. government, itself the subsidizer or perpetrator of genocide and war crimes in Central America and Southeast Asia, has never been humanitarian in its interventions. True, it acts only for its own agenda. However, I believe that there is not one but several agendas, and they can be unclear and contradictory. U.S. world policies have fluctuated among different ambitions. Star Wars plans continue alongside capitalist cooperation with Communist bureaucracies; military hegemony and world market domination are pursued but so is the image of righteousness, and any other images the politicians need to win elections.

It is therefore at least theoretically possible that a movement for socialism and democracy will find in this complexity moments in which its objectives overlap with government policy, or at least contradictions to take advantage of. It has worked in the past. Imperialist America was compelled to fight Hitler, and not out of compassion for the Jews. But this fight was backed and joined by progressive movements, and fascism was overthrown. Later, the role of defending the "free world" against Soviet imperialism conflicted with supporting the apartheid regime in South Africa, and the divestment movement, led by African-Americans, succeeded in removing that support. The peace movement was able to undermine popular support for the war in Vietnam by showing the immense contrast between the projected image of the U.S. as defender of democracy and the reality of puppet regimes and decimated villages.

When the war in Bosnia began, these considerations prompted people like me to demand that this government act in the way we would expect a really democratic government to act: to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia, arm the Bosnian Army (and later, the KLA) and, if necessary (as it soon was), send ground troops to defeat the Serbian Army once and for all. We want to confront the U.S. with its hypocrisy and shame it into doing the right thing — it just might do it and save some people. If it does not, we must demand more loudly because by doing so we are showing the kind of government we want and would have if we had real democracy; not to do so means abandoning fellow human beings to unspeakable horror.

To assess which imperialist agenda informed U.S. policy in the Balkans, you need evidence for the whole decade, not merely the four months in which the U.S. finally mounted an offensive against Serbia. That evidence, I believe, can only lead to the conclusion that the U.S. imperial agenda consisted precisely in avoiding use of its military arsenal and above all its troops. The U.S. wanted trade and investment to proceed in Eastern Europe uninterrupted by social and national revolution, with deals to be made with known, reliable, stable power-wielders.

THE U.S. INTERVENED IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA IN JUNE 1991 to insure that the strongman of the area, Milosevic, would maintain stability, that is, preserve existing borders and control unruly populations. This was another version of U.S. attempts to prevent the crumbling of the USSR, and, after August 1991, Russia. When Milosevic unleashed the Yugoslav Army against the Slovenes and then the Croats, the U.S. fell in behind Britain and France for a "diplomatic"

solution to the "civil war" rather than military engagement against the Serb aggressor. In short, it was appeasement from 1991 right up to the ultimatum of February 1999. That this policy was self-contradictory and blew up in the faces of the U.S. and NATO does not alter the fact that refraining from the use of military power was the policy throughout, and refraining from the full military power necessary to smash the Serbian army was the reason for high-altitude bombing — an historically ineffective tactic — of Serbia and Kosovo/a instead of a ground invasion.

The contradiction which eight years later led the U.S. to military confrontation of Milosevic instead of continued diplomacy, was that this "force for stability" actually derived his power from destabilizing. He is a strongman exactly because he has been able to create a fanatic mass out of the majority of Serbs, unleash them on their neighbors and violently recreate borders. While the U.S. was tacitly supporting Milosevic in June 1991 because he was ostensibly keeping Yugoslavia together, he was in fact destroying it. Over the next four years, Milosevic and allied warlords continued with wholesale murder and land-grabbing in Bosnia. The victorious defenders of the "free world" directly helped him get away with it.

Though the U.S. talked tough, this was designed to convince the Bosnians that Washington was on their side. The Bosnians could then be lulled into taking American advice to negotiate a "political" solution and stop demanding arms or else military intervention. Somehow, the U.S. would make things right in the end if the Bosnians agreed to partition along ethnic lines, thereby destroying their state and their culture. And this is indeed what happened with the Dayton Pact, the triumph of "diplomacy."

It is true that in the summer of 1995 the U.S. was acting tough. It armed the Croats and Bosnians to defeat the Bosnian Serbs in the west, and NATO bombed Bosnian Serb military installations. This is what made the pact possible by November. But Milosevic was allowed to entrench himself again in power. He was now to be the grand stabilizer of the shambles of former Yugoslavia, curbing the Bosnian Serbs; in return, the sanctions against Serbia were to be lifted and the Bosnian Serb para-state legitimized. (It is significant that Washington turned to the second local strongman, Franjo Tudjman, to effect the military offensive. The U.S. then permitted him to ethnically cleanse the formerly Serb-held part of Croatia of 150,000 Serbs, thus reinforcing ethnic partition as a basis for the deal.)

Making Milosevic the Dayton guarantor meant Washington had to shut up about what the Serbs had been doing to the Kosovars since 1989. The nonviolent independence movement of Kosovo/a was not allowed to speak at Dayton. Returning home empty-handed after having placed their faith in the U.S., the movement's leadership was soon challenged by the emergence of an armed guerilla force, the KLA, in the next years. In 1998 this precipitated the blow-up of diplomacy with Milosevic.

The American course was to desperately seek diplomatic agreement throughout 1998. During the first months Serb forces were successful in attacking the popular base of the KLA in the countryside through several massacres and destruction of villages. The U.S. obliged Milosevic by calling the KLA terrorists. The initial scorched earth actions by the Serbian police merely caused young men to join the KLA, which succeeded in gaining control of many areas in Kosovo/

a by May. But Serbian retaliation, even more virulent, seriously cut back the KLA by July and forced 400,000 to hide in the hills as their villages were torched. Sixty thousand refugees were thrown out into neighboring countries. Serb forces cleared great swaths of land near key border areas, ominous signs for the future. While U.S. officials continually asserted that Kosovo/a would not be allowed to become another Bosnia, they also announced they would never send troops. And privately they were saying it was not such a bad thing that the KLA had been brought down a notch or two *(International Herald Tribune*, Sept. 15, 1998). The famous 1992 "Christmas Warning" by Bush and Clinton that the U.S. would tolerate no Serb military action in Kosova was conspicuously ignored.

Along with weekly threats of bombing for deadlines unmet, the U.S., with the help of the Russians, fostered the "diplomatic initiative" (numerous European dignitaries traipsing to Belgrade, Holbrooke brokering the October deal). The number of refugees grew to 100,000 by September. The Holbrooke deal called for the Serbs to reduce their troops and accept OSCE monitors. But Milosevic openly flouted the agreement and deployed more troops instead. The monitors, who were supposed to have stopped the violence "from both sides," could do nothing but record mounting Serb atrocities. By year's end, there were 200,000 refugees and an estimated quarter of a million internally displaced. By this time, after countless unmet deadlines and failures to act, the U.S. and NATO had a major credibility problem. They either had to decide finally to make a deadline stick or be seen as a paper tiger. Only then did they begin to seriously plan to bomb.

THIS HISTORY COMPLETELY BELIES THE CLAIM THAT THE U.S. was out for military hegemony. It shows instead that it was following exactly the sort of policy the anti-interventionists demand it should have taken. Similarly, a longer look at the enormously intensified mass expulsions show them to have been a part of larger Serb plan for which the bombing was an excuse, not the result of any spontaneously erupted rage. It also shows that the only way to attack NATO's cynicism (and incompetence) in ignoring this obvious consequence was to demand the ground invasion, and not, as the anti-interventionists wanted, a withdrawal. This is precisely what we "left-interventionists" did in the weeks prior to the bombing, warning that bombing alone would simply lead to a huge Srebrenica.

As we know from the testimony of one of those seeking diplomatic agreement in November with Milosevic (German General Klaus Naumann), a Serb general, soon to be purged, secretly warned that Milosevic's intentions were to lead the Serb Army against NATO. Plans for "Operation Horseshoe," the deployment of troops to carry out the specific function of wholesale expulsion, had already been made in December, and carried out throughout January 1999 (Washington Post, April 11, 1999). Not only did NATO bombs not make the Serbs go any wilder than they had already gone, but this disclosure shows that for Milosevic, Rambouillet in February was not going to be about negotiations. This was clear when Milosevic not only did not show up but sent second-stringers. He knew that the U.S. and NATO would have no choice but to issue an ultimatum challenging Serb sovereignty, and that was okay with him. In rejecting it, he would look like David against Goliath, gamble on the divisions among NATO members, particularly with Russian help, and exploit the historical ineffectiveness of bombing in

order to accomplish a great mission, the final solution to the Albanian problem.

For the Albanians in Kosovo/a, the carefully planned and executed expulsion of almost a million of them was the culmination of Serbian state practice that reached back to its conquest of Kosovo/a in 1913. This policy was designed to correct the demographic imbalance in favor of Serbs. It consisted in making life miserable for Albanians by killing and robbing them and destroying their livelihood so that they would leave, thereby making Serbs a majority. Tito's Yugoslavia, in which Kosovo/a was autonomous, had made this goal impossible. But it was renewed with the military dictatorship imposed by Milosevic in 1989. As Helsinki Human Rights Watch reports from 1992 attest, "cleansing" was already occurring in northern towns of Kosovo, and Albanian emigration was precisely the aim of the apartheid laws of that regime. The ethnic cleansing of March to June, 1999, threw out over half the population. (The opposition in Serbia, supposedly marginalized by the bombing but which actually had sidelined itself in 1997, has as its outstanding characteristic the inability to face any of these facts and convince the Serb public that they happened. Until the opposition does this, it is meaningless.)

The anti-interventionists point to Washington's violation of international law by avoiding going through the UN; but they fail to take note of the violation of the UN Charter that the U.S. and Europe committed when they did not come to the aid of a member state, Bosnia, and sent in UN peacekeepers instead. And they overlook American disregard for the Genocide Convention to which the U.S. is a signatory, when those peacekeepers failed to prevent genocide, and even collaborated with Serb forces. Indeed, the arms embargo on Bosnia was illegal, particularly after three votes of the General Assembly to lift it. In fact, the UN has all along been the instrument of U.S. policy toward the successor states of Yugoslavia: it was supposed to go in and "stabilize" by treating both aggressor and victim equally. As a vehicle for American agendas, the UN has not been that different from NATO, in which there are also other nations with which the U.S. has to contend: last May, for example, Britain wanted ground troops, and Germany wanted to stop the bombing.

Obviously, U.S. intervention to stop genocide is only going to happen in special circumstances, and it will probably not turn out the way we want it to. Thus today, the refugees are back, but Milosevic remains in power; the Serb military is intact and now threatens Montenegro. And the real work is helping to strengthen a multi-ethnic, region-wide, authentic democratic opposition representing working people and civil society. We also need to construct a better UN, with a global police force. Only then can we start preventing situations that impel urgent and desperate responses. Meanwhile, we need not shrink from calling on the U.S. to take arms against killers.

Kosovo, Justice, and Humanitarianism

Stephen R. Shalom

IF BY OUR ACTIONS WE CAN SAVE LARGE NUMBERS OF LIVES, we have a moral obligation to do so. This principle is accepted by almost everyone, but it doesn't get us very far because in the real world there are often countervailing considerations. Sometimes, for example, an action can save lives in the short run but cost more lives in the long run: say that by encouraging a U.S. military intervention that stopped some atrocities today we made more likely other U.S. military interventions tomorrow, interventions that might lead to the deaths of many innocent people.

This example is not just an obscure hypothetical. Weakening the UN or international law, which check to some small degree the arbitrary power of leading states, makes future interventions — maybe next time in Colombia — more likely. Promoting military solutions to a current crisis increases the likelihood of a military solution in the future. (Already the European members of NATO have concluded from the Kosovo conflict that they need to modernize their militaries, while in the U.S. large hikes in the defense budget have encountered minimal resistance.) So those concerned about moral outcomes will want to carefully weigh both the long-run and the short-run human consequences of the actions they urge — a weighing all too rare among left interventionists.

Some argue — correctly in the abstract — that extreme circumstances may override other considerations. In the case of Kosovo, however, this argument seems especially inappropriate because there is no reason to believe that a single life was saved by NATO's "humanitarian" intervention. Many point to the horrific ethnic cleansing carried out by Serbian forces during the NATO bombing, but this ethnic cleansing wasn't prevented by NATO's actions; on the contrary, the bombing precipitated the wholesale forced deportations. NATO bombing, of course, does not absolve Serbian forces from moral responsibility for these atrocities — just as hostage takers are not blameless for killing their hostages when under attack — but surely NATO by its actions contributed to the gruesome outcome and it must share in the responsibility (just as would those who recklessly attack hostage takers without due consideration for the well-being of the hostages). In the year before the bombing, some 2,000 people had been killed in Kosovo — some KLA fighters, some Serbian

STEPHEN R. SHALOM *is a member of the* NEW POLITICS E*ditorial Board.*

police, but mostly ethnic Albanian civilians. After the bombing, on the other hand, the toll will almost certainly turn out to be much higher.

(Some on the left have lately been arguing that the post-war estimate of 10,000 dead Kosovar Albanians is a gross exaggeration. The numbers are not yet known, but I'd be extremely wary of promoting this claim. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has reported more than 2,100 bodies recovered so far, with more than half the known sites left to examine. Many people remain missing and there is good evidence that at least some bodies have been burned or removed, precisely to make it more difficult to press war crimes charges. The same situation obtains in East Timor, where despite much refugee testimony of massacre some have been quick to cite the relative lack of corpses as proof that no large scale killings occurred. Given the possibility that many bodies may have been dumped at sea, burned, or removed to West Timor, declaring the absence of a massacre seems premature, certainly until a careful population count is undertaken.)

THERE WERE, TO BE SURE, KILLINGS AND REFUGEES IN KOSOVO before the bombing began, but their scale and character differed markedly from that which followed the bombing. As the U.S. State Department noted, "In late March 1999, Serbian forces dramatically increased the scope and pace of their efforts, moving away from selective targeting of towns and regions suspected of KLA sympathies toward a sustained and systematic effort to ethnically cleanse the entire province of Kosovo."

Of course, if what followed the bombing was going to happen in any case or was going to happen on an even larger scale, then the bombing had no negative effect. But despite the special pleading of interventionists, there is no compelling evidence that the ethnic cleansing that occurred after March 24 was going to happen anyway, and there is good reason for doubting it. I examine the relevant evidence elsewhere (*Z* magazine, Sept. 1999), and there is no room to repeat the details here. Suffice it to note the inadequacy of the two main arguments offered as "proof" that the ethnic cleansing was inevitable.

First, there is the observation that the expulsions of a large fraction of the ethnic Albanian population were apparently methodically planned. This is probably true, but it tells us nothing about whether the ethnic cleansing would have taken place under any circumstances. All military organizations develop contingency plans. That they carry out these plans under some circumstances does not demonstrate that they would have done so under others. There is no reason to disagree with the assessment of Dejan Anastasijevic of the London-based Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR) on May 12, 1999: "It is now clear that Belgrade prepared the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo . . . months in advance. It was to be executed in the event of NATO bombing."

The second "proof" of the inevitability of the large-scale ethnic cleansing is said to be the fact that Milosevic was responsible for similar crimes earlier in Bosnia. It is certainly true that Milosevic's previous record was horrendous and criminal. From this one can reasonably conclude that the Serbian leader was morally capable of massive ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. But this is a far cry from proving that therefore he intended to do what he did even in the absence of the bombing. Consider an analogy. Is Clinton morally capable of murdering a political opponent? No doubt: if he is indifferent to the deaths of hundreds of thou-

sands of Iraqi civilians as a result of U.S.-imposed sanctions, then killing an additional political opponent would not present a moral dilemma. But showing that an actor is morally capable of an action is hardly proof that the actor will carry out the action. One needs to look at all the circumstances and judge assessments of costs and benefits.

In determining how many innocent lives were saved (or not saved) by the NATO intervention, we need to add in: (1) increased infant and maternal mortality rates (already abysmal) among displaced Kosovars; (2) the deaths of civilians in Serbia caused by the bombing — more than a thousand people were likely killed, many of them children; and (3) the long-term civilian deaths that will surely result from NATO attacks on Serbia's economic infrastructure.

So, yes, there may be times when humanitarian intervention is appropriate, even obligatory, even by the United States, and even unilaterally. When huge numbers of lives are at stake, normal cautions may be overruled. But what kind of humanitarianism is it where the results of the intervention are more not fewer deaths?

ADMITTEDLY, LIVES SHOULD NOT BE OUR ONLY CONCERN. If they were, no one would ever fight for freedom. And certainly many Kosovar Albanians seem to be glad that NATO intervened, despite the consequences. So let us consider whether justice and freedom have been served by the intervention.

Most Kosovar Albanians say they want independence. But NATO bombs were never a very good means of achieving such a goal given that the NATO powers oppose independence for Kosovo. NATO Secretary General Javier Solana told reporters in September that Kosovo Albanians have to abandon hope of gaining independence from Yugoslavia. "We've been very clear," said U.S. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger on November 22, "that independence is not something we support, it's not our policy."

Has the bombing brought the goal of a multiethnic, democratic Kosovo any closer? Since mid-June most of the non-Albanian population of Kosovo has been displaced. Some simply fled, perhaps fleeing justice, but many have been driven out. Serbs and Roma have been especially targeted, and Muslim Slavs (Bosniaks) and people of mixed ethnicity have been victimized as well. Scores of people have been killed, and dozens of Orthodox churches and monasteries have been destroyed or damaged. According to the Special Rapporteur of the UN's Commission on Human Rights, "The situation in Kosovo can be summarized as follows: the spring ethnic cleansing of Albanians accompanied by murders, torture, looting and burning of houses has been replaced by the fall ethnic cleansing of Serbs, Roma, Bosniaks and other non-Albanians accompanied by the same atrocities."

Of course, the Kosovar Albanians have been through a nightmare and that there would be a strong desire for revenge is not surprising. But it is important to note that though there are certainly random individual acts of revenge, the "most serious incidents of violence," according to Human Rights Watch, "have been carried out by members of the KLA," though the extent of central coordination of these actions is unknown. Noting that "the KLA has been linked to earlier abuses," Human Rights Watch reported that while some of those killed since June may have committed atrocities, "many of the Serb victims were innocent civilians." And the intent behind the violence "appears to be the expulsion of Kosovo's Serb and Roma population rather than a desire for revenge alone."

With regard to the Roma, "current tensions are reinforced by historic discrimination." Ethnic Albanians watching Serbian forces retreat on June 13 cursed the troops with one word: "Gypsies!"

The intolerance in Kosovo is palpable; as Janez Kovac wrote for IWPR, "even foreign diplomats, aid workers and journalists find themselves in danger if they dare speak a Slav language." This intolerance is in no small measure a result of the NATO bombing: first because the bombing unleashed the Serbian ethnic cleansing and second because it taught the lesson — approved in NATO capitals — that it is permissible to kill Serb civilians in behalf of the Albanian cause.

The bombing had another unfortunate consequence: it reduced the prospects for democracy within the Kosovar Albanian community. Military solutions always strengthen the hands of those with the guns, and the KLA still has the guns. KLA leaders have been reported to have eliminated internal rivals by assassination (NYT, June 25, 1999). When Veton Surroi and Baton Haxhiu, two leading Kosovo Albanian intellectuals, criticized the organized violence against Serbs and warned of the fascism behind this violence, Kosovapress, the press agency linked closely to the KLA, published a denunciation of the two as traitors to the Kosovo Albanian cause and warned that they were at risk of "eventual and very understandable revenge."

In the prevailing atmosphere, it is hard to know what most Kosovar Albanians think; a recent western poll is said to have found that 90 percent of respondents indicated that in an election they would vote for pacifist leader Ibrahim Rugova. Janez Kovac quoted one ethnic Albanian woman who, fearing for her safety, asked not to be named: "Albanians like me, who don't think like the street mob, are in as much danger as the Serbs. We don't dare to go out at night." Many "politically suspect" Albanians have been attacked.

WAS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE TO NATO'S WAR? Some claim that negotiations were tried and failed. But the Rambouillet accords, which Washington demanded Milosevic sign or else be bombed, included the insistence that the international force in Kosovo belong to NATO, rather than the UN, and gave NATO access to the entire territory of Yugoslavia. Might a peaceful settlement have been achieved had NATO dropped these demands? No one knows, but the fact that it wasn't tried necessarily undermines the argument for war.

Serbia did propose a plan offering substantial autonomy for Kosovo — in effect restoring the autonomy withdrawn in 1989. Would the plan have led to Kosovo's independence? No, but bombing wasn't intended to lead there either. Would it have allowed real autonomy? Again, no one can know, because NATO never pursued the matter. But in any event, the question is not whether negotiations would have led to a perfectly just outcome, but whether they would have enhanced — rather than detracted from — the cause of justice and humanitarianism.

Would a negotiated settlement along these lines have satisfied the KLA or Kosovar Albanians more generally? Perhaps not. But it is one thing to save a people facing slaughter; it is another thing entirely to intervene on behalf of those who insist on fighting until their maximalist demands are met.

Advocates of military intervention in Kosovo often insist that there was genocide going on, even before the bombing. Genocide, they argued, is not a mat-

ter of the number or proportion of people killed, but the interference with the national life of a people, and genocide so defined obligates nations to intervene. I find this definition of genocide hopelessly broad, but let's use it and ask what is happening to the Serbs and Roma of Kosovo. Has their national life been disrupted? Does this mean that the advocates of intervention are now calling on Russia to intervene militarily — indeed, insisting that Russia is morally and legally obliged to intervene — in order to prevent genocide? Of course not. Such a call would be ludicrous (even apart from the fact that the United States would level Moscow). There is no way such a military intervention could possibly improve the situation.

If only that same astuteness were applied to NATO's war.

Self-Determination, Not Intervention

Joanne Landy

DURING THE COLD WAR, MOST AMERICAN RADICALS OPPOSED U.S. military intervention around the globe. Of course there were some exceptions, leftists who "chose the West" and its military power. Though they didn't support every specific military action, these supporters of the West had no basic objection to American intervention; they saw the exercise of U.S. military power as a lesser evil against the greater evil of Communism and the Soviet Union. In contrast, particularly with the baring of the horrors of the Vietnam War, most of the left, joined by increasing numbers of ordinary Americans, broadly condemned U.S. military forays into other countries. They saw such intervention as an attempt to bully and subordinate the rest of the world in the interests of a narrow elite, not on behalf of democracy and freedom.

Unfortunately, many radicals temporized in their opposition to Soviet interventionism, fearing that to condemn it wholeheartedly would somehow give credence to the supporters of American imperialism. And some leftists became outright supporters of Communist movements and regimes, especially in the third world. This temporizing and support exacted a heavy price during the Cold War, a price progressives continue to pay, because they have made it all too easy for defenders of U.S. military power to tar the left with the brush of being apologists for totalitarianism. Nevertheless, the mainstream American left was *right* to recoil from support to the U.S. military. Strangely enough, many leftists seem to

JOANNE LANDY *is a member of the* NEW POLITICS *Editorial Board.*

have forgotten the reasons for their past opposition, even though these reasons remain as compelling today as they ever were. After all, weren't there plenty of wrongs to be righted in the world during all those Cold War years? Certainly, but the left understood that the sway of corporate power at home had implications for U.S. foreign policy: it meant that the American government's arms establishment couldn't serve as the instrument for righting international wrongs.

So what has changed? The Soviet bloc no longer exists. But why does this justify leftist calls for the United States to send its forces around the world, to Haiti, Bosnia and Kosova; even, for some, to the Persian Gulf? Is the U.S. today any more capable of using force to promote international democracy and social justice than it was before 1989? Manuela Dobos, herself a justly proud veteran of the 60's, has to my knowledge thus far limited her concrete calls for American intervention to the Balkans, but her reasoning would logically lead her to exhort the U.S. to "do the right thing" by sending its troops by air, land and sea to sites of gross injustice around the globe. In the case of the Balkans — Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and now Kosova — Manuela rightly says that only armed force could have succeeded in repelling Milosevic's advances. But from that truth, which implies that supporters of democracy everywhere ought to have demanded that their governments give Milosevic's victims full access to arms along with diplomatic and moral support, Manuela makes the unwarranted leap to arguing that the U.S. should have sent in its forces. She dismisses the idea that America could make imperial gains from such intervention by invoking the fact that from 1991 to 1999 the U.S. looked to Milosevic as the stabilizer of the region and avoided deploying its forces to oppose him.

But simply because the United States cynically avoided intervention against Milosevic in the interests of a corrupt stability doesn't obviate the fact that when it *did* intervene militarily in the face of Milosevic's unanticipated obstinacy, it was in order to defend and expand the credibility of NATO and its ability to mount "out of area" force projection — not in defense of the democratic self-determination rights of the Albanian Kosovars. President Clinton made it perfectly clear from the outset that he had no interest in independence for Kosova, despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of its citizens clearly wanted to be liberated from oppressive Serbian rule. He begged Milosevic to accept the Rambouillet accords on the grounds that this was Serbia's last chance to hold on to Kosova. Now that the war is over, the victorious Americans and their allies are doing all in their power to deny self-rule for the Kosovars — disarming the KLA to the extent that they can, preventing the emergence of self-governing structures such as courts and civil administration, and keeping open the possibility of partition of the country. Thanks to their own independent efforts and resistance to Western attempts to suppress them, the Kosovars may yet be able to turn the defeat of the Serbs into a victory for themselves. We hope for their success, but they will face an uphill battle given the deep hostility the U.S. and the other great powers harbor toward the self-determination struggles of weaker nations and groups.

Of course, if one believes that domination by the U.S. and its wealthy allies is not, or is no longer, a grave threat to the rights, safety and well-being of the world's peoples, then enhancing NATO's power and reach poses no significant problem. In my opinion, such a view is profoundly mistaken. I believe that the

next several years will show that U.S. military might is a crucial complement to its imperial economic power, and that NATO's successful 1999 battles in the Balkans have helped to strengthen and legitimize that military might. The implications go beyond NATO. Military force will continue to be an indispensable element in the ability of the U.S. and its wealthy allies to coerce people into acquiescing in their exploitative system; when progressives call for intervention by these great powers, they are suicidally helping to strengthen the very forces that are and will be arrayed against them and the people they care about.

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF *New Politics* (#27), while the war was still going on, Steve Shalom opposed U.S. intervention, using arguments with which I largely agree. I disagreed, however, with his call for diplomatic compromise through involvement of the U.N. Security Council and the Russians, as opposed to support for the KLA's self-defense of Kosova against the Serbs. These disagreements, debated in an exchange in that same issue, continue in the aftermath of the war.

First, Steve's opposition to U.S. intervention relies heavily on the contention that it has made matters *worse* for the Kosovars. He states in a post-war article in the September issue of *Z* magazine that "the bombing unleashed a humanitarian catastrophe for the Kosovar Albanians on a scale far worse than what was going on before the bombing," and suggests that NATO's actions in no way mitigated the suffering of the ethnic Albanians. In the midst of the conflict, with tens of thousands of refugees fleeing their homes, this contention could have seemed to have some merit. But those of us who opposed NATO and the U.S. (as well as Milosevic) gain nothing by refusing to acknowledge the extent to which the Kosovars are probably better off now than before the war. They have a greater measure of independence from Serbia than they once had: despite the U.S.'s intention to keep Kosova totally under Serbia's domination, Milosevic's unexpected intransigence led to a series of events that made this very difficult, and the suffering the Kosovars endured during the war was probably, in their eyes, worth it in light of the outcome. Meanwhile, though, the fundamental reasons for opposing U.S. military intervention remain: the U.S. is hostile to self-determination, grants it on rare occasions only if forced to by pressures beyond its control, and looks toward strongmen like Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein to maintain stability in a world dominated by the wealthy and powerful. America's military force is used repeatedly to perpetuate and recreate conditions of oppression and poverty. Support to that military force is self-defeating for progressives hoping to create the conditions for a democratic and just peace.

Steve argues in his *Z* article that Milosevic would not have been able to carry out his extensive ethnic cleansing had he not been provided with the opening and excuse to do so by the NATO bombing. Manuela counters this line of argument with the fact that Milosevic had *already* developed his "Operation Horseshoe" plans for massive expulsion of the Albanians. However, it cannot be assumed, as Manuela does, that Milosevic would have been able to mount his full-scale attempt at ethnic cleansing if the bombing hadn't taken place. In fact, it is virtually impossible to know, one way or the other, how far Milosevic might have gone in the absence of the bombing. But Manuela is right that the Albanians would always have lived in extreme peril under Serb rule, permanently threatened with ethnic cleansing.

However, my basic disagreement with Steve is of a different nature. He

condemned, as I did, U.S. bombing, which I believe should have been opposed whether or not it opened the way for Milosevic's ethnic cleansing campaign. Where we differ is that Steve didn't support the KLA's armed struggle against Milosevic, arguing that such resistance could only lead to worse repression. But the Kosovars and the KLA didn't undertake their resistance lightly, without awareness of its risks. As a people totally dispossessed in their own land, they were driven to it. The KLA had already suffered major attacks from the Serbs before the U.S. bombing, and the Albanian population as a whole had been subjected to years of police terror and horrific systematic discrimination that denied them education in their own language, excluded them from most decent jobs, and caused massive unemployment. As the failure of Ibrahim Rugova's non-violent campaign became apparent when the Kosova problem was deliberately left out of the Dayton accords, ordinary Kosovars turned to the KLA and its armed resistance as the only alternative. Diplomatic solutions sponsored by the U.S., the Russians, or the Security Council that would effectively protect the Kosovars were not on the table. Though the chances of winning were clearly very slim, the Kosovars' only real alternative to armed resistance was acceptance of Serb domination and the permanent reign of terror that it inevitably entailed.

Besides his argument that armed resistance was inevitably doomed, Steve withheld his support from the KLA on the additional ground that it was not sufficiently committed to building a multi-ethnic Kosova. Yet both before and after the war the KLA stated that it is in favor of just that, and has on several occasions intervened to prevent harassment and violence against Serb civilians. Perhaps these declarations and interventions were insincere, perhaps most if not all of the members of the KLA, in their heart of hearts, favor driving all Serbs out of Kosova. This would certainly be understandable — though wrong — given the complicity of many Kosovar Serb civilians as well as paramilitaries in barbaric acts of murder and torture of Albanians. But the need for international recognition and support continues to provide significant reasons for the KLA to discourage acts of revenge by its leadership or ranks and by ordinary Kosovar civilians.

Persecution of innocent Serb civilians in Kosova is deplorable and criminal; all friends of Kosova should speak out against it and insist that the KLA has a responsibility to protect the Serbs — although Serb war criminals should be brought to justice and tried by Kosovar courts. But victimization of innocent Serbs is not an argument against self-determination. When Czechoslovakia was liberated from Nazi rule, it brutally — and far more predictably than in the case of Albanian actions against Serbs in Kosova — expelled some three million Sudeten Germans. Who, among us, would say that this crime — for that is what it was — meant that no support should have been given to the Czechoslovak resistance under German occupation? And more recent examples abound, unfortunately, of peoples taking advantage of newly-won independence to settle scores with ethnic minorities in their midst — the treatment of Russians in the Baltic states comes to mind. It is wrong and terrible, but it cannot mean that Latvia, say, should have remained an occupied province of Russia. Similar issues are raised in the unfolding of the struggles of other oppressed nations such as Tibet.

TIME AND AGAIN WE SEE THE UNITED STATES and other wealthy countries supporting the very despots — Suharto, Milosevic, Duvalier, Saddam Hussein — whose

evil deeds are later invoked to justify intervention. Rather than strengthening U.S. imperial legitimacy by calling on the American military to act as a liberating force, we should be supporting struggles for economic equality, human rights and democracy — including the democratic right to self-determination — even as our own government refuses to do so. Support for these struggles need not, should not, be uncritical; the KLA or any other movement needs to be held accountable for its actions. However, hope for a better world lies in the success of these various and diverse popular movements, not in advancing the power of the U.S. military or the self-appointed leaders of the UN Security Council.

Poems of Protest for the Year 2000

WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE PEACE CALENDAR

A collection of poetry by 20th-century writers who warn of the need to end war and suffering, and create a new world of environmental justice and human rights in the new millennium. *Including poems by* Wendell Berry, James Broughton, Dennis Brutus, Lucille Clifton, Ruby Dee, Rita Dove, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Holman, Denise Levertov, Joyce Carol Oates, Grace Paley, Kenneth Patchen, Marge Piercy, Adrienne Rich, and many more.

* * *

Edited by Scott Bates
Artwork from the Bread and Puppet Theatre

5½" x 8½" desk calendar. Spiral bound. NY state/city residents include sales tax. Calendars are shipped bulk mail. Allow up to 4 weeks for delivery or enclose an extra $2.00 per calendar for first class mailing. For delivery outside the U.S. add $1.50 surface mail; $4 airmail.

$12.00 each/Four for $44.00
War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street, #2, New York, NY 10012
wrl@igc.org/1-800-975-9688

Jewish Fundamentalism and the Roots of Israeli Apartheid

David Finkel

THE ELECTION OF EHUD BARAK AS PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, replacing the former government of Benjamin Netanyahu, is widely regarded as a political turning point in the development of what had come to be known as "the stalled Oslo peace process." The Clinton Administration State Department, in particular, was openly jubilant about the result.

A brief comparison of the peace programs of the Netanyahu and Barak coalitions, both of which were openly stated, shows what makes the change so highly significant. On the one hand, the Netanyahu/Likud bloc stood for the following priorities:

• Minimum division of sovereignty, to be achieved through Israeli control over the maximum attainable portion of the Occupied Territories, notably including total sovereignty over "undivided Jerusalem";
• Maximum possible separation of the Palestinian from the Israeli-Jewish population;
• Maximum Israeli control over security arrangements, assigning to Palestinian police special responsibility for suppressing dissent;
• The strongest strategic political partnership with the religious parties, both the Ultra-Orthodox and religious nationalists; and
• All this to be carried out through measures specifically calculated to inflict the maximum possible public humiliation on the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian population.

In contrast, the peace policies of Ehud Barak/One Israel (formerly Labor) were these:

• Minimum division of sovereignty, to be achieved through Israeli control over the maximum attainable portion of the Occupied Territories, notably including total sovereignty over "undivided Jerusalem";
• Maximum possible separation of the Palestinian from the Israeli-Jewish population;
• Maximum Israeli control over security arrangements, assigning to Palestinian police special responsibility for suppressing dissent;
• A tactical political alliance with those religious parties prepared to enter Barak's coalition; and
• All this to be carried out through measures specifically calculated to

DAVID FINKEL *is an editor of the socialist journal* Against the Current.

avoid public humiliation of the Palestinian Authority, and actually to promote as much as possible the image of an Israeli-PA partnership.

The difference is as crucial for U.S. elites as it is marginal in substance for the Palestinian population. The latter, in either case, are to exercise a kind of strangled semi-sovereignty over disconnected population centers, with no possibility of economic development or democracy, inasmuch as investments, imports and exports are controlled by monopolies established by Arafat loyalists.

For Washington, however, the difference between an Israeli government dominated by a nationalist-religious partnership and one apparently eager for comprehensive peace—and real political-economic partnership, not "cold peace"—with the surrounding Middle Eastern states, is of fundamental significance.

Then a difficulty arose which, I believe, throws into sharp relief not only the inequalities of power underlying the Oslo-Wye arrangements (which are too obvious to require detailed discussion), but a much deeper dynamic at the heart of Zionist and Israeli realities.

The issue was the release of Palestinian prisoners, and it all but negated the expressions of confidence and good will from the Palestinian side that had greeted Barak's election. Infamously, Netanyahu had cheated on commitments to release hundreds of political prisoners, instead dumping ordinary criminals into the PA's lap. It was naturally expected that Barak would resolve this bitter Palestinian grievance.

Instead, when the prisoner release lists were presented, the Israeli authorities had removed the names of all Palestinians deemed to "have shed Jewish blood." Palestinians who had murdered other Palestinians accused (truly or falsely) as "collaborators" could go free, but not those convicted of grievous harm to Jews. Meanwhile, Israeli Jewish settlers who have shed the blood of hundreds of Palestinian civilians go unpunished, untried, even uninvestigated.

Flagrant injustice of this kind, to be sure, is by no means rare in the world—so what is the special significance of this instance? I believe it lies precisely in the fact that this stance of Barak's government contradicted the priority that most sharply differentiated it from Netanyahu—to treat the Palestinian Authority (PA) as a partner, to avoid publicly humiliating it.

This particular conflict, indeed, was resolved in the way that all such differences have been and will be—by abject PA surrender to Israeli dictates. But that resolution, by damaging the PA's reputation at the grassroots level, can only mean that its future inevitable surrenders on all the vital "final status" issues—Jerusalem, return of refugees, water rights, everything — will be all the more damaging, and will require more blunt repression to enforce.

It is important to notice that the refusal to release "shedders of Jewish blood" was much more than a negotiating stance, subject to horse-trading, or a political problem in Barak's coalition that could be settled by some compromise or bribe to the right wing. Nor can it be explained simply by the passions involved, which surely are not greater than in Northern Ireland, where militants involved in intercommunal killings are being released under terms of the Good Friday accord.

This refusal to release prisoners who "shed Jewish blood" must be understood, rather, as a matter of *principle*.

Is it surprising that, in practice, the killing of members of a dominant ethnic

group is punished more harshly than killings of subordinate races? Hardly: In the United States, notoriously, the degree of punishment is heavily influenced by the race of the victim (much more than by that of the perpetrator).

What makes the Israeli case stand out—uniquely, as far as I know, among industrial states claiming the distinctions of "the rule of law" and democratic institutions—-is that the sacredness of the blood of the master race is an openly stated, official principle, overriding even the pragmatic policy priorities of the government of the day.

HOW SUCH A SITUATION COULD ARISE—provoking virtually no *principled* protest among Israel Zionists and even less among their American backers, Jewish or Christian, religious or secular—should be a subject of intense concerned inquiry. Instead, it passes virtually as a matter of course, as if it were natural law, attracting no more surprise than falling leaves.

This is where the work of Israel Shahak on Zionism and Jewish religious practice is of enormous importance—work which is utterly ignored by influential U.S. media (though in recent years it has attracted growing sympathetic attention in Israel). In this instance, it seems to be a serious error to treat religion merely as a secondary "superstructural" element. Thus I will begin here with the religious component of the apartheid system that is under construction today in Israel-Palestine, reserving for a review in the next issue, several classic and new works that shed light on the secular-political aspects of the problem.

Israel Shahak's work is unvarnished and, frankly, often somewhat frightening. A veteran Israeli human rights campaigner and a systematic critic of Zionism, Shahak for many years has insisted that the classical traditions of rabbinic Orthodox Judaism must be taken seriously—not the syrupy sentimentalized versions that many of us who never experienced it may dimly perceive rapidly receding in a rear-view mirror, but what Shahak has called "the Jewish religion as it really is."

Shahak's first systematic presentation of the contemporary relevance of classic rabbinical Judaism to modern Israel was contained in a two-part essay "The Jewish Religion and Its Attitude Toward Non-Jews," published in a short-lived journal of Middle Eastern politics *Khamsin*, subsequently expanded and published by Pluto Press as *Jewish History, Jewish Religion. The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (1994).

In that work Shahak extensively quoted Talmudic and other rabbinic texts that demonstrate an absolute contempt for non-Jewish life, for non-religious Jews, for women in general, for any form of secular intellectual endeavor, particularly the study of history, for humor, for anything resembling democracy—in short, a detailed totalitarian Jewish code, under the dominion of rabbinical authorities (intermarried with the small layer of wealthy Jews in medieval society) who were authorized by government to control the personal and communal life of Jews.

The qualities associated with modern Jewry—love of wide secular learning, literature and science, liberal tolerance, commitments to social justice, political engagement—were products not of classical Judaism, Shahak argued, but of the Jews' liberation from that society brought about primarily by outside forces—the Enlightenment and modernity.

This was not a matter of rooting around in the dark closets of Talmudic and

Cabbalistic texts, or a peculiar subculture to be studied by anthropologists in the Ultra-Orthodox quarters of Jerusalem. It was, Shahak argued, crucial for understanding the real attitudes toward Arabs, indeed toward the whole non-Jewish world, deeply embedded within a growing sector of Israeli society and even within the mainstream of secular political Zionism.

The argument is a critical one, inasmuch as political Zionism is generally understood—and certainly insists on describing itself—as a fundamental break from a religious definition of the Jews, and from the medieval and superstitious past. For Shahak, Zionism is at most a partial rupture; it also reflects continuity with the worst, not the best, in Jewish tradition, and if anything is increasingly dependent upon that tradition, with dire consequences.

Shahak's second book was *Open Secrets. Israeli Nuclear and Foreign Policies* (Pluto, 1997), written with the help of the late Witold Jedlicki (a long-time friend of this journal, who was instrumental in the early 1960s in bringing to international attention the classic "Open Letter to the Party" of Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, the Polish Marxist dissidents). This work, a collection of essays on explosive topics covered extensively in the Hebrew-language Israeli press, but nowhere else, had its own history worth mentioning since it throws light on the American dimension of our subject.

This reviewer is aware that several years before *Open Secrets* appeared, Shahak had prepared the collection but encountered great difficulty finding a U.S. publisher—indeed, left-wing publishers declined to bring it out. When the book finally appeared, I suspected the reason: It was not so much Shahak's anti-Zionist stance (anti-Zionist books can be published, though getting them taken seriously is another matter), but Shahak's highly negative assessment of the American Jewish public, including its liberal-left elements, which he considered to be on the whole more chauvinistic than Israeli-Jewish society.

This is likely to have worried left-wing publishers, if only from a marketing standpoint. Keeping in mind, however, that it was American society that produced the Jewish-nazi Rabbi Meir Kahane and Dr. Baruch Goldstein, perpetrator of the Purim 1994 massacre in the Hebron mosque, the following account of Shahak's own experience deserves quotation:

> In 1974, after I was invited by the Dutch Association in Support of Palestinian Rights for a speaking tour addressing only human rights issues, I was attacked by Amnon Rubinstein (now [1993] a minister in the Rabin government on behalf of Meretz). He demanded, unsuccessfully, that I should be dismissed from my position at the Hebrew University for expressing my views within the limits of the Israeli law.
>
> After Rubinstein's attack on me I received 1081 hate letters within two months. (They continued coming except that I ceased to count them.) Only 36 were in Hebrew and 3 in French; the remaining 1042 were in English. Almost all of their senders provided their U.S. addresses and identified themselves as Jews...Some deplored that I had not been exterminated [Shahak survived a Nazi concentration camp] while others expressed a rather curious view that had I been exterminated, "a better" or "more loyal" Jew could have been saved instead of me. (*Open Secrets*, 128)

Shahak, a distinguished organic chemist, went on to describe how American Jewish chemistry professors petitioned Hebrew University to fire him, and how the University withstood all such pressure directed against him and other re-

puted dissident voices, despite the threatened loss of contributions from U.S. benefactors. (*Ibid*., 134)

Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel,* Shahak's new work co-authored with American activist and scholar Norton Mezvinsky, is a book-length exploration of the highly tangled relations between Zionism and religious (Orthodox) Judaism. The authors' agenda is stated at the outset:

> Almost every moderately sophisticated Israeli Jew knows the facts about Israeli society that are mentioned in this book. These facts, however, are unknown to most interested Jews and non-Jews outside Israel who do not know Hebrew and thus cannot read most of what Israeli Jews write about themselves in Hebrew. (5)

A summary of the analysis is roughly the following:

Israeli Jewish society is sharply divided between "Israel A" or "the left," politically organized in the Labor and allied Meretz parties, and "Israel B," also known as "the right and the religious parties."

"Almost all of Israel A and a great majority of Israel B (the exception being some of the fundamentalist Jews [see below—DF]) strongly adhere to Zionist ideology, which in brief holds that all or at least the majority of Jews should emigrate to Palestine, which as the Land of Israel, belongs to all Jews and should be a Jewish state."

Between the two camps, nonetheless, a "strong and increasing enmity" prevails: "There are many reasons for this enmity. The reason relevant to this study is that Israel B, including its secular members, is sympathetic to Jewish fundamentalism while Israel A is not." (6)

This is a striking point: right-wing nationalists (the secular part of Israel B) have common cause with fundamentalists who reject Zionism in principle, who refuse to sing the national anthem at their conventions, whose religious students generally avoid military service (although this is changing under a system of *hesder yeshivot*, where these students now receive the kind of training that may ultimately make them a threat to the state itself)!

Within the Jewish fundamentalist camp there are two important Haredi ("trembler," or Ultra-Orthodox) factions: the Ashkenazi party called Yahadut Ha'Torah and the Middle Eastern "Oriental" party Shas. It is this latter party, originally created as a satellite of the Ashkenazi Ultra-Orthodox party, having now broken from this tutelage and emerged as the powerful communal and patronage organization of the Mizrachi Israeli population, which shot up to third place in the latest election, just behind Likud. In all, the authors estimate, "the Haredim probably constitute 11 percent of the Israeli population and 13.4 percent of the Israeli Jews."

Shas (whose entry into the Barak coalition was negotiated only after the resignation of its popular leader, convicted in a corruption scandal), is widely perceived as "dovish." No doubt this partly reflects the fact that its Mizrachi constituents are more concerned, on the whole, with pressing social welfare problems than with West Bank settlements. This sociological dimension is not really taken up in this study.

The overriding fact remains the utterly "Judeocentric" quality of all Haredi

---

*Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky, Pluto Press (London, England and Sterling,VA U.S.A.) 1999. 176 pp.

thought. The "dovish" Shas rabbi, Ovadia Yoseph, following his former mentor rabbi Shach of the Ashkenazi Haredi party, argues theologically as follows: Jewish religious law requires—at whatever time it can be implemented without endangering Jewish life—that all Christian, Muslim and other non-Jewish shrines throughout the Land of Israel be destroyed. Since it is clear that this law cannot be carried out at this time, it follows that compromise is necessary and an aggressive stance toward the Palestinians cannot be justified. (16)

One could speculate that this reasoning might be calculated, in part, to offer a theological rationale for an authentic yearning for peace among at least part of the Shas popular base. But even so, such "dovishness" is enveloped in a set of ultra-racist assumptions that can readily be put to other uses.

The argument of the Haredi rabbis Shach and Yoseph is closely related to the following one: Jewish redemption and supremacy in the Land of Israel (or the world, for that matter) belongs to the messianic era and must be the work of God. (For this reason, the vast majority of rabbinical authorities for over a thousand years expressly prohibited any form of large-scale Jewish immigration to Palestine.) The state of Israel having been created by human agency, it is in no way a religious Jewish state and indeed has no legitimacy at all.

It is not so difficult, however, to alter the underlying assumptions. The strongest ultra-Orthodox faction in the Jewish world, the Lubavitcher Hasidim, have done exactly that. Rather than preserving the medieval rabbinical premise that Jews are weak and therefore must be quietist, the Lubavitchers argue (somewhat more realistically) that Jews are in fact strong. From this premise, they can simultaneously demand a hawkish policy for the Israeli state while also (when it serves their theological-political purposes) continuing to deny its full legitimacy.

For Shahak and Mezvinsky, however, all of the Haredi factions represent the less dangerous face of Jewish fundamentalism—in part because the internal hatreds and leadership rivalries among the Haredim prevent any one from achieving supremacy. Beginning with Chapter 4, the authors explore the more modern "innovative" religious-national movement of the National Religious Party (NRP) and Gush Emunim, the powerful religious-settler bloc:

> The discussion in this chapter should distinguish qualitatively the Gush Emunim NRP form from the Haredi form of Jewish fundamentalism. The greater potential danger clearly rests with the Gush Emunim and the NRP, because their members have involved themselves in the state in order to sanctify Israel. (77)

"In order to sanctify Israel:" That is the key. For the Haredim, the Zionist state is profane, not legitimately Jewish. For the national-religious faction, following the thought of the rabbis Abraham ("the elder") and Tzvi Yehuda ("the younger") Kook, the state has a quality of holiness and is itself a sign of the coming of the messianic era, in which the laws proscribing attempts to achieve Jewish supremacy cease to apply.

In the Kooks' system of thought, the godless secular Zionist pioneers, unintentionally, in spite of themselves, are seen as the unconscious agents of the divine redemption of the Land. The Land itself, its stones, partake of the holiness—while of course its actual inhabitants, the Arabs, are a subhuman pollutant. The parallels to Nazi thought are obvious.

"In order to sanctify Israel," the maintenance of every West Bank settle-

ment is a holy religious obligation. "In order to sanctify Israel," the Brooklyn Kahanist and Lubavitcher follower Baruch Goldstein is regarded as (literally) a Jewish saint for the holy deed of gunning down the worshippers in the Hebron mosque on Purim.

It was also "in order to sanctify Israel" that a religious student Yigal Amir, guided by "halakhic rulings" by rabbis whose identities are well-known to the Israeli government but who have never been arrested or even questioned, assassinated Yitzhak Rabin: "The murderer and his sympathizers were and still are convinced that the killing was dictated by God and was therefore a commandment of Judaism." (113)

This simple fact, I believe, is well known. What relatively few general readers will know is the profound depth of this tradition in Jewish history as well as in contemporary fundamentalist culture. This is why chapter 7 ("The Religious Background of Rabin's Assassination") is as essential as it is awful to read. In addition to all manner of medieval obscurities, some of the accounts of "heroic Jewish resistance" deeply embedded in secular Zionist and Israeli national mythology, notably Masada, come in for a severe rereading:

"The Great Rebellion (AD 66-73) of Jews against the Romans that culminated in the destruction of the Second Temple and in mass suicide in Masada is exemplary. The defenders of Masada were, as many present-day visitors to the Masada site are seemingly unaware, a band of assassins called Sikarikin, a name taken from the word for a short sword that group members hid under their robes and used to kill their Jewish opponents...

"The Sikarikin escaped to Masada not from the Romans but from their Jewish brethren. Shortly after the rebellion against the Romans began, the Roman army that was advancing to Jerusalem was initially defeated and had to withdraw. The Sikarikin attempted forcefully to establish the leader, Menahem, as absolute king. The Jews of Jerusalem then attacked and defeated the Sikarikin in the temple itself, killing most of them including Menahem. The remaining Sikarikin escaped to Masada where they stayed during the rebellion; they did not fight the Romans but instead robbed neighboring Jewish villages." (113-4)

Students of nationalism are aware that all nationalist ideologies incorporate events from history, often invested with very different meanings than they had at the time. In the Israeli-Zionist case, close to our own time the leadership of secular Labor Zionism has made a devil's bargain with religious fanaticism.

It was Moshe Dayan, in the euphoric wake of the 1967 war—when Gush Emunim began to preach that the Six-Day War showed that the beginning of the messianic age was at hand—who first sponsored the religious-settler settlements in Kiryat Arba and the center of Hebron. It was an act he reputedly came to regret, and it was from that very milieu that came Yigal Amir, the murderer of Dayan's colleague and political heir Rabin.

THE OPPORTUNISTIC SYMBIOSIS OF POLITICAL ZIONISM AND RELIGION is a major structural element of contemporary Israeli apartheid. It is therefore important to understand that there is a very different kind of pious Orthodox Judaism, one that partakes neither of the virulent anti-modernism of the Haredim or the poisonous mystical-racist nationalism of the followers of the rabbis Kook and Moshe Levinger. It is far less well-known and influential than either, precisely because it was not amenable to that alliance.

This brand of Orthodox Judaism as represented by the late religious scholar Yeshayahu Leibowitz (who was a friend of Israel Shahak). His views can be seen in a collection of his work published as *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State* (Eliezer Goldman, ed., Harvard University Press, 1992), sadly out of print while the fashionable mystical ravings of rabbi Kook the Elder go through numerous editions.

Leibowitz was both a political Zionist of a pragmatic type, and a deeply religious Jew, but not a Hasidic-mystic and, crucially, *not a religious Zionist*. He wrote that the mystical-Cabbalistic "Doctrine of Truth of Rabbi Kook himself, which involves a confusion of the actual people of Israel with a mystical Israel, has become in the hands of his disciples and their disciples, a deification of the nation and a fetishism of the land." (Leibowitz, 113)

Rather, Leibowitz's Judaism "means knowing that we are *not* a holy people." (ibid., 86) The state of Israel, which he proudly supported as an expression of national self-determination, held for him no religious significance whatsoever. And when he insisted that religion and the state should be separated— understanding that the fusion of the two would inevitably corrupt both of them, as it has and always will, David Ben-Gurion refused him point-blank:

"I will never agree [Ben-Gurion told Leibowitz] to the separation of religion from the state. I want the state to hold religion in the palm of its hand." (*Ibid*., 115)

That, after all, was how Ben-Gurion intended to infuse with greater legitimacy his own Labor-Zionist version of the "holiness of the state," a state whose mission of "Jewish redemption" could justify expropriations, ethnic cleansing, deportation, the destruction of 400 Palestinian villages and the declaration of their inhabitants as "absentees" and "absentees who are present."

To paraphrase Lenin's famous "Who whom?": Who holds whom in the palm of its hand, fifty years afterward? The assassination of Rabin may be seen, on one level, as the ultimate blowback from the operation of the state's Founding Father, who refused to allow the establishment of a secular Constitution because, in part, he felt that his own power and the invincible political machine of Labor would perpetually "hold religion in the palm of its hand."

DOES THE ELECTION OF EHUD BARAK AND THE INEXORABLE IMPLEMENTATION of Oslo and Wye mark the beginning of the end of a national nightmare? Most of Israel A and liberal-secular Zionism worldwide would like to think so. But to return to where we began: How many of Barak's supporters are prepared to demand the release of all Palestinian political prisoners, under the terms of the peace accords, *"shedders of Jewish blood" included*, with the same strength of principle with which the government refuses to free them?

That is only one of many dangerous signs. Take the much-publicized and delayed opening transit road for Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza, finally opened on October 24. Somehow forgotten in the pride over this "normalizing" step is the previously reported fact that for Barak—not Ariel Sharon, not the national-religious crazies, but for the moderate left-secular Prime Minister—this road is only an interim measure. His ultimate vision is for an elevated Gaza-West Bank road, or an underground tunnel, *through which Palestinians would pass without physical contact with Israeli territory.*

Or look at the opinions expressed by an undoubted left-liberal secular Is-

raeli, the dovish author A.B. Yehoshua, who even looks forward optimistically to future Palestinian tourists visiting Israeli beaches and Saudi sheikhs frequenting casinos to be specially built for them in Israel:

"We are deep into dangerous major surgery. We got to the operating table at the very last minute, when there was nothing for it but an operation to separate the two nations, to remove the Palestinian cancer from ourselves and the Israeli cancer from them."

Yehoshua spoke thus to a conference of secular Israelis in 1994 ("Israeli Identity in an Era of Peace," published in *Free Judaism and Religion in Israel*, ed. Yaakov Malkin, Jerusalem: The Milan Press and Free Judaism, 1999. I will have further comments on this collection in the second installment of this essay.)

I stress this here because Yehoshua presents many aspects of an attractive vision: a society no longer consumed with debates over settlements and religious affairs, a society where the left regains its orientation toward social justice, a society with a normal rather than a racist immigration policy. Yet the notion that such a vision begins with treating two peoples as cancers in each other's presence—that the peoples, not only the sovereignty, must be divided—if applied to (say) Black-white relations in the United States, would be regarded as the thinking of the Aryan Nations or Farrakhan.

There is much to be learned about the deep roots of such a conception from the realities of the past 32 years of occupation, and the century-long history of the Zionist project and the Palestine conflict. If I have focussed in this first part on the importance of the religious dimension—and undoubtedly only succeeded here in scratching the surface—it is because it is the dimension that committed secularist, rational and Marxist thinkers are least likely to take seriously in its own terms. We owe a debt of gratitude to Shahak and Mezvinsky for demanding that we pay the closest attention to it.

East Timor and the United States: An Interview with Allan Nairn

Introduction

Ever since the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975, the U.S. government has sought to back Jakarta while keeping news of the atrocities there out of the public eye. But the sustained efforts of grassroots activists and a few persistent writers and journalists have insured that East Timor could not be ignored.

In 1991, U.S. journalists Allan Nairn and Amy Goodman were in Dili, the capital of East Timor, covering a peaceful memorial procession, when Indonesian troops — armed with U.S. weapons — opened fire, killing some 270 people. Though Nairn was severely beaten, he and Goodman were able to get out alive and they spread the word of the massacre around the world. (A photojournalist hiding behind a tombstone was also able to smuggle out videotape of the slaughter.) Since then, Nairn and Goodman have been tireless campaigners on behalf of Timorese freedom. Though banned from ever returning to Indonesia or occupied East Timor, they have defied the bans to bring us continuing information on the heroic struggle of the Timorese people.

Following the Dili massacre, international East Timor activism picked up. In the United States, the East Timor Action Network (ETAN) was formed and it carried out a remarkable program of public education and lobbying. These and similar efforts in other countries were so successful in focusing attention on the situation in East Timor that in 1996 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Bishop Carlos Belo and José Ramos Horta, two leaders of the Timorese struggle.

Growing pressure led in May 1999 to an agreement by Indonesia to permit a referendum on the future of East Timor. The referendum was scheduled for August 30, 1999, and run by the United Nations, but, at Jakarta's insistence, Indonesian forces were alone to be responsible for security. Despite months of terror by army-organized militias, more than 98% of Timorese cast ballots and four out of five voted for independence. At this point, the militias — still under Jakarta's control — exploded into a paroxysm of violence. UN personnel and international observers were forced to flee. The last foreign journalist in Dili was ... Allan Nairn, until his arrest by Indonesian authorities on September 14. Nairn was threatened with ten years in prison and then expelled (again) from Indonesia six days later.

NEW POLITICS editorial board members Joanne Landy and Steve Shalom spoke with Nairn in New York on October 18, 1999, two days before the Indonesian parliament was set to vote on East Timor's independence and on a new president for Indonesia. We talked first about the relationship between Washington and Jakarta and the motives of each. Then we turned to a consideration of differences within the U.S. government between Congress and the Executive branch and the way in which groups like ETAN have been able to bring public pressure to bear on Congress. Next, we discussed the role of the White House, the Pentagon, and the State Department. Finally, we focused on events in East Timor, taking up the issue of international peacekeepers and the position of the East Timorese resistance.

The United States and Indonesia

New Politics: *There are some places in the world where the United States has very little influence and other places where Washington's word is law. How much leverage does the U.S. have over Indonesia?*

Allan Nairn: The U.S. has vast influence. It has from the start been the main military and political sponsor of the Indonesian regime. If the U.S. had not supported the regime when it first seized power in 1965-67, it would have been much weaker. If the U.S. had said "No" in '75 when Suharto essentially asked permission to invade East Timor, they wouldn't have invaded. If at any point after Indonesian President B. J. Habibie announced in January 1999 that he would tolerate a UN-supervised vote in East Timor, the U.S. had said to General Wiranto [Indonesian defense minister and chief of the armed forces]: "Let it happen. No militias or else we'll cut you off," there wouldn't have been the militia campaign.

NP: *Many people say U.S. military aid to Indonesia now is practically nothing.*

Nairn: No, that's a myth. Due to pressure over the years from the East Timor Action Network and other activist groups, many of the training programs and weapons sales have been cut back substantially. And because of that the Administration makes the argument, and many people believe, "Well, we're not really doing anything for the Indonesian military anyway, so there's no need to call for an end to U.S. support." But in fact that's not true.

Since April, when I managed to get back into Indonesia, I've been researching what the U.S. is doing with the Indonesian military, and I testified about this in Congress in September '99. There is a whole web of connections, lifelines that run from Washington, that Congress hasn't been aware of. It's not just the Pentagon that's been training the Indonesian military and police, but also a half-dozen other agencies: the CIA, Justice Department, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Marshals, Customs. They have also been using many local entities. Just a couple of months ago, as the militia terror was in full swing in East Timor, there were colonels in the Indonesian National Police being trained at the New York Police Academy. And the Indonesian military have made similar deals with other local police departments across the country. They have a deal with Norwich University in Vermont, where Kopassus [Special Forces Command elite commando unit troops] are trained. The Defense Intelligence Agency appears to have had a hand in the Norwich deal. The local police deals were arranged by the Jakarta CIA station and senior State Department people in Washington.

The U.S. continued to ship ammunition and spare parts even as the militia terror was intensifying. Strategic industries in Indonesia that manufacture many of their weapons and maintain the military's communications and electronic infrastructure have contracts and joint ventures with American companies, including GE, General Motors, Textron, Boeing, and many others. American technicians work in the Indonesian army, air force and plants in Indonesian strategic industries. They help to keep the whole machine working.

NP: *To what extent is this public policy rather than a series of private acts?*

Nairn: Oh, it's all public policy. None of this happens without State Department and Pentagon permission. You're not going to find any Libyan police training with the NYPD, you're not going to find U.S. technicians working with the Iranian armed forces, because those things are prohibited. All these contacts, all these deals, only happen with permission.

NP: *Is it "permission," or is it because the powers that be* want *these things to happen?*

Nairn: They want it. It's policy to support the Indonesian military.

NP: *So what we have is a multi-textured, many-layered relationship, which makes it more difficult for Congress to control.*

Nairn: That's exactly right. The relationship actually began many years ago when the U.S. tried to build a relationship with the Indonesian army for the purpose of going after Sukarno, Indonesia's independence leader and first president. He was a nationalist, a founder of the non-aligned movement, he had run-ins with foreign oil companies. The Pentagon and CIA were delighted with the 1965 coup; it's still not documented whether the U.S. played an active role in the coup, but it is documented that they were very happy with the result, and that they actively aided the bloodbath afterwards by providing a list of 5,000 names of Communists and dissidents, who were then assassinated.

Over the years the State Department and the CIA, and then many other executive agencies, built on their deep links with the Indonesian armed forces. The web of connections is so intricate that no one in Congress knows them all. I know the members of Congress most engaged in this issue, and the details of these links are news to them. The very complexity of the connections makes it hard to find out. Now that a lot more of it is in the open, though, I think that public pressure can move some in Congress to try to cut off all those lines of support.

NP: *These extensive links mean that if the Administration had wanted to pull the rug out from under the regime in the face of the slaughter in East Timor, it could have.*

Nairn: Clinton could simply have ordered all executive agencies to cease all forms of support for the Indonesian military and police, and it would have happened, and that would have been that — it would have badly shaken the Indonesian armed forces. Instead, it was not until September 9th — after the worst destruction — when the U.S. corporate press finally discovered East Timor, that Clinton finally gave in to public and Congressional pressure and announced a suspension, a freeze of U.S. military-to-military support.

The suspension covered Pentagon programs; it did not cover the other agencies. But even more importantly, Clinton made it clear, virtually in the next breath, that the freeze was only temporary, that it could be lifted within weeks, so the message he sent to Jakarta was "Just hold your breath, just hang on, this will be over soon, and we will resume the usual relationship." This was taken by General Wiranto and other military figures to mean, "Clinton has to do this, but

we can get by it, we just have to hold on for a while."

U.S. support is very significant in a material way, and it's even more important politically and psychologically. It reminds me of South Africa. I went there in '83 and was a little stunned by how obsessed the white government was with following every twist of American politics regarding South Africa. If there was a resolution against apartheid or in favor of sanctions passed in the city council of a medium-sized city somewhere in the U.S., it was on the front page of the Pretoria newspapers and they were all upset about it.

I happened to be there when Congressman Bill Gray became head of the House Budget Committee; they were in hysterics, they were desperate, because they didn't understand Congressional organization. They thought the Budget Committee actually spends the money. In fact, it only draws up the broad parameters, and the Appropriations Committee spends it. They thought, "Oh my God, here's this black Congressman who's now wielding power over the American budget!," and they were beside themselves with grief.

Yet at this time the U.S. had already years before cut off military assistance to South Africa. There was some covert intelligence sharing, but it was pretty minor compared to the heavy military support the U.S. had given for years before. The actual substantive military support for South African was a fraction of what it is for Indonesia today, and also economically the U.S. was far from the main supporter or trading partner — Britain was the primary economic partner, and trade was with them, along with Russia, Israel and some others.

In all material respects the U.S. was a fairly minor player with South Africa but they looked excessively to Washington as their savior, as their lifeline.

The thinking in Pretoria was "If push comes to shove, it's Washington that will save us." They were right, they were not delusional. It was in fact Washington that ultimately held their fate in its hands, because of Washington's dominant position in world politics. At that time Washington was less dominant than it is today, and the material relationship with South Africa was much less important than it is today with Indonesia. It's a very similar thing. Even though all these material ties with Indonesia are important — and I haven't even talked about the IMF loan and World Bank stuff, I've just been talking about the military aspect — much more important is the political and psychological. And if it looks like the patron, Washington, the long-time sponsor, is actually abandoning them, that just terrifies the Indonesian military. That's why, if the U.S. were truly to pull the plug on the Indonesian armed forces, they would be in major trouble.

NP: *Some might say that if the U.S. stopped supporting the Indonesian military, it would lose its leverage.*

Nairn: The leverage argument is one of my favorites. It's one of the classics. By that logic, the U.S. should be arming and training the Cuban and Libyan armies, to get some leverage over them. But they never get around to proposing that. The real leverage would lie in threatening to cut them off and thereby endangering their survival. It's revealing that in '75 when Suharto and the military were completely in control of Indonesia and there wasn't a whisper of a threat to their power, even then they felt it necessary to ask U.S. permission before invading the tiny nation of East Timor. Today, there is a serious groundswell, a popular chal-

lenge to the Indonesian Army and their survival as the power in control is in question. Their ability to maintain a police state is up in the air. In this moment of their maximum vulnerability, the prospect of a real cut-off of the lifeline, of the loss of their U.S. patron, is absolutely terrifying to them.

Motives in Washington and Jakarta

NP: *What would you say has been the motive for U.S. policy on East Timor over the years?*

Nairn: Several years ago I asked former CIA director William Colby, what would have happened if President Gerald Ford had said "No" to Suharto in 1975, telling him you just can't invade Timor. Colby said that there would have been a few weeks of diplomatic tension, because Suharto would have been disappointed, but then after that things would have returned to normal. It was basically for that very marginal gain, to avoid that little political discomfort with an ally, to a protégé, that the U.S. gave the green light. The U.S. didn't really care about East Timor. The CIA two years before had written a report about Timor, saying — this isn't an exact quote, but it's close —, "It's a place of virtually no strategic significance."

The Indonesian plan was also not primarily driven by the politics of Fretilin [Revolutionary Front Army for an Independent East Timor, the pro-independence group with the most popular support in East Timor which had just defeated the UDT, its main rival, in a brief civil war]. That's a myth. The army had called in the UDT, the more conservative Timorese party that the army had provoked into starting the civil war with Fretilin, and told them, if *you* become the government and declare an independent East Timor, we will invade *you*. So the Indonesian regime didn't care if it was a conservative government or a left-wing government, they just didn't want an independent East Timor, apparently because they feared that independence might put ideas in the heads of Indonesians. If they saw an example of freedom next door, that might somehow inspire them. They by and large didn't have a problem with East Timor being a Portuguese colony, but a next-door example of freedom was considered inconvenient, and also they thought — this is what they told Washington, and I think they sincerely believed it — that they could crush the Timorese in two weeks.

NP: *It's often said that they are afraid that there will be other "separatist" movements if East Timor succeeds, but you're saying it goes beyond that.*

Nairn: It does. The threat is freedom in general. Concern about other independence movements is an element. Of course the word "separatist" doesn't really apply to East Timor, because it was always a separate, foreign, entity.

NP: *Yes, we understand, but the idea of East Timor's success still could trigger that worry.*

Nairn: But just the example of freedom, they were uncomfortable with that, and they apparently thought, Well, it'll just take us two weeks, anyway, we'll just smash these people and that'll be that. But the U.S. could have stopped it, and didn't. In fact they very actively supported it. They gave the green light, immedi-

ately doubled military aid, blocked the U.N. from enforcing its Security Council resolutions.

NP: *In 1999, why did the militias wait to carry out their rampage and allow a losing referendum to take place? Did they think they would win because they had terrorized enough people?*

Nairn: I don't think the top military leadership in Jakarta felt that they would win. By a month or two before the vote the Indonesian military already was conceding that they were going to lose. There were internal memos in which they said that, and some militia leaders started to say it publicly. Some publicly called for a boycott of the vote — they knew they were going to lose. I think Wiranto made the decision that if they actually tried to stop the election the international community would have had no choice but to cut the Army off. That would have been too much, too outrageous to force the cancellation of this big UN-sponsored vote. I think they decided they couldn't get away with that. In fact, on election day there were some militia attacks, but very limited. They basically turned them off for election day, but then as soon as the results were announced, then, especially two days after, that's when they started to burn down Dili and the rest of the country. That's when they massacred the people in the church in Suai. I think the basic motives behind the terror were (1) to take revenge on the Timorese; (2) to boost the Army's own internal morale — after all, this had been a horrible defeat, even worse than for the U.S. in Vietnam. Wiranto was seen as waging a very successful campaign — this was a big morale booster, and showed they were still strong, they weren't defeated; and (3) most important, to send a message to Indonesians: "Don't get the wrong idea. We may have lost Timor, but we're still terrorists, we're still able and willing to kill, so if you start thinking of freedom, this is what's in store for you."

That failed. The message of intimidation flopped; within less than two weeks of the major terror in Timor, protesters were in the streets protesting against a parliamentary bill that would increase the Army's security power, which is kind of a technicality, since the Army does whatever the hell they want anyway, but they were writing it into law, and people were very angry about that. The military killed four of them in street confrontations. That must have really frightened them. They had just abducted nearly half the population of East Timor, they had just burned the country down. They went to all that trouble, and they found that they didn't intimidate the pro-democracy activists in Indonesia.

Congress & the Executive Branch, Democrats & Republicans

NP: *We heard you on the radio, when an interviewer said that he was sure you were having a lot of trouble with Congressional Republicans in your work for human rights in Indonesia and East Timor, and you replied in a way that might be surprising to some that the biggest obstacles you faced were from the Clinton Administration. You went on to explain that this has been true of every administration, whether Republican or Democrat. Congress has been consistently better.*

Nairn: Congress is where you can bring public pressure. It's harder to bring public pressure on the Executive branch. On this issue and on most issues it's

possible to get more movement out of Congress.

NP: *But that doesn't account for someone like Jesse Helms, who has supported some restrictions on aid to Indonesia.*

Nairn: No, that doesn't account for him. There aren't many broad explanations and you really have to go case by case. Helms is a racist. He was not only a major backer of the military death squads in Latin America; he also went out of his way to back private ARENA death squads in El Salvador. However, Helms has made a point in recent years of saying he is an advocate of human rights, most prominently on China. I think he takes that position because he mistakenly thinks it's still Communist, but he also has been supportive of cutting off or at least cutting back U. S. military support for the Indonesian regime.

NP: *Just in the last short while or going back earlier?*

Nairn: Actually as long as I can remember, and I've been dealing with Congress on this since late 1991 and Helms had that position from early on. It is important to understand that East Timor is very low on the list of U.S. foreign policy priorities. Recently it's temporarily been near the top, but for most of the years it's been way down there. That means that some kind of side factor that could never sway a position for an issue that's high on the list, for example Israel or the former Soviet Union, can sway a position on something that's low on the list, like Timor. This is not about Helms in particular, but about members of Congress in general. Let's say there's a member of the staff who somebody is able to make a personal contact with, may make an argument, tell a story, the person gets a sympathetic response. Maybe that staff member can determine a member's position on an issue that's way down on the priority list. Another factor for many conservatives is — well the word isolationism is thrown around now, and it's very confusing and misleading — but there is a general tendency among many conservatives to want to cut back on some of the international activities of the U.S., so a proposal to cut back on support for a given regime, whatever it is, is consistent with that general philosophic principal.

NP: *Let's turn around the question. Let's say one of these same Republicans (not Helms, but the more "typical" Republicans) were in the Executive. Do you think he or she could afford to take the same position?*

Nairn: Well, it's always different if you're president rather than a member of Congress. If you're president, all the pressures come down, pressures to conform to long-standing bipartisan consensus policy, and it's almost unheard of for any president to deviate from that, regardless of party. In fact, there is a ritual for presidential candidates, where they are virtually made to take the pledge about the bipartisan foreign policy. They're expected to consult establishment foreign policy experts, they're expected to sign on to certain basic points. Clinton did that very early in his campaign for the presidency. Being a member of Congress is different. You don't have that obligation, and so many other forces can bear on what position a member of Congress takes. In the case of conservatives one of the other forces is the growing resentment among many of them about the corporate lobby because the corporations are being increasingly aggressive on China.

The corporations fight fiercely to get as much as they can for the Chinese regime, and some conservatives fight that very bitterly. There is resentment against those corporate tactics that carries over into some other issues.

NP: *But doesn't a lot of their funding come from these corporations?*

Nairn: It varies. I probably shouldn't even use the term "conservatives" because there are so many different camps. To be specific, in the House, among those on the right generally who supported a lot of international human rights initiatives you have Dana Rohrbacher of California; Bob Dornan, an ultra-rightist, while he was in Congress, Dan Burton of Indiana, also ultra-right; Frank Wolf of Virginia, whose district includes many Pentagon employees and who is generally considered very conservative; foremost among them; Chris Smith of New Jersey, who is the leader of the anti-choice forces in the House and is also probably the single strongest voice in the House against U.S. support for military repression overseas — in case after case he speaks up very strongly about it. With Smith, I think it's a matter of principle, personal conviction, I think he's very sincere. I think he feels strongly about it. I think it's also that way with Wolf and Rohrbacher. They define themselves as big supporters of the U.S. military but also as big supporters of international human rights. However, if a member has a major company in their district that for some reason puts support for the regime in question high on their agenda, that might change their position, but often they don't have such a company.

NP: *So someone hearing you talk would ask, "Well, now, does that mean you think that this brand of Republicans could lead the United States into conducting a democratic foreign policy?"*

Nairn: No. No leadership will come from the Executive branch or even the Congress. Leadership has to come from below, from public pressure. Even giving him the benefit of the doubt, if someone like Smith became president, his hands would be tied by all the forces around him unless enough support had been built up. If we truly enforced the murder laws every recent President would be in prison. They've all acted as accomplices to crimes against humanity overseas. That's a deeply ingrained policy that has to be exposed and overthrown. Only the public can do that. We ought to treat the parties with equal contempt and recognize that when it comes to violence against civilians overseas their philosophies are basically criminal.

The East Timor Action Network

NP: *You speak of pressure from below. How did this pressure, especially from the East Timor Action Network (ETAN) and other groups, affect the Administration's ability to keep supporting the Indonesian military?*

Nairn: After the Dili massacre of '91 the U.S. relationship to the Indonesian military did start to change somewhat, but only as a result of the public, and therefore Congressional, pressure. ETAN and other activist groups were able to win the cut-off of support for IMET [International Military Education and Training; a program by which the Pentagon trains foreign military officers], and then

the others. That really stung Jakarta, and for the first time they were made to pay a price for atrocities resulting from the invasion of East Timor. And so starting from the fall of '92, when Congress cut off the IMET training, up through the present, there's been an ongoing battle in Washington over U.S. policy. The policy has shifted substantially. Congress thought in '92 that they had succeeded in cutting off training for the Indonesian military. That turned out not to be true, because the Pentagon then started a new program for Indonesia, the JCET— Joint Combined Exchange and Training — program, under which they sent in Air Force commandos, Marines, and Green Berets to train Indonesian troops on Indonesian soil. But then last year, after we in ETAN exposed that, there was an uproar in Congress and the Pentagon suspended that program.

NP: *What accounts for your successes and defeats in lobbying Congress on the East Timor issue?*

Nairn: The higher up on the list of priorities an issue gets, the more pressure there is around it. For example, in the first years, fighting this issue of Indonesia and East Timor in Congress — 1991-92, '93, until early '94 — working on this issue in Congress, you didn't usually find that many non-governmental lobbyists on the other side. The main opponents were the State Department and the Pentagon and they would have their people going around on the other side of the issue, and in the case of the IMET battle in late '91 General Electric and AT&T were called in by Suharto to lobby on his behalf. Occasionally the America-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce or the U.S. ASEAN Business Council would weigh in, but it was sporadic. It's not like working on NAFTA or the IMF, with hundreds of individual corporations and various coalitions working together on the other side in addition to the Administration and all its agencies. It changed in 1994 when Jakarta launched a counter-attack because we — ETAN and other East Timor activists — had beaten them so badly. We had had four or five victories in a row: cutting off the IMET; stopping F-5 fighter plane sales; winning a ban on small arms sales; reversing the U.S. position at the U.N. Human Rights Commission; winning a ban on the sale of helicopter-mounted weapons. At that point, Jakarta launched a counter-offensive.

They did three things: First, they got the corporations more involved to lobby on their behalf. Second, they created a whole new front group called the U.S.-Indonesia Society which had backing from the Indonesian army directly, from former State Department, Pentagon and CIA people, and from corporations, and they became a very active pro-Suharto, pro-Indonesian-army lobby in Washington. And the third element of their campaign was the Riadys.

The Lippo Group and the campaign finance scandals were heavily mis-interpreted by the Republicans for partisan reasons and also because they made a tactical error. They chose to focus on China, but in fact the Riadys and the Lippo group had much stronger political connections to Suharto than they did to Beijing. The dramatic increase in their contribution to Clinton and the Democrats in '94 was part of this counter-offensive that I just described. After that, it was really very tough in Washington for the groups supporting human rights in Indonesia and the tide didn't start turning back again in our favor until late '96 when three outside events intervened. One was when the Indonesian military attacked the headquarters of Megawati Sukarnoputri's opposition party. That touched off

several days of rioting in Jakarta where people were burning military buildings and so on. Second, there was the exposure of the Lippo-Riady campaign finance money, which became an important secondary issue in the '96 presidential campaign. Third was the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Belo and Ramos Horta. Those three events again turned things our way. But you can get a lot more done when there isn't a full corporate mobilization against you.

NP: *In the 1992 campaign Clinton raised the issue of East Timor.*

Nairn: Well, he didn't really raise it. This was misreported. What happened in the '92 campaign was Clinton had a press conference here in New York at the Foreign Policy Association and Amy Goodman went and asked him a question about Timor. Clinton, being a well-prepared guy, had an answer to the question. He said, "I think we have ignored the issue in ways that I think are unconscionable." That was his full quote, and at the time the quote got absolutely zero attention, it wasn't picked up anywhere in the press. And that was the only time in that campaign that Clinton ever mentioned the subject. However, in 1996, when the Riady money became an issue, reporters went back and found that quote and used it to construct this false scenario which said "Well, Clinton used to be good on Indonesia, after all he made this statement during the '92 campaign, but then when the Riadys gave him money, he turned around and went the other way." That's not accurate. Clinton was terrible all along, he was just following the usual bi-partisan policy. The Riadys didn't have to buy his allegiance, they already had it. He was doing all that he could. Maybe they thought they were buying insurance. He did not make an issue of it in '92 — he just responded to one question. Clinton gave a skilled politician's answer. He didn't make any specific commitment. And he was inaccurate when he said that the U.S. had ignored the issue. Would that they had! Then they wouldn't have been shipping arms to Indonesia or doubling military aid right after the invasion or blocking the U.N. from enforcing Security Council resolutions. Of course *ignoring* was not what the U.S. was doing. The U.S. was intervening on the wrong side.

The Pentagon & the State Department

NP: *You told the story in your* Nation *article (Sept. 27, 1999) about Admiral Dennis Blair, U.S. Commander in Chief of the Pacific (CINCPAC), going to Indonesia supposedly to see Wiranto and pull the plug on the militias, but instead offering more aid, and then doing that a second time. It wasn't clear in your article to what extent this was a rogue, unauthorized operation and to what extent this was the real U.S. policy.*

Nairn: The short answer is, he was defying the State Department, but not the White House. The relationship between the State Department and the Pentagon is a little ambiguous. The State Department is supposed to set the overall framework of U.S. policy, and the Pentagon is supposed to be more of a mechanical implementer, but in fact the Pentagon always makes a certain amount of policy on its own. There's always tension there. In this case, although for years the State Department had been just as adamant as the Pentagon in supporting Suharto and the Indonesian military, for about the last year the State Depart-

ment finally had started to change its policy in response to Congressional pressure, in response to all the cutoffs that we in the East Timor activist movement had won, and also the passage of the House and Senate resolutions supporting self-determination for East Timor. After all that some people in the State Department did start to shift, though it was very controversial within the Department. Many resisted, including Ambassador Stapleton Roy, who to this day remains a die-hard supporter of Suharto and the Indonesian Army.

NP: *And Madeleine Albright?*

Nairn: Albright was one of those who accepted the Congressional shift, as did Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering and Stanley Roth, Assistant Secretary for East Asia. So throughout '98 State Department policy was slowly shifting, starting to come more into line with the Congressional position. They were doing it very reluctantly, they were being dragged along, but they were moving. They were slowly starting to express support for a UN-sponsored referendum, and as the militia attacks got underway they began to criticize the militia attacks with increasing severity, and even at a certain point started to criticize the Indonesian Army for sponsoring those attacks. The Pentagon, however, was not budging an inch. When Blair went in to see Wiranto, the State Department, especially those in the Department who were accepting the new policy, made a very big priority of setting an agenda, saying, "You tell Wiranto to shut the militias down." Their understanding was that Blair had agreed to do that, but then he went in and essentially did the opposite.

The meeting was two days after Liquica, the massacre in the church and the rectory where militias with machetes hacked up about 70 people, and they were backed up by uniformed police Mobile Brigade troops who lobbed in tear gas. When Blair went into the meeting, he said nothing critical of Liquica. Instead, he offered the first new U.S. military training program since 1992, which was to be through the Justice Department and ICITAP — the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, an offshoot of the Justice Department, an FBI-type program; ICITAP was very involved in Haiti and El Salvador. The ICITAP-Justice Department program would train the very Mobile Brigade troops that two days before had helped to commit the Liquica massacre, and other police. Blair even invited Wiranto to his home in Hawaii. He said the Pentagon would join the Indonesian military in lobbying Congress to reverse the standing U.S. policy of cutting off the IMET training. He offered him one political plum after another.

Wiranto took this as a sign that the people that counted in Washington and who were really delivering the goods had no problem with the militia. When the State Department heard about this, they were outraged and sent an eyes-only telegram to Ambassador Roy and set up a corrective phone call. But then the same thing happened in the phone call — instead of reading Wiranto the riot act, Blair offered more aid. Then in July, Admiral Archie Clemins, head of the Pacific fleet, gave a briefing to the Indonesian senior commanders in which he discussed stepping up U.S. military ties to the armed forces, establishing a U.S. military training base within Indonesia, and urged the Indonesians to buy a system of elaborate U.S. high-tech military electronics that would more fully integrate the Indonesian Navy with the U.S. Navy for surveillance and electronic warfare.

Clemins was talking about a very real deepening of the relationship at the very moment when the militia attacks were intensifying and when there was incredible terror in Aceh, a province with a strong independence movement. All this was contrary to what Congress and even the White House were saying publicly. So it was the Pentagon defying the State Department, but *not* defying the White House, because the way Clinton and Berger handled this was to let it play out. Clinton has control over the military, but he chose not to step in and bring Blair into line. So in effect, and this angered many State Department people, the result was a two-track policy. The U.S. has used this elsewhere: on the level of words and diplomacy condemning the military and saying we're pulling back, but on the level of substantive involvement in fact drawing closer.

NP: *So it was a political decision.*

Nairn: Sure, Clinton could have called it off in a minute. He could have called Secretary of Defense Cohen and said, "Hey what are you up to? Look at what the policy is, read the State Department statement, that's our policy." But he chose the two-track policy.

Previously the Indonesian military had been very sensitive to even *words* coming out of Washington, because from '65 through the '91 Dili massacre they had enjoyed 100 per cent uninterrupted support. The only rough spots involved logistics, or occasionally Congress would want, for budgetary reasons, to cut some foreign aid in general. After the massacre, when a movement really started to grow here and there was real opposition in Congress and real things started to get cut and members of Congress started to make strong statements critical of the Indonesian Army, the Indonesian military didn't know what to think. They were very hurt and confused.

It took the Generals quite a few years to figure out how American politics actually works, even to understand the distinction between Congress and the Executive branch. They didn't seem to understand that when an American member of Congress condemns the Indonesian military, he is not speaking for the Pentagon or the White House. Naturally, then, these Congressional speeches were very alarming.

But by 1998, they started to understand the dynamics. Wiranto was sophisticated enough to realize that though the State Department was saying one thing to him on the public level, and even privately, what really mattered was that the Commander in Chief of the Pacific offered concrete programs and said don't worry about it. Conversely, the moment the CINCPAC comes in and says, "We're canceling the training programs, you get no more spare parts for your American weapons systems, we're pulling all the technicians out of the strategic industries, and it's not coming back," that's when you start getting worried. You don't worry about rhetoric from the State Department.

Peacekeepers & Resistance Forces

NP: *To shift a bit, in some of your reports from East Timor you expressed skepticism about an Australian peacekeeping force.*

Nairn: I was against sending in an armed peacekeeping force. I think it was

completely unnecessary. It was badly confusing the discussion in the West, because the issue was framed as "Should we be sending in peacekeepers to stop the terror in East Timor?" That wasn't the question. The question is, should we keep *supporting* the terror in East Timor or should we stop supporting the terror in East Timor? If the U.S. government had done that, if they had completely cut off the Indonesian military, that would have shut it down immediately.

I spoke with a Western military official serving in East Timor while this was going on who knew the Indonesian Army very well. He had trained the Kopassus extensively in commando tactics. He said that Wiranto is playing a game of brinksmanship. He's pushing as far as he can, seeing how much he can get away with, but the minute he reaches the brink, he stops. When he reaches the point where he's going to actually pay a concrete price, then he will pull back.

NP: *When you say you opposed the Australian force, did you also oppose any kind of U.N. force?*

Nairn: I opposed any *armed* U.N. presence. My position on this was definitely a minority position. Most activists including Xanana Gusmão, the leader of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, were calling for an armed force to come in.

NP: *What was your reason for opposing it?*

Nairn: Because you do not call for an armed U.S. force to come in and fight U.S.-armed, -trained and -financed troops. Instead, you call on the U.S. to stop arming, training and financing them, to cut them off. Also, once you reach the point we're at now, where it's a transition and you're starting a new government, it's a big problem to have armed foreigners hanging around and being the ultimate authority in your country. It was a big problem for Haiti, and they weren't even starting from ground zero like the Timorese are; they were just trying to reconstitute their existing government.

The top U.N. staff in New York, including Annan, are mainly sympathetic to the Timorese, but there are problems whenever you have an army that's the only one with the guns.

NP: *What do you think about armed resistance by the Timorese? Do you think that has any positive role to play?*

Nairn: One part of the May '99 deal made in New York between Indonesia and Portugal that set the terms for the election was that Falintil, the Timorese guerrillas under the command of the CNRT, would go to the "cantonments" in the countryside. Over time they would stop attacks. They weren't really doing them anyway, but they would stop them. And they complied with that, unlike the Indonesian military, which completely defied the May 5th agreement. As the militias started burning down the country, Falintil held their fire. They were very uncomfortable and angry about it, and there were often private political clashes between Xanana and the field commanders, because he would tell them, "Hold back, don't go out." They basically sat there and watched as their people were abducted and their towns were burnt down all around them. In recent weeks that has started to change a bit. They're not doing armed attacks on the remaining Indonesian troops and the remaining militia, but they have also said

that they will not turn over their arms.

NP: *We read about a confrontation in which a U.N. person said, "You have to disarm," and the response was "Thank you, we're not going to."*

Nairn: They're saying, "No, sorry, we're not going to comply now because the Indonesian Army has not complied." They're absolutely right, they would be crazy to turn in their arms *at least* until the last Indonesian soldier has left, until it's clear that there are no stay-behind Indonesian military intelligence people, and until it's clear that the whole militia operation has been shut down. The restraint has been amazing.

Within the Timorese movement Xanana took a great deal of criticism for all the concessions he made during the negotiations for the deal, and many people were very unhappy with the fact that the Falintil was sidelined, and also with the fact that Xanana for many months sent orders down to the young people — orders that were not always followed — not to demonstrate, not to go out on the streets, trying to keep things quiet because he wanted to present a good image to the world community. There was a lot of internal controversy, although his policy did by and large prevail. But now even Xanana, who has been extremely accommodating to all the international intermediaries, is balking at turning over their arms.

NP: *Is there anything further that people outside East Timor can do to help the Timorese now?*

Nairn: Pressure Congress to end all support for the Indonesian armed forces. And get organized. Join up with the East Timor Action Network (http://www.etan.org). Many tens of thousands of East Timorese are still being held hostage. There's an entire country that has to be built, that has to win economic freedom. If we can cut off the Indonesian military now, that can help consolidate freedom in Timor and open the door for the possibility of real democracy in Indonesia.

Exchange: Socialism & the Market

1. The Robust Social Market: A Response to David McNally

Roy Morrison

DAVID MCNALLY IN HIS "IMPASSE OF MARKET SOCIALISM" (*New Politics* — Summer 1999) presents a useful and strong case against reliance upon the capitalist market as a realm of freedom. Further, he demonstrates how the commodification of labor through wages establishes the basis for the creation and recreation of capitalist social relations.

But I found less than insightful and fair his refusal to consider prospects for non-capitalist market systems. Is a non-capitalist market an oxymoron? Or is the creation of various kinds of so-called social market systems both a possibility and a challenge for those attempting to build a liberatory and ecological social order?

David McNally rejects the Soviet model in his exhortation for the development of new socialist ideas. But by failing to consider the possibilities for any sort of social market, it is hard to weigh the liberatory possibilities of the decentralized planning he proposes, compared to a non-capitalist, robust social market system.

In this article, first, I will briefly sketch some of the dynamics of such a robust social market system. Second, I will touch upon ways in which we can begin to move from the afflicted present toward a better future.

The Robust Social Market

THE SOCIAL MARKET I WANT TO CONSIDER is not a capitalist wolf in threadbare social vestments. A robust social market would be characterized by and built around three interrelated structural pillars: a labor-managed, cooperatively-owned economy; democratic political control rooted in the devolution of the current state system toward a confederal order that rests upon local, directly democratic community structures; an ecological social order and political economy that is based on sufficiency and sustainability instead of growth and inequality.

Tall order. But these principles I would argue are more than just dreams, but represent healing and dialectical responses to capitalist and

ROY MORRISON's *latest book is* Ecological Investigations *forthcoming in 2000. He works organizing cooperatives.*

industrial excesses—cooperation in response to unbridled competition; local democracy in response to globalization; sufficiency and survival in response to growth and ecological pillage.

As such they are not inevitable, but they represent distinct possibilities. And of course each of these responses contains its own contradictions and is therefore nuanced and contested terrain. My point is not that the attainment of such a social order represents the end of struggle, or of history. But it does reflect not only a vision but an organizing program, as well as a way to first limit and then transform the nature of an industrial and capitalist social order to that of an ecological and cooperative one.

Clearly, we are looking at more than economic questions here. McNally's criticism about the operation of conventional market socialist schemes are well taken. But markets and their nature are social creations. The traditional market existed for thousands of year before the advent of industrial capitalism, and shall continue long after industrial capitalism has disappeared. I suggest that markets can be more than either traditional or capitalist. They can be shaped and used by cooperative and democratic social orders.

Economic Dynamics

THE ROBUST SOCIAL MARKET SYSTEM IS DEFINED ECONOMICALLY by a labor and community managed and owned economy; the practice of a social and community based entrepreneurship; cooperation and competition as an effective engine of social and economic change.

On a macro level, such a robust social market would radically dampen the amplitude of capitalist economic swings and boom-bust business cycles. The economy would have the ability for technical equilibration based on full employment, a social wage, as well as personal and social ownership of the institutions of civil society including housing, schools, and health facilities.

On a micro level, first, labor within the cooperative firm would be regarded as a nearly fixed cost. Layoffs would be the last and not the first response to economic signals. That is, a manufacturing or service cooperative facing a decline in sales would reduce prices, increase advertising, reduce production, reduce the hours of work, share jobs, etc. The cooperative would respond to economic signals, but in the context of a system that artfully avoids, as opposed to embracing, human redundancy.

Further, the social market system would be organized not on the basis of an individual coop in a great cooperative sea of individual coops, but instead on the basis of cooperative groups with diverse member cooperatives. Within a cooperative group, it would be possible to transfer workers between cooperative enterprises in different sectors that are affected differently by economical conditions, engage in retraining, additional education, retooling and modernization of individual firms. And if all this failed, unemployment benefits would be paid.

Jaroslav Vanek, in *The General Theory of Labor Managed Market Economies*[1], has developed an economic model for the durable and efficient operation of one such labor managed economic order. The robust social market I am suggesting is not necessarily limited by the assumptions of Vanek's model. In the same vein, David Albert and Robin Hahnel have offered a participatory planning based economic design is *Looking Forward* that does not exhaust all pos-

sible iterations of a planned economy.[2]

Cooperation and the Social Market

IN A ROBUST SOCIAL MARKET, COOPERATION IS EXPRESSED by cooperative ownership and control of the firm and of capital. Workers on the basis of one worker/one vote would own their job and their firm. Individual firms would be linked in cooperative and community groups. Cooperative ownership would extend to the banking system. The circle would thus be closed between workers earnings, savings and the community control of capital and investment.

The cooperative banking system's democratic governance will reflect a mixture of representation by community depositors, cooperative firms and democratically chosen community representatives. Such mixed representation in the control of capital reflects the realities of the disparate interests that will naturally arise in any market system, which include the conflicting interest between a confederal cooperative state and the organs of civil society.

The Mondragon cooperatives have demonstrated within the context of a capitalist market (and its limits) the ability of economically and socially integrated cooperative groups to function successfully within the capitalist ocean. Through the internal capital account system they have shown ways for worker-owners to benefit only on the basis of their own labor (and those benefits rigorously subject to social control).[3] The Mondragon system has demonstrated the cooperative advantage of their operation of social as well as economic enterprises, as well as the limits of existing as a lonely cooperative group in a capitalist world.

A labor managed, cooperative economy would be characterized by a universe of many types of community based cooperative systems., and confederal systems of such cooperatives. They would be the rule and not the exception. Their competition would take place in accord with democratically determined cooperative norms.

In this cooperative system, the firm represents a socially entrepreneurial entity producing socially-determined items for community benefit. What is produced and how is subject to a series of democratically decided standards. Production and consumption are examined to internalize the real costs, monetary and non-monetary, of so-called externalities upon this and future generations. Some items and processes will be prohibited, for example, production and use of most chemical insecticides, will be replaced by organic methods.

The focus here is *ex ante* consideration of what and how items are produced and their consequences. By its nature, the robust social market is an integrated market and planning system. Democratic planning structures on the level of the firm and above shape what is brought to market . (Services such as advertizing, its means and nature, are, of course, subject to cooperative and social norms.) After planning, the social market, not production and planning quotas, determines price and demand for both consumer and capital goods as well as services within the context of the norms of the social market system.

The market price in a robust social market system, by including necessary pollution, depletion and social impact taxes to internalize the impacts of production achieves higher levels of market efficiency than a capitalist market system. The price and market signals are much closer to true costs. Therefore they allow market decisions to be made in an economically rational way. For example the price of a gallon of gasoline would include taxes accessing costs of pollution and

depletion for the whole chain of production from oil well to pipeline to refinery to end user to atmosphere, as well as to the hospital and to the forest. The true cost would make the use of far less polluting alternatives cheaper. The social market and not just Greenpeace would demand that people drove non-polluting vehicles.

Property and the Robust Social Market

IN A COOPERATIVE SYSTEM, PROPERTY INSTEAD OF BEING EITHER CONSIDERED PUBLIC, that is, state owned, or private, that is, individually owned, will be transformed in conception. In a social market system, property will generally be considered both personal and social. In this way individuals have both a personal stake and right to use and responsibilities to participate in the control of property on a broad number of levels. At the same time property, besides being personal, is also social. It is clearly subject to the democratic mandates of the society. The individual is presented with a clear balance of rights and responsibilities. The rights to responsibly use and enjoy property. The responsibility to protect, maintain and sustain property.

In a social market, the ownership of most property is not transferred on the basis of conventional market sales. That is, for example, a worker in a cooperatively owned firm has an equity share in the cooperative. The worker benefits on the basis of profits or losses obtained through her own labor. A worker receives in her capital account a share of the cooperative profit, above her socially determined wage level, or shares in the losses of the cooperative. Profits, of course, beyond the portion allotted to individual workers, are both redistributed by taxes and reinvested. When the worker retires, she must take her internal capital account with her. Cooperative governance is based on those working. And the cooperative cannot be sold to encumber the work of future generations on the basis of anticipated profits sold to capitalist owners.

Housing, for instance, in a social market system would be largely owned by cooperatives and land trusts. Individuals could own life-time tenancy in their home or apartment. Construction (as in the Canadian system)could be by cooperatives using low cost social capital.

A house (but not the land) could be sold to the co-op or landtrust or to a new owner-member, or passed through inheritance to children. But the land nor the house would not be for sale to the highest bidder. The value of the house could depreciate if not maintained by the individual or the cooperative. But sale prices for housing would be based on real costs and replacement values and not on market speculation.

Profit and the Robust Social Market

ONE QUESTION NATURALLY FLIES TO THE FORE following a description of any kind of competitive, albeit, cooperatively managed and socially mediated markets. What about that cursed word “profit”? I could have used the more neutral term “surplus” but that would be too easy a recourse to the department of euphemism to soften the blow. But surpluses (the cooperative name for profits) are, in fact, essential. This is not for the satisfaction of capitalist lusts for profit and the inescapable exploitation of labor power. In fact, in any system, surpluses need to be generated both to replace what exists and is wearing out, and to do anything

more than simply to maintain the status quo.

Clearly, the current world system is based on grotesque inequalities, the creation of obscene and often murderous wealth, and at the same time nearly boundless poverty and immiseration. But beyond the need for a redistribution of wealth, it is clear that an ecological social system would need to replace much of the current poisonous, destructive, and toxic industrial infrastructure that bestrides the planet with appropriate eco-technologies and infrastructure.

To reward cooperative members with a small portion of profits based on their own labor is, I believe, a reasonable recognition of reward for very hard labor. In such a system, the differentials in pay between the highest and lowest would be democratically determined and nuanced for reasons such as combination of need, effort, and unpleasantness.

What is most significant is less the maximum spread between the highest and lowest paid although clearly the current U.S. model of a 1,000-to-1 differential is absurd. But whether the maximum income disparity is 3-to-1 or 5-to-1 or 10-to-1 is less significant to me than the assurance that the 1 is sufficient to lead a thoroughly satisfactory life, and that the higher levels of income reflect both the choice of individuals and factors that would not at all seem necessarily desirable for most people, for example, the desire to work much harder, travel more often, perform a dirty job in order to buy more goods for consumption while most people, instead of working extra hours, spend time with their children, fishing, singing, making love, writing poetry, or walking in the woods.

Social theorist and activist Joel Kovel remarked to me, when discussing this issue, that the market was clearly problematic because certainly a capitalist market recapitulates capitalism. The question is whether a robust social market will recapitulate a robust social market system?

Civil Society and the Nation State

COOPERATION NEITHER BEGINS NOR ENDS AT THE DOOR OF THE WORKPLACE. Cooperative ownership would be extended in a devolutionary model, following the guild socialist inspiration, to include housing, schools, healthcare, recreational institutions that are owned by and democratically controlled by members of the community.

These institutions can be supported, in part, by taxation and accountable to meeting broad democratically-determined public mandates for performance, honesty, and openness to all. But they remain democratically controlled on the basis of one member/one vote by their participants.

Thus in a social market system, participation and equity extends not just to the workplace, but to the institutions of civil society that structure and shape our lives. Democratic participation in the governance of civil society, as well as government, would exist to a far greater extent than at present in the so-called liberal democracies.

The liberal state as we have known it—as tool to facilitate industrial capitalist development—would be a radically diminished institution. Power would increasingly rest in local democratic assemblies where many of the real decisions effecting people's lives as citizens and workers would be made. These assemblies would exist in a social order based on an interdependent localism and the strengthening of freedom and community and recognition of their interdependence. This is not just talk, but the manifestation of the economic and social behavior on a day-

to-day basis within a social market system.

As the nation state weakens, community structures and larger confederal structures would be built regionally, bioregionally, nationally, internationally (e.g. a cooperative European Union, American Union, African Union) and globally. These larger structures governed by the principles of subsidiarity would deal with issues that transcend the power and purview of the empowered local communities e.g., global carbon emissions, and hemispheric upward harmonization of minimum wages and labor standards.

The gateway to such changes are to be found in existing trends and tendencies. Cooperation, participation, decentralization, and networks instead of hierarchies and command are all the capitalist rage (within limits of course). A cooperative labor managed economy has the not inconsiderable advantage (competitive and otherwise) of being the real thing. Similarly, devolution of power of the nation state to communities need not mean the weakening of the social contract but instead its strengthening and radical democratization.

The inability of radical and left political forces to articulate and organize behind a liberatory devolutionary agenda makes it appear that the institutions of social democracy and the New Deal represent the limit of radical imagination. Devolution can mean community empowerment and revitalization and not the abdication of federal responsibilities. How and why this happens I believe is a crucial point of entry for organizing for real social change and the building of a robust social market system from below.

Building A Robust Social Market System
How Do We Get There From Here?

CLEARLY THE FIRST THING WE NEED IS A DIRECTION, that is, inspiration. Explorers need a direction, even if it is only following one point of the compass or one bearing into space. A few pathways are clear If we want to pursue a social market based on cooperative ownership of business and of the organs of civil society, the devolution of power from government and the state to cooperative institutions, and a liberatory and ecological social order in contrast to an industrial and hierarchical industrial capitalist system.

First, is the encouragement and strengthening of cooperative organizations and institutions on all levels. There exist institutions such as the ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan), a clearly imperfect form, that can be used to facilitate cooperative ownership of even the largest firms, and strengthened to be more democratic and easily employed by worker initiative.

Second, the banking system, instead of being rescued periodically through public taxation that leads to the creation of new bands of private speculators, can be turned into community control and cooperative institutions on the basis of insurance and the inevitable bailout of such institutions following speculative excesses.

Third, we need develop and pursue a political and community organizing agenda in support of the associative democratic model calling for community control of institutions and the necessary power and financial resources to make such control and provision of services both effective and meaningful. In fact, the efficacy and success of community based education and social institutions is a crucial concomitant for the competitive advantage and success of community

based cooperative enterprises. By building community controlled educational and health systems we are establishing the basis for the rise of a social entrepreneurship by developing the educational and technical infrastructure, building successful social forms and local power.

Fourth, a social wage can be established that provides each person the right of a share of the social product in return for a socially required amount of useful work, based on our ability and life situation, that is broadly defined. This means a basic commitment to sufficiency; that each of us has not only decent food, clothing, shelter but the opportunity to pursue a worthwhile life. Such a system can begin with a negative income tax and evolve as the social market system develops.

Globally, a commitment to sufficiency must mean a commitment to sustainability, and likewise a commitment to sustainability must mean a commitment to sufficiency are the expressions of the prosperity and health of the one and the many. This must mean not just the good life for OECD nations, but a global convergence toward sufficiency and sustainability.

As we examine the banking, credit, pension systems, budgetary, fiscal and monetary policy, there are enormous financial resources in a country such as the U.S. that if redirected over time toward cooperative and community purposes could, over a couple of generations, transform the nature of ownership and of power. The issue here is more political, social, and philosophical than economic. Capitalism will provide the opportunities for change through its failures. We need to provide the venues and the movements for liberation.

The system I am proposing is certainly not immune from a variety of economic, political, environmental, and philosophical problems. The argument is that a robust social market system has the possibility of effectively, creatively, and democratically dealing with both foreseeable and unforeseeable problems. There is no iron law that can guarantee either liberation or tyranny given any particular social design. That is, some systems are clearly much more inclined to repression, failure, and abuse than others. There is unfortunately, as we have seen, no rhetorical or schematic guarantees of a good life or a good society.

The venues for such a cooperative restructuring are clear and many. Their performance depends not simply upon clever policy making but absolutely upon our personal and community participation that is, in part, the manifestation of a powerful social movement that will transform a capitalist and industrial civilization to a liberatory and ecological one. This is the challenge. I believe we have no realistic course if we are to survive as a global civilization than to pursue this path. We ignore the possibilities for a robust social market system and the inspiration it can provide for such a social movement at our peril.

NOTES

1. Jaroslav Vanek, *The General Theory of Labor Managed Market Economies* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970).

2. Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel, *Looking Forward: Participatory Economics for the 21st Century* (Boston: South End Press, 1991).

3. David Ellerman, formally of the Industrial Cooperative Association, has examined the nature of the cooperative firm, the importance of internal capital accounts and the socialization of entrepreneurship by the Mondragon system in depth. See for example, David Ellerman, "Theory of Legal Structures: Worker Cooperatives" *Journal of Economic Issues* vol. XVIII No. 3 , Sept. 1984, pp. 861-891

2. Further Contributions to the Debate

David McNally

THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE MARKET QUESTION CONTINUES to be a point of contention among socialists. In addition to Roy Morrison's response in this issue to my article, "The Impasse of Market Socialism" (*New Politics*, Summer 1999), a book-length volume devoted to this debate has recently appeared.[1] However, as I argued in my earlier piece, this debate often suffers from unclarity about what is actually at stake. Typically, terms like "market" and "prices" are thrown about with little conceptual precision. Yet these apparently technical terms are in fact packed with social content. Rather than referring simply to economic instrumentalities, they describe *social forms* of economic life. What we think about issues like markets and prices is thus full of consequences for the sort of society we seek. For this reason, I want to probe a number of Morrison's arguments in an effort to clarify the theoretical and political stakes of this discussion.

Refreshingly, Morrison's article is meant as a contribution to the discussion of mechanisms for achieving socialist objectives. His interest in the market is not driven by a retreat from anti-capitalist commitments. Moreover, the essential principles of his "robust social market" are clearly progressive ones: cooperatively owned and labor-managed enterprises; democratic political control; and an ecological social order.[2] But, as with all such models, much depends upon the details. And here I must confess to some doubts. In order to explain why this is so, I shall interrogate Morrison's social market model with respect to three issues: the question of market regulation; the problem of socialist democracy; and the issue of linking socialist analysis to political struggle.

The Question of Market Regulation

AS I ARGUED IN "THE IMPASSE OF MARKET SOCIALISM," the crucial question in this debate concerns the regulation of economic life by the market. Virtually all socialists agree, after all, that various market *mechanisms* would exist for a considerable period of time in the development of a post-capitalist society. But anti-market socialists like myself insist that

DAVID MCNALLY *is a Canadian socialist activist who teaches at York University in Toronto. He is the author of* Against the Market: Political Economy, Market Socialism and the Marxist Critique, *Verso, 1993.*

the *regulation* of economic relations by means of the market is fundamentally incompatible with socialism. If the allocation of goods and services is to be accomplished by means of price signals (which in turn guide strategic decisions about employment and investment), it follows that all economic "inputs" — and most crucially human labor-power itself — have to be priced and allocated according to the unplanned process of market competition. To interfere with that process is, as the market fetishists never tire of pointing out, to distort the market prices that regulate the system. If we want an economy directed by price signals, we have to let market relations operate unfettered. As a result, a commitment to market regulation logically entails that labor-power exist as a commodity — as just another cost that is priced by the market. And this has a logic that some market socialists don't want to concede: that layoffs, unemployment, and the subjection of workers to the blind compulsions of the market — what Marx called the "violence of things" — will be inherent in any such system.[3]

Put in different terms, market regulation involves a system of social synthesis that reduces human labor-power and elements of the natural environment to *things* which are organized according to the quantifying processes of market pricing. Market regulation thus makes genuine democratic social planning impossible; it imposes the unplanned logic of the market upon the human agents who interact in the economic system. And this logic entails a whole system of social relations that are antithetical to socialism: the commodification of labor-power; the domination of people by market laws they do not control; disastrous effects on the natural environment; and market-induced unemployment and inequalities. For this reason, as I have argued, we need to recognize that a fundamental choice must be made between socialism and market regulation.

And this returns me to the robust social market model. Much of the time, Morrison seems to want to emphasize new forms of community control. But when it comes to the dynamics of his model, it appears that these structures merely surround a particular type of market-regulated economy. Discussing these dynamics, he writes, for example, that "layoffs would be the last and not the first response to economic signals." To be sure, this sounds much more humane than what usually occurs under unbridled capitalism. But on closer inspection, it appears we are dealing with a difference in degree, not in kind. After all, to talk about layoffs occurring as a "response to economic signals" suggests that employment is regulated not by human social choices, but by the signals to which markets give rise.[4] This impression is confirmed when Morrison proceeds to discuss "unemployment benefits" in his model, clearly indicating that market forces will determine employment — and may consign some to being out of work. Nowhere do we get any indication of guaranteed employment of the sort that might follow from social relations which subordinate market mechanisms to social decision-making. And we certainly don't get much sense that enormous areas of human life — housing, food provision, childcare, education, health care and so on — would be organized in non-market ways, i.e. as social entitlements which aren't priced by the market and which don't require the mediation of money.[5]

Morrison's laudable preference for community-controlled institutions is thus seriously constrained by the powers he invests in market forces. Why, after all, should market processes be allowed to drive people into unemployment? Why not let people determine whether they will accept unemployment at all? After

all, if rising productivity (or falling demand) meant that less labor were needed in a specific product line, why shouldn't an established set of social priorities guide the redirection of workers into an expanding sector of (non-market) social entitlements? But to think in these terms is to break with all forms of "market rationality" (an oxymoron if ever there was one) by insisting that the allocation of labor will follow upon a schema of democratic social planning, not blind market imperatives. And this is to oppose socialist democracy to market regulation.

The Problem of Socialist Democracy

ONE OF THE MANY TRAGEDIES OF THE STALINIST EXPERIENCE is that commentators (including large numbers on the Left) regularly identify socialist planning with the bureaucratically-directed "command economies" that prevailed in Russia and Eastern Europe. In reacting against that experience — for good and understandable reasons — many socialist theorists have looked to the market, rather than to socialist democracy, to act as a curb on bureaucracy. While it is encouraging to see Morrison attach a high priority to democratic social institutions and arrangements, it's not clear, as I've already intimated, that he's really come to terms with one of the central principles of socialist democracy: its radical extension into the whole field of economic processes and relations.

As Ellen Meiksins Wood explains in *Democracy Against Capitalism*, by comparison with its ancient form, bourgeois democracy involves an enormous contraction in the sphere of democracy. This is a consequence of the way in which classical capitalism differentiates the economic sphere from the realm of politics. In feudal society, by contrast, economics and politics were fused. The economic powers of the feudal lord — his estates, his command over the labor and/or a share of the product of his peasants — flowed from his political title. Legally, the lord did not "own" his estates — they belonged to the supreme lord of the realm (the monarch) and were conferred by power of the crown. With the rise of capitalism, however, we witness the dis-integration of economic and political power and the rise of absolute private property rights. Bourgeois property law centrally involves the concept of individual ownership. Capitalists do not require political offices or titles granted by the state in order to control their property. Titles to private property are recognized in law without attachment to office or estate. Economic and political power are thus differentiated in important ways. And this has major implications for what comes to be called "democracy" in capitalist society since powerfully important areas of human life are removed from the space of politics.

Historically, in fact, the working class was only incorporated into the structures of bourgeois democracy once absolute private property rights had been established — in law *and* in popular consciousness. So long as people were used to customs by which much property was held communally or subject to common rights — such as common lands which could be used by all for grazing, hunting, fishing, wood-gathering, and so on — it was dangerous for the ruling class to admit them into the political process. After all, the ruling class could not see "why those men may not vote against all property," as General Ireton put it while attacking the democratic proposals of the Levellers during the debates of the English Civil War.[6]

Only after a many centuries-long process of extinguishing communal rights

and property, of establishing the private character of property, and of subjecting propertyless workers to utter dependence on the market, was it safe to enfranchise the working class. The historical experience of communal property rights having been eclipsed, workers were now disciplined to accept wage-labor and to seek material improvements, not by a return to communal rights, but by struggling to improve their position within market society. The danger that workers' movements would treat politics as a realm that governed the "private" space of the economy had receded.[7] Public and private spheres having been demarcated, economics and politics were radically separated. Economic life had thus been *depoliticized*, turned into a space of private rights beyond the reach of politics. The working class was thus admitted into "democracy," argues Wood, only after "the *expulsion* of politics from spheres in which it had always been directly involved."[8]

Bourgeois democracy pivots on this expulsion. It enfranchises the working class subject to the delimitation of democracy from the "private" arena of the economy — the field of investment, employment, distribution of wealth, establishment of prices, and so on. It seems clear that any meaningful anti-capitalist politics must challenge this separation of economic and political spheres. It must insist that politics and economics are not separate, despite the mystifications of bourgeois law. To this end, socialists try to expose the way economic power translates into political power in a capitalist society. We insist that the economy is actually a site of social power which determines human well-being. And we argue, therefore, that the ostensibly "private" actions of banks and corporations are full of public meaning and consequences — and ought to be subjected to democratic control.

Indeed, all of these points flow from Marx's powerful critique of classical political economy. At the heart of Marx's critical theory is the claim that the bourgeois notion of the economy is a thoroughly fetishized one. Bourgeois thought depicts the economy as a collection of things — land, factories, banks, buildings, stocks, bonds and so — which are owned and utilized by private individuals. But this picture, Marx demonstrates, obscures the fact that all these things are really just alienated forms in which labor and its products adhere to those who own the means of producing wealth. Labor is in fact the basis of all these forms of property; it is labor that gives birth to capital, not vice versa: "*Private property* is, therefore, the product, the necessary result, of *alienated labour*."[9] Rather than a space in which private individuals attend to the things they own, the economy is the space of human life-activity, of social labor and production. And in opposition to a social order in which one class buys human life-activity (labor-power), accumulates wealth through its products, and comes to exercise growing powers over labor, Marxian socialism seeks the dis-alienation of economic life, the decommodification of human labor-power, and the establishment of workers' control over labor and the disposition of its products.

The Marxist concept of democracy is thus richer, more extensive and more radical than anything available in liberal theory or practice. It pivots on the notion that people need to reclaim control over this whole alienated sphere of relations and transactions known as the economy (or euphemistically as "the market") under capitalism. It proposes to break down the separation between politics and economics by *democratizing* economic life. In the words of Rosa Luxemburg, "The essence of socialist society consists in the fact that the great laboring mass ceases to be a dominated mass, but, rather, makes the entire economic

and political life its own life, and gives that life a conscious, free and autonomous direction."[10] In this spirit, Marxian socialism seeks structures through which decisions about the investment of social resources and the allocation of labor, goods and services can be subjected to popular democratic control. And socialist theorists have no need to invent such structures in their imaginations since the working class movement provides us with crucial guidelines in this regard. Major episodes in working class history — from the Russian *soviets* of 1905 and 1917 to the Central Budapest workers' council of 1956 or the *cordones* in Chile in the early 1970s — suggest that grassroots councils in the workplaces and the neighborhoods are central to all mass struggles for workers' democracy. Socialist planning would simply build upon such structures of popular democracy at work and in the community, utilizing the principle of democratic (and revocable) delegation established in the Paris Commune of 1871.

It is with these considerations that I think Morrison's model is not radical enough when it comes to the question of democracy. By leaving significant social processes to regulation by the market, he fails to appreciate fully the need to extend democracy into spheres from which it is excluded in capitalist society. Reliance on the market as a regulator (which will generate layoffs and unemployment, for instance), hives off whole areas of social life from democratic regulation. And that is to seriously weaken the whole project of socialist democracy.

Perspectives for Social Struggle

TO HIS CREDIT, MORRISON SEEKS ELEMENTS OF AN "ORGANIZING PROGRAM" in his social market model. He hopes that its principles might usefully inform actual popular struggles. But, as I have already suggested, my concern is that the program that follows is not as radical or as critical as it ought to be.

Much of the terrain of actual social struggle today pits popular democracy against market imperatives. Whether it is a question of struggles against plant closures; against government cuts that close schools, clinics or hospitals; against practices of deregulation that impose user fees, or raise university tuition; or anti-poverty campaigns that seek funds to house the homeless — all of these struggles and more involve large groups of people asserting their needs against the ostensible dictates of the market. In so doing, people in struggle are advancing the needs of human communities against the "rationality" of the market. Yet, to successfully carry through such battles, popular movements need a critique of the market; they need a political outlook which enables them to see through the smoke-screen of market rhetoric and ideology (with its discourse of efficiency, competitiveness, and so on) that is turned against them. Without this, popular movements can often be confused, diverted, divided. Moreover, if such movements are to do more than resist the latest attacks by capital, if they are to pass over to the struggle for a new form of society, they need a vision that looks beyond the market as the regulator of economic life. For all these reasons, as Bertell Ollman puts it, "a frontal, no-holds barred attack on the market and its ills . . . is an absolutely indispensable means of developing socialist consciousness."[11]

It is with these concerns in mind, and not as an exercise in academic nit-picking, that I have subjected Morrison's robust social market model to close scrutiny. Morrison is to be applauded for trying to think through a progressive

model that combines cooperative ownership, workers' self-management, and democracy with an ecological social order. But, in giving market regulation a central role in his model, he has, in my judgment, undermined these objectives. Market regulation imposes the logic of social alienation on its participants. It reifies human relations and subjects them to the violence of things. It sets in motion dynamics which breed unemployment and inequality. In short, market regulation is antithetical to all genuinely socialist commitments. People on the Left looking for alternatives to the disasters of the Stalinist experience need to turn to a radical and uncompromising insistence on socialist democracy, not the market, if we hope to renew socialism.

NOTES

1. See Bertell Ollman, ed., *Market Socialism: The Debate Among Socialists* (New York: Routledge, 1998). I have recently reviewed this volume in the *American Political Science Review*.

2. There are potential problems here, however, not the least of which concerns the interrelationships among cooperative enterprises and the degree to which these are regulated by the market.

3. This is a highly compressed summary of a much longer argument. For the full version see my book *Against the Market: Political Economy, Market Socialism and the Marxist Critique* (London: Verso, 1993).

4. Morrison's preference for social prices that are closer to true costs (including so-called "externalities") does not negate this determining role of market forces.

5. Morrison does talk about the need for a social wage, but this is referred to merely in passing. Certainly it appears that this takes the form of the sort of social wage packages characteristic of capitalist welfare states (albeit an expanded one) — and not the form of guaranteed social subsistence that de-commodifies labor-power. On this last point see my *Against the Market*, Ch. 6.

6. "The Putney Debates" in *Divine Right and Democracy: An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England*, ed. David Wooton (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986), p. 296.

7. In Britain, it was only after the defeat of Chartism that workers' movements tended to dissociate the struggle for democracy from a struggle against the existing property arrangements.

8. Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 44, emphasis in original.

9. Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 131.

10. Rosa Luxemburg, "What Does the Spartacus League Want?" in *Selected Political Writings*, ed. Dick Howard (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), p. 368.

11. Bertell Ollman, "Market Mystification in Capitalist and Market Socialist Societies" in *Market Socialism: The Debate Among Socialists*, p. 112.

Symposium

U.S. Labor from Gompers to Sweeney

In the introductory remarks to his comprehensive study of the bureaucratization of the mainstream of organized labor, *Taking Care of Business*, Paul Buhle writes: "This book is about history, but inevitably it poses a contemporary question: which way will organized labor go now in the era of the global economy, with its back evidently against the wall? Will it return to the familiar pattern of business unionism, adjusted in small ways? Or will it move toward a new social unionism, joined to other sectors of society, the dispossessed and those eager to see life change?"

How Paul Buhle answers these questions, what he finds instructive in the lessons of history for building a dynamic trade union movement, is the subject for the symposium below.

Special thanks to editor Michael Hirsch who was in charge of organizing the symposium.

Changing the Guard at Top Not the Key to Labor's Revival

Stanley Aronowitz

IN *TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS*, PAUL BUHLE FILLS A HUGE GAP in our grasp of the role of the three key leaders in the history of the AFL. Buhle's focus is chiefly on the relationship between three of the four AFL presidents, Samuel Gompers, George Meany and Lane Kirkland, and the American state and its two principal political parties. The point of his analysis is that the dominant brand of American labor's practice, business unionism, relies as much on the patronage of the political directorate as on collective bargaining and the grievance and arbitration procedures.

What emerges from Buhle's portraits is a key ingredient in the age-old puzzle of why unions have remained what C.Wright Mills once termed a "dependent variable" in the political economy. Buhle emphasizes the subordination of

STANLEY ARONOWITZ *is a professor of sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center. Among his recent books is* From the Ashes of the Old: American Labor and America's Future (*Houghton Mifflin) 1998.*

the leading labor federation and its affiliates to U.S. foreign policy and, since the early twentieth century, to the Democratic party. He argues that the party's pro-labor sentiments were always modified by its own conservative proclivities, by the centralist pull of the corporate capitalist-dominated political climate and, of course, by the periodic right-wing attacks on the labor movement.

As Buhle makes clear anti-radicalism was a strong motivation for the leadership's alliance with the Democrats, especially at the turn of the century when Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists proposed a substantially different course for the labor movement than that of Gompers and his craft-union associates, and had a powerful presence both in and out of the AFL. Indeed Gompers was defeated by a left-led coalition in 1893 but regained office in the next election. Still, in 1908, a Socialist candidate mounted a serious but losing challenge to his leadership on a platform directed not so much to the narrow craft union approach as to the Federation's implicit support of capitalism and the capitalist parties. In the first decade of the century Gompers adamantly refused to organize the millions of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in industrial unions, prompting leading socialist and labor mavericks to form a revolutionary industrial union, the IWW, which among other virtues declared the principle of inclusion, especially of blacks and Asians who the AFL had all but openly spurned. While the bulk of socialists and syndicalists remained in the AFL because they opposed dual unionism, in two decades of labor insurgency between 1890-1910, including the appearance of mass industrial unions, Gompers succeeded but was hard-pressed to retain his dominance of American labor.

The Gompers chapter is admirable in its sweep. Not only does Buhle cover the chronological ground but he carefully deliniates Gompers's key role in the making of business unionism. In contrast to the Knights of Labor, whose conservatism was partially redeemed by its inclusiveness and its commitment to grassroots democracy, and to the radicalism of the Socialist-led unions and the revolutionary unionism of the IWW, Gompers haughtily disdained any program that went beyond the immediate interests of the most skilled workers and insisted that unionism meant little else but the quest for a better life within the existing social system. Far from images inherited from prior accounts, Buhle shows how, in his quest for a secure birth within rampant capitalism, Gompers curried favor not only with the large corporations but also with the Wilson administration whose war aims Gompers fervently supported. If organized labor got some benefits from its pro-war stand, notably the rapid unionization of the meatpacking industry, the price was the abandonment of the Federation's electoral nonpartisanship, which by 1917 was, in any case, merely a remnant. Buhle demonstrates how, more egregiously, Gompers virtually sanctioned Wilson's anti-radical repression, which spilled over from its wartime imprisonment of Debs and others who opposed U.S. intervention to the early post-war period into the explosive 1919-1920 period of mass strikes and the bolshevization of the left-wing of the Socialist Party.

Buhle's third subject, Lane Kirkland, emerges as a labor leader of a new type, one who is bred within the intersecting bureaucracies of the trade unions, government and corporations. As Meany's hand-picked successor, he assumed the Federation presidency in 1979, and owed his rise almost entirely to the patronage of his boss. Kirkland was among the first of a growing layer of union leaders whose careers are forged primarily in Beltway politics or in the staff

bureaucracy more than on the shop floor and the picket line. Buhle chronicles Kirkland's utter inexperience as a trade unionist and reveals him to be, primarily, an operative of the agencies responsible for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy, not a representative of union members — let alone the American working class as a whole. In Millsian fashion, Buhle traces Kirkland's personal as well as political ties to large corporate and government officials. In fact the cumulative effect of his account of Kirkland's frequent attendance at parties and other gatherings of the foreign policy elite leads to the conclusion that Kirkland spent more time in the ruling circles pursuing America's cold war interests than with other union officials, least of all attending the economic and social problems of union members.

Of the three portraits, the Meany chapters constitute an original and absorbing monograph on the shaping of the post-World War II trade union movement. Meany is shown to be the architect of organized labor's public and political life for most of the post-war era. He developed the policy of the tri-partite alliance of the unions, government and corporations, originally instituted by Gompers during World War I in behalf American international interests. In the service of the national state, under his guidance the AFL-CIO rarely if ever took issue with the president and the executive branch, and frequently sacrificed its own agenda for strengthening the welfare state when he perceived it was in conflict with America's global interests. Since the "post-war" era was marked by a plethora of United States military engagements there were many occasions to declare that the interests of national unity overrode labor's parochial interests. As a result, Labor's agenda — the repeal of Taft-Hartley, more public housing, an adequate social security system including national health care insurance, and a liveable minimum wage — was often sacrificed on the altar of patriotism.

MEANY EMERGES IN BUHLE'S ACCOUNT AS A SUPERB, AUTOCRATIC LABOR POLITICIAN whose career was forged in the schismatic environment of New York's labor movement during the second of the two great periods of its growth, 1930-45. As state AFL president during the CIO's meteoric rise in the late 1930s, with the key role played by radicals, especially the Communists, Meany made himself a bulwark of AFL orthodoxy claiming that the industrial unionism of the CIO was little more than a Communist conspiracy.

Buhle insists that Meany is not identical to the gruff public stereotype of the traditional conservative labor leader, but was a shrewd and nimble trade union politician. Attentive to the winds of ideology and social change within his generally conservative framework, he could go left as well as right in his quest for power. He was as capable of railing against large corporate power as he was of capitulating to it when the chips were down. During the New Deal he could invoke the threat of a labor party to advance the interests of craft unions and was much more independent of the Roosevelt Administration than his presumably more radical CIO counterparts who, for the most part, were glued to the Administration.

Meany was elected AFL secretary-treasurer in 1939 and in 1952 succeeded William Green who had, in effect, surrendered the reins of power several years earlier. No sooner had he taken office than he began to court Walter Reuther and other leaders of an exhausted and severely compromised CIO — compromised among other things by its surrender to the Taft-Hartley amendments to the

National Labor Relations Act, by its relentless purge of the CP-controlled unions and by the no-raiding agreement with AFL unions negotiated in 1953. Rhetoric aside, most CIO affiliates had drifted closer to business unionism and were barely distinguishable politically from most AFL unions. In fact, despite the CIO's public support for the NAACP and civil rights in the South, on the crucial issue of equality at the workplace the two federations were embarrassingly lacking in commitment. While, in comparison to Gompers and Green, Meany expressed public approval of the struggle for civil rights, he was, as an old building trades official, as ambivalent about racial equality as he was about fighting corruption among some of the affiliates, according to Buhle.

As AFL-CIO president, Meany fostered increased centralization. He maintained tight control over affiliates on issues of domestic as well as foreign policy. He also strengthened its alliance with the State Department and the CIA, throwing considerable resources into Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America in an effort to thwart left-led guerilla and trade union movements. With only a few — and then only partial — exceptions, the former CIO unions were only too pleased to join.

While I was on the staff of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), I remember $300,000 given by the CIA to the Kenyan Oil Workers' leader Tom Mboye through the International Federation of Oil and Chemical Workers to buy the largest daily newspaper in Nairobi. The generous gift caused the union's president, O.A. Knight, the OCAW and IFCW president to retire when members of the American union's rank and file international executive board learned of the deal. Similar activities were conducted by many other unions such as the UAW, Communications Workers, and the ILGWU.

DURING MEANY'S TENURE, THE AFL-CIO WAS A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY PLAYER in the practical as well as the ideological realm. Buhle tells the story of how Garment Workers president David Dubinsky introduced the union's master spy, deposed Communist Party General Secretary Jay Lovestone, to Meany who eventually hired him to head the AFL-CIO's Labor's League for Human Rights, the Federation's espionage and anti-communist international agency. Lovestone's operations were considered indispensible to the anti-radical and anti-communist efforts of the United States government in the pursuit of Cold War aims. Institutions such as the American Institute for Free Labor Development were instrumental in recruiting and training Central and Latin American trade unions for counter-insurgency among peasants and urban workers and played an important role during the war in Vietnam.

Unlike some on the left, Buhle has no scales on his eyes when it comes to Walter Reuther. He remarks that Reuther "ruthlessly crushed all internal opposition" within the UAW, accuses him of accommodating to the auto companies on shop-floor conditions and of being as deeply ambivalent on the race question as was Meany, whose hostility to the 1960s civil rights movement's use of tactics such as civil disobedience was as apparent as it was scandalous.

Nonetheless, Reuther's battle to force the AFL-CIO to play a more aggressive role on domestic issues and to reverse its full-throated backing of the Vietnam war led to the UAW's withdrawal from the Federation. It was Reuther's finest hour since a quarter century earlier when he called for a partial breach of the no-strike pledge during World War II. Unfortunately, as Buhle points out,

Reuther was only half-hearted in his resolve to build a new labor movement. Having purged many labor militants and built a powerful top-down machine in the UAW, he was obliged to seek reform from above. For Reuther, as for Meany, the membership remained clients of a leadership that acted, alternately, as exemplars of tough love disciplinarians and as service providers. Of such roles social movements are not made.

IN HIS ACCOUNT OF THE 1995 CHALLENGE TO KIRKLAND BY JOHN SWEENEY and his allies Buhle at first keeps his perspective. As president of the large Service Employees union Sweeney presided over a doubling of its members to more than a million. But, Buhle points out, most of these gains were the result of mergers rather than new organizing activities. Sweeney was prone to the dubious practice of "double dipping" — collecting more than one salary — (Buhle terms this a "common though misguided practice") and he was as harsh on his internal opponents as any other international union president. Sweeney's announcement that he would oppose Kirkland forced the faithful Meany supplicant to retire and, with the help of the State, County and Municipal Employees, the new administration of the Teamsters, the UAW, Steelworkers and Machinists defeated AFL-CIO secretary treasurer Tom Donahue who was sponsored and surrounded by hard-bitten anti-radicals such as Al Shanker and Morty Barr of the Communications Workers, two the leading foreign policy wonks of the Federation.

In fact, perhaps Sweeney's most dramatic departure from the policies of his predecessor was the new turn in international relations. Although under pressure from labor progressives Kirkland had challenged NAFTA in 1993, the International Department remained in the thrall of the American corporate interests abroad. Shortly after assuming the presidency, without renouncing the 50 years of faithful service to the CIA and other U.S. foreign policy agencies, Sweeney revamped the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department to make it less an instrument of American foreign policy and more an arm of American labor's interests on such matters as sweatshops, international child labor and trade policy. At this writing, Sweeney has declared that the Federation would not support the Free Trade agreement of the World Trade Unionization unless workers rights were strictly observed and enforced throughout the globe.

Buhle praises the new AFL-CIO leader for putting new energy into organizing, especially the founding of an Organizing Institute to bring thousands of young organizers into the task of rebuilding labor's depleted ranks, and encouraging local and regional initiatives in the same direction. While Buhle recognizes that only a new horizontal unionism based on rank and file insurgencies can reinvigorate the labor movement, that is, a movement based on communication among rank and file and local leaders across occupations and industries, the new AFL-CIO leadership gets off pretty easy. Buhle notes that the new leadership is consistent with the long tradition of labor's political dependence but does not explore, in any detail, the consequences of the continuity of labor's ties to the Democratic party in a period when the DP has adopted openly center-right programs and policies. Not the least of these are the relatively minor reforms in the administration of the National Labor Relations Act and the foot-dragging by the Administration on health care, minimum wage, and its openly reactionary free trade policy.

Nor does he pay enough attention to the persistence of the Federation's

benign attitude toward corruption among some of its affiliates. Noting the DC 37 scandal of gross misappropriation of union members' dues and of brazen ballot stuffing to retain power (p.250) and the autocratic practices of many unions, including many in the so-called "progressive" camp, Buhle hesitates to draw the conclusion that the promise of the 1995 election remains largely unfulfilled — and perhaps can't be fulfilled as long as the unions are more a series of insurance companies and collaborationist institutions than a movement of solidarity and change. Despite the richness of Buhle's narratives, the book suffers from a certain lack of appreciation of *difference*, in the first place between what goes on at the top and what goes on in the international unions and at the local level.

Having said this, *Taking Care of Business* remains a major object lesson for those who cling to the illusion that changing the guard at the top is the key to rebuilding labor's waning strength.

Endorsing the Lean Machine

Jane Slaughter

PAUL BUHLE'S APTLY NAMED *Taking Care of Business* approaches the question of American business unionism from two angles: the AFL-CIO's relationship to race and to empire. He achieves this with a wealth of detail and clear politics, which I presume other contributors to this symposium will debate. I'll spend my time, instead, on two important facets of the union bureaucracy's politics that Buhle leaves to one side.

Monthly Review Press's jacket calls *Taking Care of Business* "the first comprehensive history of American labor leadership"; to fulfill that claim, Buhle's focus would have to be broader. Most of his discussion deals with the top leaders of the AFL or the AFL-CIO, but union members experience the phenomenon of bureaucratic and business unionism much more through their own unions than through the Federation. This is because, most importantly, the AFL-CIO itself does not bargain contracts with employers. When companies began demanding givebacks and installing labor-management cooperation programs in the 1980s, Lane Kirkland was not officially in charge of deciding whether the labor movement would accede or would organize members to resist (although one would think the presumed leader of the working class could have given a lead on the question).

Almost to a man (the word is used advisedly), international union leaders did go along with concessions on wages and working conditions, agreeing to them in national contracts, pressuring locals to sign agreements, or providing no support when locals wanted to resist. Again with almost no dissenters at the top levels, they signed on to labor-management cooperation programs such as "team

JANE SLAUGHTER *writes on union issues for* Labor Notes *and other publications.*

concept" and "Quality of Work Life" that, after an initial burst of enthusiasm, invariably left rank-and-filers disgusted and cynical about the next "flavor of the month." Buhle doesn't address this central fact of unionism in the 1980s and 1990s, because by and large AFL-CIO leaders didn't. The AFL-CIO made no detailed statement on labor-management cooperation until 1994, long after the damage had been done (at which time the Executive Council endorsed such programs).

The second way that union members experience the workings of their Internationals is the response they get when they try to make changes beyond the level of the local union. It is here that they often run into career officials with a staff paid to contain dissent through cooptation or threats. A single example: at the United Auto Workers convention in 1992, a reform caucus called New Directions had put up a presidential candidate, Jerry Tucker. It was clear that Tucker would receive only a small percentage of the delegates' votes (five, it turned out), yet President Owen Bieber found the challenge so insulting that he instructed International Representatives to work the floor to intimidate voters. One delegate from a GM parts plant in Wisconsin was surrounded by these staffers. She had intended to vote for Tucker, but the reps warned that GM might decide to close her plant. Could she live with ruining her members' lives? You may scoff, correctly, at the notion that GM would base its investment decisions on the symbolic action of one union delegate far off in San Diego. But the reps delivered the vote for the man they referred to as their "boss."

This determination to hold on to power in the face of rank and file challenges has been a central facet of the bureaucracy since Gompers's day. Although Buhle makes it clear that he is for "anti-bureaucratic unrest [and] Wobbly manners," the question of democracy within the unions is outside his task. He touches on authoritarianism within the AFL-CIO itself when he mentions Kirkland's attempts to keep city-level central labor councils in line on El Salvador and Nicaragua during the 1980s — no solidarity with the "wrong" unions in Central America was allowed. And this reader was struck by how faithfully the various bureaucratic maneuvers are repeated over and over from the earliest years. For example, in the 1970s and 1980s reform movements in the UAW campaigned for the right to a direct membership vote for top officers. The ruling Administration Caucus argued against on the grounds that white members would not vote for blacks. Buhle reports that John L. Lewis used this argument in 1919.

SINCE HIS ELECTION IN 1995, JOHN SWEENEY HAS BROKEN WITH THE TRADITION that the head of the AFL-CIO should not lead the labor movement except in foreign affairs. While campaigning, his New Voice Team promised to orient the Federation toward just two priorities — organizing the unorganized and electoral politics — and he has done so. He has used moral suasion, financial incentives, and bureaucratic restructuring to convince union leaders to hire more organizers and to follow his lead on electoral work. The 1999 AFL-CIO Convention's decision to endorse Albert Gore more than a year before the 2000 election is one example of Sweeney's success at persuasion.

With Sweeney's two priorities in mind, we can examine how the AFL-CIO and its constituent unions are handling relations with employers. Here, it's helpful to return to Buhle, whose bottom line is that union leaders go wrong when they embrace capitalism, as Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland zealously did.

Once they accept the right of capital to exploit labor, the game is set. In contrast, Buhle points to the Knights of Labor and the Wobblies, who "rebutted the claim of capital and government to set the standards for civilization."

At first glance, Sweeney's version of the embrace appears ambivalent. He is clearly willing to wage a fight against employers in order to organize the unorganized. When he was president of the Service Employees (SEIU), that union's Justice for Janitors campaigns often involved mass mobilization of potential members, even civil disobedience. (SEIU is just as happy to win recognition through legislation or by convincing the employer to voluntarily accept the union, as with the recent organizing of 74,000 home nursing aides in Los Angeles.) Once the union is legally recognized, however, Sweeney's and other top leaders' notion of the proper labor-management relationship changes. In an October 1999 interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, Sweeney spelled it out: "We're going to be as militant as is necessary to represent workers, but at the same time we're going to be looking for opportunities to cooperate in labor-management partnerships."

In 1998, for example, Sweeney pursued a formal "dialogue" between corporate executives and union officials, with himself and Jack Welch of General Electric proposed as co-chairs. "Neutron Jack" presides over a company that in 1998 alone made five major plant closings or transfers of work to non-union or Mexican plants, and from 1991 to 1998 shrunk the union share of its U.S. employment from 39 to 25 percent. But Ed Fire, president of GE's largest union, the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE), cited reasons for Sweeney's and Welch's "mutual respect": "Let's face it: GE made $8.2 billion a year profit. He's got to be doing something right." When he was newly elected, Sweeney appeared before many conclaves of concerned business executives, calling for a "social compact." The argument ran: corporate leaders should realize that recognizing unions is actually in their interest. Partnership with a union, along with a high-wage, high-performance workplace — in short, "the high road" — will yield greater productivity, quality, and therefore profits — a win-win situation. This philosophy in effect rewrites labor's anthem, "Solidarity Forever." Instead of "There is naught we have in common with the greedy parasite," the new song becomes, "There's a lot we have in common..."

In 1996, Sweeney told members of Business for Social Responsibility, "We want to help American business compete in the world and create new wealth for your shareholders and your employees. We want to work with you to bake a larger pie which all Americans can share, and not just argue with you about how to divide the existing pie." With this scenario, there's no need to take from the shareholders to benefit workers.

The problem is that employers are not choosing the low road — downsizing, using low-wage labor, busting unions — because they are short-sighted or mismanagers. They do so because the market rewards low-road companies. It's no accident that Wall Street sends stock prices soaring when a company announces layoffs — fewer workers doing more work. Employers see no point in experimenting with the high-morale strategy when they can gain good results with intimidation, overwork, and insecurity.

An example of a company that follows Sweeney's version of the high road, and thus receives his blessing, is Kaiser Permanente, the huge health maintenance organization. Kaiser might appear to most people to be thoroughly low-road. The HMO has closed hospitals and departments, contracted out care, cut

professional staff, and shifted work to non-licensed employees. A federal investigation cited severe deficiencies in Kaiser hospitals in low-income areas; one Kaiser union accused the company of "medical redlining." Despite this anti-worker and anti-patient record, the AFL-CIO announced a partnership with Kaiser in 1997, negotiated by Sweeney himself. The Federation would market Kaiser to unionists, and the company would give workers "input" on quality issues and — the key clause — remain neutral in organizing drives. The parties said their aim was to show that "labor-management collaboration produces...market leading competitive performance." It was the first time the Federation had agreed to promote the interests of a specific business on a national basis.

As part of their obligation to promote Kaiser, the unions agreed not to take actions that might damage the company's reputation, such as public opposition to closings or service cuts. Kaiser unionists who had campaigned and struck against cutbacks said the agreement would undermine both the quality of patient care and their ability to fight job loss. It seemed clear that the real prize here was the prospect of tens of thousands of new union members, won without resistance from management.

A remarkable July 1999 document from the Service Employees, titled "The High Road," carries the idea of non-confrontation into organizing campaigns. SEIU polled hospital workers and found, incredibly, that "most do not have negative feelings toward management." Advising staff organizers to avoid "stridency," the union warns: "*Don't* use words that conjure up images of conflict and struggle, such as power, strength, demand, fight, take on, stand up to, struggle, solidarity, beat, defeat, blame, fault, the 'boss,' union-busting." Do "reassure workers that the conflict ends when the campaign ends."

Let's just say, for a moment, that the SEIU is tactically correct, and that more hospital workers will vote yes with such a bowdlerized campaign. How can they win a decent contract, or build on-the-job organization, if their leaders try to deny them even the words with which to think about solidarity? (In fairness, "The High Road" also contains some sound organizing advice, although it assumes throughout that the brains and strategizing for the campaign come from professional organizers outside the workforce.)

Many observers see the labor movement's new emphasis on organizing as purely positive. They should consider whether unionizing by any means necessary actually advances class struggle. In Detroit, for example, when a new casino came to town, management, seeking to avoid further bad publicity, agreed not to oppose an organizing drive. Four unions negotiated at the international level on how to divide up the casino workforce. "Organizers" approached new-hires outside the workplace to sign cards for the "Detroit Casino Council." Signers did not even know which of the four unions they would belong to. Yes, it's better for these workers to be union members than not, and perhaps they will have the chance to build strong locals in the future (though most were dumped into existing locals). But it's hard to regard them as "organized" yet, in any sense that's meaningful. Dues-payers, of course, they are. Writing in the October 1999 issue of *Labor Notes*, Hetty Rosenstein, vice-president of a public workers local, says that she is "uncomfortable about what I hear from some new national leaders within the labor movement." She argues for a "mobilized and supportive worksite" where stewards, pickets, family members, signs and buttons are brought to press griev-

ances, which are "microcosms of the labor-management struggle where we contest for power over our working conditions." Sadly, she reports that her friends and colleagues in many unions "are getting less support and resources from their national unions just at the point they expected to be getting more encouragement and support." The reason? The all-out emphasis on organizing new members, at the expense of attention to current ones. "If doing something that really works and builds real power isn't as important as organizing," says Rosenstein, "it is only less so by a matter of degree."

I would argue that it is as important, and that the reason the new AFL-CIO is not interested in on-the-job militancy is not simply because of a temporary decision to prioritize recruitment instead. Leaders' acceptance of capital's right to rule — which Buhle posits as the first falling domino leading to all their other policies — causes them to ignore or to acquiesce in management's sweeping changes in the way work is organized. Sometimes with the way eased through participation programs, sometimes by management fiat, workers have been subjected to reengineering, speedup, de-skilling (often called "multiskilling"), quality circles to filch their job knowledge, rigid standardization, increased contracting out, use of part-timers and temporaries, long and non-standard hours, computer monitoring, teams, just-in-time schedules — in other words, what many call "the lean workplace." Jobs are more regimented, more stressful, with longer hours, than most workers can remember. Yet combatting the new workplace regime does not appear on Sweeney's to-do list, nor on the lists of union presidents.

In fact, Sweeney endorses the lean regime. He gave the *Los Angeles Times* "U.S. Steel" (which changed its name to USX in the 1980s) as an example of a high-road employer, citing a plant "operating with probably half the work force of 10 years ago." But USX was deemed "high-road" because the company had "invested in" the remaining workers, training them to use computerized equipment or to take other jobs when they were "attrited out."

This lack of understanding of members' life on the job is not new. Top labor leaders have always been more concerned with matters that can be easily measured — number of cents per hour raise, number of jobs, number of members. What their members actually do for eight — or ten or twelve — hours per day does not percolate up very well. Yet the workplace is seeing more change today than at any time since mass production began, and the new AFL-CIO's neglect of or applause for this transformation undermines the Federation's recruitment message.

WORKERS ARE NOT IGNORING LEAN PRODUCTION; resistance to its dictates has been behind some of the notable labor struggles of the nineties: the A.E. Staley workers' revolt against the twelve-hour day; a dozen local strikes at General Motors demanding more bodies on the line, to relieve the speedup; the strike for full-time jobs to replace part-time ones at UPS. With its gently-worded organizing campaign "Voice @ Work" the AFL-CIO won't discover how much anger about insecure and stressful jobs is waiting to be tapped.

The hang-up is that for unions to challenge the dictates of lean production would mean challenging the methods that are wringing more profits out of the workforce. And, given the assumption that unions should make the pie bigger rather than win workers a larger slice, higher profits are the only means that

labor leaders can imagine to win Sweeney's other slogan, "America Needs a Raise."

The two stated priorities of the AFL-CIO sum up clearly leaders' perspective on how unions are to increase their power in society: they must increase their numbers, through organizing, and they must elect friendly politicians. But large numbers do not translate automatically into power vis-a-vis the boss; muscle must be flexed in some way. Sweeney's record shows that his plan is not for now-larger unions to challenge employers directly. Unions are to collaborate, as at Kaiser, not confront. How, then, is a larger labor movement to transform itself into a powerful one?

Sweeney's answer is that larger unions will be better able to get out the vote. At the 1997 AFL-CIO convention, Sweeney announced that the Federation would seek to register 4 million members of union households by the year 2000. Jawboning the affiliates for Gore, Sweeney argued that early endorsement would allow the labor movement to help shape the Democratic Party's campaign message. By showing the politicians that labor can put them in office or unelect them, the thinking goes, labor will convince the Democrats to tilt in a pro-labor direction. Pro-labor legislation will then level the playing field in union drives, so that even more new members can be organized.

Thus Sweeney's two-point program hangs together: Workers are to organize, but not to confront the employers on the picket line or in the workplace. They are to become union members so that officers can more readily convince them to vote Democratic, or even better, to go out and work for the Democrats. This is the AFL-CIO strategy for worker power. Of course, with Democrats pushing the WTO, gutting welfare, and seeking to privatize Social Security, Sweeney's boast that his phone banks are turning out a larger percentage of the union-member vote becomes hollow.

Buhle argues that the need for strong class politics is as great as ever. He is not optimistic that the New Voice team will mobilize workers to challenge capital's prerogatives. He notes that the 1995 upset was initiated at the top and writes, "It remained to be seen...how leadership could rebuild the labor movement without tapping vast unreleased energies and hidden talents from below." *Taking Care of Business* makes crystal clear the consequences of a monopoly of power from above.

Rupture or Continuity?

by Peter Rachleff

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS OFFERS THE BEST SINGLE BOOK TREATMENT of the history of the U.S. labor movement yet written. Where most labor historians have counterposed the social and cultural history of working people to the institutional history of trade unions, Paul Buhle interweaves them in order to elucidate the very *direction* of the development of the labor movement. His framework is driven by his sense of purpose — to understand *why* the U.S. labor movement has historically generated and been dominated by conservative leadership. At the center of his argument lies the ever-evolving but ever-present relationship between the institutional labor movement and business within the context of international economic expansion. "America's historic labor bureaucracy is, then, finally and without doubt connected to the creation of empire," he writes in his introduction. "Overlaid with an array of other factors including the character of racial and ethnic hierarchies, the changing rules of industrial production, and, to no small degree, the compelling need of leaderships to put down or co-opt challenges to their authority, the steady commitment to imperial aims has demanded an 'iron triangle' amounting to rules and practices *against* functioning labor democracy, as well as ferociously anti-socialist and pseudo-egalitarian rhetoric." (p.15)

Buhle uses this framework to organize the stories of not only the Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland leadership cadres, but also to explain the limitations of the internal alternatives represented by John L. Lewis in the 1930s and Walter Reuther in the 1950s and 1960s and the inability of external alternatives like the Knights of Labor in the 1880s, the Socialist Labor Party in the 1890s, and the Industrial Workers of the World in the early 1900s to supplant the hegemonic forces within the labor movement. The result is a clear and compelling argument, richly documented, moving back and forth between the rank-and-file base and the leadership hierarchy. This is *useful* history, written not only to encourage the labor movement to understand its own history, but to be more effective in the present and the future.

Buhle stops short, however, of employing the very framework of his own creation to the new leadership cadre around John Sweeney, the "New Voice" team that assumed direction of the AFL-CIO in 1995. He enthuses that "the tottering of business unionism's hierarchy in 1995 was one of the most remarkable developments in all of U.S. labor history. It reversed, at least symbolically, the triumphal return of the Gompers machine from its temporary defeat just over a century earlier." (p.204) Rather than subject the Sweeney cadre to the sort of systematic analysis that he accorded the Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland

PETER RACHLEFF *teaches labor history at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and is active in a variety of projects and grassroots organizations in the labor movement.*

groups, he raises some concerns about the top down character of the palace revolution that brought them to power and he scours the grassroots for other signs of "renewal." At heart he argues that this new leadership represents a *break* with the past. I wish that this were so, but my reading of recent events and my experience of the labor movement under the "new" leadership suggests far more *continuity* with the sordid history — the "tragedy" — of the past century that Buhle presents and analyzes so well.

I want to devote my contribution to this symposium to raising questions about how we might understand the place of the Sweeney leadership within the history of the AFL-CIO. Two recent events, both of which have occurred since the publication of *Taking Care of Business*, have probably pained Buhle as much as other progressive labor historians and labor activists. They certainly offer readers additional perspective on Buhle's optimistic interpretation of Sweeney et al. I want to start with a brief mention of them as a way to set a tone, but then I want to turn to a more in-depth discussion of the relationship of the AFL-CIO to a Mexican railroad workers' strike in 1998 and its implications for our understanding of the nature of the Sweeney leadership.

When Lane Kirkland passed away in August 1999, his death was marked not merely with due respect from the Sweeney leadership but with rhetoric so troubling that observers can only wonder how the "New Voice" team understands their relationship to the history presented so critically by Buhle. Was it really necessary for Sweeney to characterize Kirkland as "a warrior for the cause of working families," a "master builder of the modern American labor movement," and "a man of courage who stood for the rights of working people around the globe"? Is this the same man that Buhle describes as "a child not of labor experiences but of inside-the-Beltway policy maneuvers," a man with "no actual, personal history of unionism" (p.205)? That Sweeney's Kirkland bears so little resemblance to Buhle's makes one wonder how much Sweeney's Sweeney compares to Buhle's Sweeney.

Similar concerns are prompted by the other event, which occurred just this past week (mid-October) when Sweeney and the AFL-CIO leadership engineered an early endorsement of Al Gore for the Democratic presidential nomination. That Sweeney claims that he can organize support for Gore and, at the same time, build an anti-WTO, anti-free trade rally in Seattle suggests that he is the greatest contortionist since Harry Houdini. The truth, sadly, suggests that Sweeney and the AFL-CIO leadership have no intention of building grassroots anti-free trade demonstrations. Local union activists in the Twin Cities are already reporting in mid-October that individual labor organizations and central bodies are scaling back their commitments to send numbers of activists to Seattle in late November. It would appear that Sweeney and the national labor leadership are blowing smoke about their willingness to build a movement against free trade, in part at least, because it might embarrass Al Gore and his political colleagues. *Taking Care of Business* is replete with similar stories from the annals of the AFL-CIO leadership. There is ample precedent for Sweeney's duplicity on this particular matter.

That this duplicity should come in matters of foreign affairs, in relationship to the expansion of U.S.-based businesses and at the expense of workers both in this country and around the world, should cause alarm for readers of *Taking Care of Business* since Buhle's central argument is that the insertion of the AFL-

CIO into the international agenda of U.S. business since World War II has been the most prominent factor in the incorporation of the labor leadership within corporate hegemony. The labor leadership's Gore/WTO stance indicates, then, not just any continuity with the AFL-CIO's history but continuity with a critical thread.

This brings me to the example that I most want to discuss, one even more troubling for those labor activists and historians who see Sweeney as representing a break with the past. These events did occur before the publication of *Taking Care of Business* but they receive no consideration in its pages. (For my account of these events, I am relying on articles published in *Labor Notes* and electronically in the internet newsletter, *Mexican Labor News* and on personal communications with people who participated in a trip to Mexico to meet with railroad workers or in union gatherings with them in the U.S. I want to be clear that the interpretation of these events and their significance is my own.)

On February 15, 1998, 3,200 railroad workers in Empalme, in the province of Sonora, launched a *paro* or work stoppage, paralyzing the Pacific North Line, which runs through seventeen states in western and northern Mexico. They were challenging the latest phase in the Mexican government's plan to privatize their state-owned railroad, FERRONALES. Almost a year earlier, the government had sold the Pacific North, a 6,521 kilometer route that services one of the country's major industrial areas — including key factories owned by Ford, General Motors, and General Electric — to a new private company called Mexican Railways, or FERROMEX, which includes the U.S.-based Union Pacific as a major investor. These moves on the economic chessboard reflect multiple items on the corporate agenda — the worldwide privatization of state-owned enterprises; the international expansion of U.S.-based businesses; the integration of transportation systems on a north-south basis so as to facilitate free trade and the outsourcing of manufacturing work to Mexico; increased U.S. access to Mexican markets and labor; the reduction of the social wage earned by workers and the job security and workrule protections that they have struggled for since World War II.

FERROMEX had already informed its workers that it would terminate their labor agreement and only rehire some of them. The workers had good reason to fear the consequences. In 1988, Mexico employed 100,000 railroad workers, but by 1996 that number had fallen to 43,000. In one well-known case, when a consortium including the Kansas City Southern Railroad, bought Mexico's Northeast Railway, it retained only 4,500 out of 8,700 workers, cut crew size from six workers to three, extended the maximum continuous service time from twelve hours to forty [yes, *forty*), and reduced the union contract from 3,045 clauses to 38. In the wake of the FERROMEX buyout of Pacific North, union sources reported instances of extortion — workers being told that they could retain their jobs in exchange for payoffs of five to ten thousand pesos ($625 to $1250) — and the signing of individual personal-service contracts. It was rumored that the new owners intended to rehire only 2,500 out of the railroad's 13,500 workers.

For nearly a year, local unions representing Pacific North workers had fruitlessly tried to negotiate the terms of the transition from state management to private ownership. They received no support from their national union, the Mexican Railroad Workers Union (STFRM), which has long been a creature of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the Mexican state. The state,

the PRI, and the STFRM have all supported the privatization process. The protections guaranteed workers by Mexican labor laws have been ignored with impunity, while the bottom has dropped out of real wages, benefits have been cut, and job security has been undermined.

Even before the sale of Pacific North, a group of rank-and-file workers and local union leaders had created the Committee to Defend the Collective Bargaining Agreement. At the Committee's head was Salvador Zarco, a skilled shopworker and veteran of the militant student movement of the late 1960s. Zarco had been imprisoned for his role in the 1968 student strike at the University of Mexico, and, when he was released in the early 1970s, had become a railroad shopworker in his native Empalme. His workplace and community roots proved valuable when he and other workers began to organize against the pending privatization of the Pacific North. They launched an aggressive movement, reaching into the community and beyond it. They organized public meetings and protests against the privatization process, and they established relationships with the Authentic Labor Front (FAT), an independent labor federation, the Jesuit Committee for Labor Reflection and Action (CEREAL), and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), which recently elected Cuahtemoc Cardenas mayor of Mexico City. They had also become part of a local community coalition in Empalme, the Broad Front of Social Organizations (FAOS). In November 1997, the Committee to Defend the Collective Bargaining Agreement and its allies organized a caravan of 2,000 workers; the group traveled throughout the northern and western states, discussing the privatization issue and distributing literature. These activities fostered popular understanding of the issues, but neither they nor the negotiations brought the Pacific North workers any protections.

In mid-February, the Empalme local voted to launch its work stoppage, which was illegal because it had not been called by the official national union or sanctioned by the national labor board. For three weeks, Empalme, the location of the line's repair shops, was the center of a popular movement that united railroad workers from a variety of crafts with telephone workers, miners, teachers, students, Yaqui Indians, community organizations, clergy, and even small-town mayors. The strikers and their supporters moved repair buggies onto the tracks in Empalme, threw switches, and set up a human blockade — a *planton* — on the main track. They also maintained a vigil at the shrine of Santo Judas Tadeo, the saint of miracles, along the main highway. So many participated in prayers at this site that truck traffic in the province was also blocked. All this activity was linked together by the *Marcha de la Cazuelas* — the march of the pots and pans — in which thousands of children marched through Empalme, banging on pots and pans, the "symbols of hunger and unemployment," according to the sixty-six-year-old widow who led them.

Strike leaders also held press conferences and organized demonstrations in Mexico City. They published a newsletter called *El Petardo* — The Firecracker — and distributed it nationally. When the national government responded by handing down felony indictments of the strike's rank-and-file leaders, the strike grew and spread. Other locals in Sonora stopped work, and the state legislature and the governor issued statements supporting the strikers. Workers in the states of Sinaloa and Jalisco held meetings and engaged in sit-ins, demonstrations, and other forms of protest. In Ciudad Juarez, workers met in "permanent assembly," announcing their intent to do so (i.e., to withhold their labor) until FERROMEX

promised to rehire all the Pacific North workers. In another community, machinists threatened to "fix" their machines so they wouldn't work unless all the strikers got their jobs back. In the national legislature, congressmen from the opposition parties demanded an investigation into the privatization of the railroads. Executives of U.S. multinationals urged the government to end the strike one way or another so they could get their shipments moving.

The Committee to Defend the Collective Bargaining Agreement also reached out to U.S. rail workers. Fearing government repression, they thought that intercession by the U.S. labor movement might bring them some protection. They invited U.S. rail unions and activists to bring a delegation to Empalme, and they explored the possibilities of a U.S. speaking tour by Salvador Zarco and other grassroots leaders. Given projects organized in the past decade by other U.S. unions, such as the United Autoworkers (whose St. Paul local has linked up with its counterpart at the Ford plant outside Mexico City), the United Electrical Workers (who have provided valuable support for the FAT, the Authentic Workers Federation and some of its local affiliates), and the Teamsters (who have supported efforts by Mexican Honeywell workers to unionize), and by trans-union organizations, such as the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras and the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition, this was not an unrealistic expectation. Some of these projects had even taken root during the Kirkland years, and there were many reasons (well-detailed by Buhle) to expect *even more* under Sweeney's leadership.

Indeed, the appeal from the Committee to Defend the Collective Bargaining Agreement was well-received in the U.S. Several rail unions and the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department assembled a team of delegates, including officials, staffers, and rank-and-file rail workers. They invited Dan LaBotz, a veteran activist and editor of the *Mexican Labor News*, to accompany them as interpreter. They flew to Mexico City, planning to go on to Empalme where they would meet with the strikers and their local leaders. Contacts began to be made across the U.S. for a tour by strike leaders which would follow the U.S. delegation's Mexican trip.

But the trip and its solidaristic goals began to come apart as soon as the delegation landed in Mexico City. There, they were met by none other than Jack Otero, the former director of AIFLD, the American Institute for Free Labor Development, a man who had been named as a CIA operative in James Agee's *Inside the Company*. Otero had been replaced as director of AIFLD by the Sweeney leadership, which had received much acclaim by progressives — including Buhle — for "dismantling" the structures through which the U.S. labor movement had interfered with grassroots union activism outside the U.S. and had funded, trained, and fostered anti-communist (and generally pro-U.S. corporate) union leadership. The new director of international affairs for the AFL-CIO, Barbara Shaillor, and her supporters in progressive organizations and the progressive media, claimed that the likes of Jack Otero had been consigned to the dustbin of history. Clearly, someone had neglected to tell Otero, who now described himself as an "independent contractor" working for the Transportation Trades Department and individual unions to "promote solidarity" with the Mexican labor movement! Otero warned the delegation that the strike leaders were communists who should be avoided and that international labor protocol required that they meet with the national STFRM leadership (who, I should remind readers, had opposed the strike and counselled rail workers to go along with the privatization

agenda). Otero also dismissed as propaganda the claims by local activists in Empalme that Victor Morales, the leader of STFRM, was reputed to have had his opponents murdered and disappeared.

Otero's intervention paralyzed the U.S. delegation. After much discussion they opted to visit both the national leadership in Mexico City and the strike leadership in Empalme. The national leadership did announce its official sanction for the strike, and the Mexican government held back from military intervention. FERROMEX offered the strikers some concessions in job security and agreed to sign a formal contract, although it continued to contain the original wage, benefit, and workrule changes. The rank-and-file membership voted to accept the compromise and the strike ended. The AFL-CIO offered to organize a "tour" of the U.S. which would pair Victor Morales and Salvador Zarco (!) and which would be restricted to Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. (there are few rail workers based in either city) and Chicago, where they would be taken to a baseball game. Despite requests from activists in the Twin Cities that Minneapolis-St. Paul (a major center for rail worker activism and U.S.-Mexican labor solidarity) be included on the tour, the AFL-CIO refused, expressing concern that activists here would intentionally "embarrass" STFRM President Morales. The tour never took place at all.

Months later, a regional gathering of the United Transportation Union in Houston invited Salvador Zarco to attend and address them. His speech brought the 500 delegates present to their feet time and again, and he spent several late nights sharing experiences with veteran rail labor activists. Unfortunately, this experience has not been repeated by other unions at other gatherings, or by the AFL-CIO or its Transportation Trades Department. The privatization of the Mexican railroads has continued, and Jack Otero continues to broker relationships between U.S. rail unions and their counterparts south of the border.

Where does this leave us? In *Taking Care of Business*, Buhle offers an insightful analysis of the development of the U.S. labor bureaucracy which explains their conservatism through their position, and the place of U.S. unions, within the project of expanding U.S. corporate interests around the globe. For most of the twentieth century, this strategy has brought higher wages and benefits and special privileges to the largely white male workers represented by those unions and their leaders. The shift in the global economy since the mid-1970s has pulled the rug out from under those relationships. Most U.S. workers have been losing ground for the past two decades, as have workers elsewhere in the world. Real wages have fallen and benefits have been reduced, while work hours, workloads, workplaces, and productivity have increased. Only global labor solidarity offers hope of positive change. Unfortunately, Buhle chose not to examine closely enough whether John Sweeney and the "New Voice" leadership are on a path to build that kind of solidarity. This is not just a question of "will" or "consciousness," as Buhle demonstrates so effectively in his analyses of earlier generations of labor bureaucrats. To respond to these questions requires systematic analysis of the place of the existing unions and the labor leadership within the hierarchy of the U.S. political economy, something that Buhle chose not to provide in *Taking Care of Business*. As a result, we *still* need more analysis, an analysis as rigorous and wide-ranging as Buhle's treatment of the Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland regimes. I hope that such analysis will emerge in this symposium and in readers' response to it.

A Powerful Indictment Lacking Balance

William B. Gould IV

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS IS A WORK OF ENORMOUS BREADTH AND SCOPE, a well-written book, filled with an accessible exposition of events and people, both recent and distant. The overriding theme is a powerful indictment of the American labor leadership (there is an implicit assumption, never articulated that foreign trade unions do not behave as badly) as distant from the rank and file, bureaucratic, frequently corrupt and racist.

Much of Buhle's book and analysis hits the mark, but a good deal does not. Wide-ranging, readable and provocative, his work is nonetheless excessively simplistic. Buhle chronicles well the conservatism of Samuel Gompers, and his "stout" resistance toward, for instance, the Adamson Act of 1916 which established the 8-hour day on the railroads for locomotive engineers. For Gompers, the regulation of hours by legislation was, in Buhle's words, "anathema."

Similarly, Buhle reminds us of George Meany's early opposition to social welfare legislation so elemental as unemployment compensation benefits. This approach, predicated upon the view that autonomous unions and collective bargaining were necessarily compromised by legislation on subject matter also addressed at the bargaining table, has helped erode the status of American workers, both organized and unorganized. It has surely been a factor in the tardy development of both the American labor movement and an effective social welfare system in this country.

And the role of race gets a good deal of attention as well — and properly so. The hostility of the American Federation of Labor in the time of Gompers — through the positions taken by the modern labor movement's founder himself — toward Chinese workers is well documented. The AFL policy toward black workers is of a similar vintage. Here again, Buhle has Gompers on record, expressing himself unsympathetically to the cause of racial equality.

Buhle notes the exclusionary practices of the craft unions and the way in which apprenticeship programs, tests and procedures devised to determine admission to them, were used to exclude black workers. His review of the conflict between black workers and the union movement in the wake of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination on the part of unions and employers on account of race and other criteria is a valuable one. As he notes, this conflict took the form of industrial as well as craft union protection of institutional practices which suppressed the upward mobility of black workers.

WILLIAM B. GOULD IV *is a law professor at Stanford University Law School and was Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board from 1994 to 1998. A practicing lawyer who has represented the United Automobile Workers and black plaintiffs in employment discrimination class actions, his forthcoming book* Labored Relations: Law, Politics and the NLRB — A Memoir *will be published by MIT Press in 2000.*

Seniority disputes involving promotion, transfer, and protection against layoff were all issues which pitted the unions against black workers. And Buhle rightly observes the attitude of union leaders who aligned themselves with polite black ministers in the South challenging Jim Crow as entirely different from their position vis-a-vis black trade unionists who sought positions of leadership in their labor organizations, sometimes swelled with substantial black membership. When it came to internal practices, it was quite difficult to get the unions to place Martin Luther King's March on Washington rhetoric into practice.

Buhle also describes in vivid detail a wide variety of foreign misadventures by the AFL-CIO — Guatemala, Brazil and Chile standing at the top of the pile. He also notes the pathetic attempt of the federation to give status to Chief Buthelezi of South Africa to head off the seemingly radical African National Congress. The ANC's alliance with the South African Communist Party alternately frightened and infuriated the AFL-CIO. And, particularly in Central America, the Cold War Meany stance frequently translated into the emasculation of trade union and worker rights in those countries.

That said, however, there is something missing here — not in the excellent treatment of historic union positions on social welfare and race (though in the latter area the discussion is not as balanced as it should be) but in its sweeping characterization of organized labor's behavior generally. Granted, the trade union movement in immediate post-World War II Europe should have been more transparent and less clandestine. But is there nothing of a laudatory nature to be said about the Marshall Plan which meant the difference between starvation and life for so many in Western Europe? Was it not a well-conceived idea? One is hard put to find this unassailable truth acknowledged anywhere by Buhle. Would it have been better to allow an aggressive post-World War II Soviet Union to pick up the pieces in that part of the world? Was not this particular AFL-CIO foreign policy initiative in the interest of working people in Europe and throughout the world?

Moreover, though Meany's support for the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is mentioned, it is quickly dismissed as self-congratulatory. (Indeed, I have noted in my own writings the contrast between the post-Title VII stance of the AFL-CIO and the position taken prior to its enactment.) And contrary to Buhle, President Nixon's formulation of the Philadelphia Plan requiring the hiring of black tradesmen in the segregated construction trades appears to have been motivated by his attempt to divide blacks from the unions in a period when Meany's hostility to affirmative action generally was just plain nasty. The policy was right and the motivation was wrong — but in the interest of honesty and accuracy Buhle should recognize both realities. Buhle's well-founded criticism of Meany does not allow him to perceive the malevolence of Nixon.

And, more generally, the rank-and-file worker is always shortchanged by union officialdom in Buhle's view. The breakthroughs obtained through collective bargaining in automobile, steel, longshore and other industries are pushed to one side. The gains from Democratic Administrations in social welfare policy and education — and in the labor policy arena in the Clinton Administration are flat-out ignored.

I find the conclusion — and many remarks in the book of similar nature — which states that "labor's national leaders, with a few admirable exceptions, have stood in the path of hopeful developments" and that the union members have "lost" and been "diminished" to be rather facile.

Moreover, the view that the answer lies in the "old Wobbly fashion: ordinary working people acting as their own leaders" is a romantic ideal, notwithstanding the curmudgeonly and conservative nature of past AFL-CIO leadership and some of the major unions in the United States. Plenty of union leaders do an adequate and sometimes more than adequate job at the bargaining table and in politics.

ONE GETS SOME SENSE OF THE AUTHOR'S APPROACH when he discusses Gompers's position vis a vis the Wilson Administration and World War I. It is Gompers who is either victimized or who ingratiates himself with government, the worker who loses out in the process. The emergence of the War Labor Board and its awards providing for union recognition gets a sleight of the hand, as Buhle states that its awards eventually provide for "arbitration" rather than recognition, without any explanation whatsoever. Moreover, no connection is made between that period and the emergence of new machinery during World War II which results in the recommendation and award of grievance-arbitration machinery as well as union security agreements requiring membership as a condition of employment in the emergency conditions of that period. The relationship between unions and governments in the time of both wars brought advances for the labor movement, yet Buhle takes very little account of them. Indeed, it may be said that the War Labor Board plays a comparable role to that of the National Labor Relations Board itself in protecting workers during their growth period of the 1930s and 1940s. Again, the book is silent on this.

Moreover, Buhle states that unions have themselves "substantially" to blame for their decline. It is true that union lethargy in the form of inadequate expenditures for organizing the unorganized is a factor in union decline. George Meany, presiding over a federation which had taken little interest in involving itself in organizational activity until the election of John Sweeney in 1995, spoke contemptuously of the paucity of union members. His view, particularly as expressed in the late '60s and '70s, was that the size of union membership had nothing whatsoever to do with union power and influence. But there is much more which is responsible for union decline — factors which Buhle failed to take into account or minimizes.

In the first place, whatever organized labor's involvement in the United States's adventures abroad, the fact of the matter is that globalization of our economy has emerged through forces which have little to do with labor management relations in our own country. And long before the debate on NAFTA, the ability of American employers to relocate beyond the nation's boundaries had a deleterious impact upon collective bargaining in this country.

The change in the employment relationship through the emergence of contingent workers, independent contractors and, perhaps even more important, the prominence of undocumented workers who are afraid to protest bad employment conditions because of their fear of deportation, all have contributed to an environment hostile to organizing. One great change in American union attitudes relates to immigration policy with the labor movement, previously advocating an exclusionary approach. Today's unions which attempt to organize — the United Farm Workers is just one example — have shifted their ground diametrically on this subject.

And, as I know from my own academic work and my involvement in Washington in recent years, the law itself and its promise to promote the collective

bargaining process has proved to be ephemeral. Contrary to the manner in which Buhle belittles labor law reform initiatives, they were and are significant and were and have been supported by most national representatives of the Democratic Party.

Moreover, as a labor lawyer and a law professor, I find some of Buhle's comments on the National Labor Relations Act rather puzzling. He seems to have accepted the view that the National Labor Relations Act somehow limited the way in which employees can organize into unions. This point of view is mirrored by newspaper headlines which say, for instance, that Labor Board decisions "allow" hospital interns and residents to join unions — when nothing in the United States prohibits them joining unions and all that is involved in the intervention of law is a compulsion which is thrust upon the employer to recognize and bargain with unions which are selected by a majority of the workers. Buhle seems to buy into the idea, without articulating it, that somehow the law has impeded the development of unions in this country.

Workers are always free to organize without the law and to put whatever pressure they can bring to bear upon the employer. But the fact of the matter is that most workers and unions need the law, notwithstanding its numerous imperfections, as a vehicle to obtain the collective bargaining process and the right to participate in wages, hours and working conditions. The law's role remains valuable.

True, as Buhle states, the unions have played a role in their decline but much more is involved. The changing composition of industry — employers have ferociously resisted unionization in the service sector where productivity increases do not allow them to pass along increased cost to the customer — has altered matters fundamentally. So concerned is Buhle with the cast of unattractive characters whose lifestyle he describes in considerable detail that he loses sight of these factors.

Buhle's book is a provocative one and compulsory reading for all who regard themselves as committed to this field and to the principles of democracy in the workplace. And it is a real page turner. For instance, at one point Buhle has this to say in describing William Casey, CIA chief, Lane Kirkland, Bayard Rustin, Albert Shanker and their involvement in Africa and Latin America:

> During happier Cold War days, at least for the credulous, this story would read like a spy novel or film, a sort of Hunt for Red October carried out among peasants, peaceniks, environmentalists and rebellious trade unionists.

Taking Care of Business itself has that flavor and that undoubtedly should hold the interest of many readers. But its lack of balance in treating the subject of the American trade union movement's record in both collective bargaining and politics requires us to proceed with caution.

Union Democracy and the U.S. Labor Bureaucracy

Michael Goldfield

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS MAKES FASCINATING READING. Buhle's immense knowledge of labor, immigrant, and radical history, including his familiarity with vast amounts of oral history material, allows him to paint perhaps the fullest, richest, and most fascinating account of the reactionary bureaucratic leaders who have dominated the AFL and the AFL-CIO from the 1890s until the 1990s. His exposure and critique is unrelenting, following in the tradition of Eugene Debs who asserted that the role of the Gompers leadership was "to chloroform the working class while the ruling class went through its pockets." In his areas of specialty, Buhle knows many of the nooks and crannies, where dirt, corruption, and even dead bodies are hidden. In his portraits, Samuel Gompers, George Meany, and Lane Kirkland turn out even worse — not only than their traditional apologists paint them — but even than their harshest critics have claimed.

Buhle's case against them is as follows: They have misled the working class in a variety of ways, usually in having unions follow the most narrow, racist, misogynist, anti-immigrant, approach to all issues. They have used much of their energy and workers' own resources to support the most reactionary forces at home and abroad, stifling progress everywhere. In doing this, they have conspired with employers, the police, the government, and the CIA, even been complicitous in mass murder, much of which was too embarrassing even for them to admit openly. But, worst of all, they have done this anti-democratically: demobilizing workers, persecuting critics and oppositionists, while repressing alternative strategies that seemed to be majoritarian views at certain points in time.

Buhle is especially good at exposing and debunking many of their allies. Not only is he sharp in carving up operatives like Jay Lovestone, Irving Brown, Max Shachtman, and others. He is lucid in exposing right-wing social-democratic henchmen including Bayard Rustin, Tom Kahn, and Penn Kemble. But his most valuable service in this venue is in unmasking the dirty politics and CIA connections of those still held in high esteem by liberals. These include Arthur Goldberg, former Steelworkers and CIO counsel and Supreme Court Justice, and those more mainstream social-democrats like Michael Harrington and Irving Howe, who played such important roles in the Democratic Socialists of America as elder socialist statesmen with alleged credible left-wing histories.

The book's fascinating details and descriptions make it well worth the read.

MICHAEL GOLDFIELD *is the author of* The Color of Politics: Race and the Mainsprings of American Politics, *and* The Decline of Organized Labor in the United States, *as well as numerous other articles and books. He currently teaches in the College of Urban, Labor, and Metropolitan Affairs, at Wayne State University in Detroit.*

Yet, it has larger claims, among which is to explain, "the suffocating authority of the labor bureaucracy" in the U.S. (4), and what accounts for the dominance of people who "were less labor representatives than labor controllers" (13). The book promises that the discussion of the labor bureaucracy will speak "to many larger issues." (5). Finally, the book, with its many references and discussions of the 1995 change in the top AFL-CIO leadership, implicitly promises to answer the question of the degree to which this "new" leadership has broken with the past.

For these questions, however, I will argue the book does not fulfill its promise. These issues are under-theorized, under-analyzed, and ultimately not addressed. In the only real discussion of possible explanations for the dominance of the reactionary bureaucrats in the U.S. (in the introduction), Buhle notes several possible theories. These include 1) the traditional labor history view (today asserted in Robert Zieger's work), that the leaders reflect the general backwardness or conservative views of rank-and-file workers, a view which Buhle quite naturally rejects; 2) tampering by outside authorities, which accounts for a good deal of the fascinating descriptive material in the book; 3) fundamental flaws in leadership. (13) The book implies that the second and third are the main reasons, and that they are somehow "connected to the creation of empire." (15) Yet, little of this is analyzed in the course of the book. An additional traditional theory — that it is misleadership among oppositionists and the left, a view raised by radical labor leader William Z. Foster, for example, before he joined the CP — is not discussed at all.

Part of the reason the book has trouble grappling with these issues is its analytic framework. Almost everything in the book is judged from one overriding, unqualified principle, that of union democracy and worker control. Let me begin by saying that I believe that this is an important fundamental principle for socialists. Mass participation and control can lead to class interests being expressed more clearly, straying leaders held in check or removed, greater militancy, empowerment of individuals, expansion of their human potential, and in many cases to growing class consciousness and solidarity. But workers control, particularly local control, at times has its negative aspects and can come into conflict with other important principles. First, there are the problems the early Bolsheviks faced in Russia, when confronted with the desires of many workers who believed what Buhle extols, "a socialism of unmediated workers' power." (148) Railway schedules, to take one famous example, had to be set nationally and rationally, and could not be controlled by local groups of railway workers. Coming closer to home, there has been a dark downside, to some of the old IWW traditions of local, workers' control.

The old split in the Wobblies between those who wanted local autonomy and those who wanted a strong national office (a dispute won by those favoring the latter in the 1913 IWW convention) was replayed in parts of the CIO. In the International Woodworkers of America, led initially by Communists, the oppositionists, largely coming from IWW localist backgrounds, opposed giving funds and supporting organizers to be assigned by the national office. They believed that current locals and districts, whose overwhelming membership was in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, should hire their own organizers and consolidate their own affairs. Their arguments were couched in unimpeachable, worker democracy, worker control, and anti-bureaucratic rhetoric. What this meant

in practice, however, was that the IWA right-wingers opposed and successfully undermined the attempts of the national office to assign organizers, and to attempt to organize the majority African-American woodworkers in the South. To the uncharitable, many of their arguments against organizing the South appear racist. During Operation Dixie, in 1946 and 1947, even right-wing CIO leaders were aghast at the IWA's willingness (now controlled by the ex-IWW anti-communists) to simply abandon militant interracial locals in the South.

The situation in the Sailors International Union/Sailors Union of the Pacific was arguably worse. Local democracy, job control, and anti-bureaucracy for the top leadership and numerous activists, steeped in the IWW tradition, meant in both theory and practice (and, of course, there were undoubtedly exceptions) the exclusion of African-American seamen from union ships. I am often amazed at reading accounts by older anti-Stalinists — who participated in and supported this union — who extol its greater militancy than the CP-led interracial National Maritime Union (with its many Black and Latino leaders), without mentioning the SIU's racism, viewing it as a minor glitch, or only raising it in passing. In the United States, as in South Africa (which under apartheid also had some very militant, democratic, white exclusionary unions), racial exclusion always trumps everything else.

NOW THERE IS MUCH TO EXTOL IN THE TRADITION of the Knights of Labor and the IWW (including the many examples of interracial solidarity) both of which Buhle looks to for historical guidance, precedence, and inspiration (252). I largely agree with him in this respect. What I find most surprising, however, especially given his many positive remarks, is his failure, or unwillingness to include the left-wing unions of the1930s in this same category. Now, Buhle is not at all an old-style anti-communist who refuses to recognize the positive features of the CP. Like many of our generation, including myself, he is able to appreciate the exemplary activities of the CP-led unions, despite fundamental disagreements with Stalinism. He notes the United Electrical Workers' stance on women's issues, the racial egalitarianism, the large numbers of non-whites in many unions, the gayness of the CP-led Marine Cooks, and other notable features (128). Yet, somehow these unions are not the models for solidarity that the IWW and the equally contradictory Knights of Labor (who often opposed Chinese workers on racial grounds and whose leadership opposed strikes) were.

Such a stance is wrong-headed. The CP-led unions were indeed contradictory. On the plus side (and here, we have much to learn), they were in most cases highly militant, mobilizing, based on strong rank-and-file participation, and were far more democratic than most of the non-Communist led unions, especially those in which the left was not a strong presence. On the issue of race (historically, the defining political issue in U.S. politics), they were in a class by themselves. Militant commitment to racial egalitarianism was not a characteristic of the left or the CIO in general, as Buhle, along with others, sometimes implies (108, 166). Those few socialists who were deeply committed to racial egalitarianism (e.g., Highlander's Miles Horton) were often isolated and skewered by their former comrades. As Martin Glaberman notes in his book, *Wartime Strikes*, even during World War II (their low point) CPers were better than other leftists in the plants on questions of race. Perhaps the one non-Communist radical who stands out as exemplary on race questions (who is referred to incor-

rectly by Buhle as "relatively progressive" p.179) was the United Packinghouse Workers president Ralph Helstein. The CP, of course, also had its downside, of which I have written extensively. It tailed FDR after 1936 and helped sabotage efforts for a labor party; its ultra-collaborationist stance during World War II (often disregarded at the local level by CPers in Food and Tobacco, Packinghouse, and other unions) had more than a few disgusting moments; its unmitigated support for the horrors of Stalinism and the hounding of its political enemies were vile. One of the most difficult and complicated questions for those of us who are critics of Stalinism is coming to terms with the complex heritage of the CP, since its best activities during the 1930s and 1940s are models that all socialists should try to emulate.

There are a number of other issues where I think Buhle has got things somewhat wrong. Some of them, if corrected, might mesh well with his arguments. Many have to do with his analysis of the CIO. Most important perhaps are certain myths about the UAW in general and Walter Reuther in particular. The UAW was not necessarily among the most advanced unions on certain issues, especially with respect to race. I have discussed this issue at length in my pieces on "Race and CIO," relying in part on Toni Gilpin's excellent work on the CP-led Farm Equipment union, which among other things compares UAW racial practice in farm and construction equipment unfavorably with that of the FE. The FE and many other left unions were far more aggressive in fighting against racial discrimination at the workplace than much of the UAW. The situation only became worse with Reuther's ascendency. The material, if not the analysis, is clear from Nelson Lichtenstein's recent biography. As Reuther began his ascendancy into the top leadership in the late 1930s and early 1940s, he built his caucus around the most racist, reactionary forces within the union, his social-democratic rhetoric, and leftist fellow-travelers notwithstanding. While the Reuther of the 1950s and 1960s had changed from the 1930s, he had not changed from the Reuther of the 1940s. So Buhle, like Lichtenstein, is wrong to think that radical impulses and possibilities (and even substantive commitments to civil rights within the labor movement) existed for Reuther, after he built his virtually all-white, conservatively based, bureaucratic caucus (175, 177, 188). A structural analysis of Reuther's caucus, rather than his rhetoric, tells the story.

This issue is, of course, important in many ways. One small part has to do with Buhle's uncritical extolling of the Workers Party. Its extreme anti-communism led it not only to support the racist leadership of the SIU against the far more egalitarian CP-led NMU, but to support the authoritarian, bureaucratic, and racially less progressive (to put it politely) Reuther group. It did this, along with the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party in 1946, when Reuther won the presidency. The SWP criticized itself after the election and broke with Reuther for all the right reasons. The Workers Party continued to support Reuther in the 1947 election, where his regime (whose dictatorial character Buhle describes in the harshest of terms) was consummated. Any honest balance sheet must take into account the dark side and theoretical weaknesses of all traditions from which one wishes to identify and learn.

The mistakes made in dating the growing problems in the UAW and the CIO is generally based upon not recognizing the contradictions within the CIO from the beginning. The bureaucratic, corporatist approach was present as one part of the CIO from its inception, a heritage from the Gompers era. Top CIO

leader Sidney Hillman, e.g., wanted to organize southern textile workers during 1937 and 1938 by first convincing employers of the benefits of having a stable union. Philip Murray's steelworkers could be similarly analyzed. Reuther was clearly in this camp by 1940. Thus, Operation Dixie did not weaken and fail in 1951 because of the purges in 1949 and 1950 (as Buhle argues, p.129), but in 1946, shortly after it started, as the dominant right-wing CIO leadership, put their most racist, bureaucratic, and unimaginative cohorts in charge of the campaign. Buhle also wrongly attributes the AFL-CIO's later failures in new organizing to their declining public image, rather than to their lack of effort and resources, along with their class collaborationist orientation.

ONE FURTHER ISSUE MUST BE EXPLORED HERE, albeit briefly. Buhle, like many leftists, is torn in evaluating the changes in the AFL-CIO since 1995, between seeing the openness (at least in terms of staffing and alliances) of the new leadership to leftists, their seeming commitment to organizing, on the one hand, and their deepening embrace of the Democratic Party, along with their lack of interest in rank-and-file democracy, on the other. A more structural analysis of the coalition that pushed for the election of the Sweeney leadership, however, will show that these things are two sides of the same coin. As Buhle notes, much of the impetus for what was really a palace coup, came from the public sector unions. The old guard on the other hand was most strongly based in the construction unions. Most construction unions are active in local markets. Overall decline of national union density and lack of influence in the Democratic Party does not affect their collective bargaining directly, as long as their local organizations are strong. Public sector unions, on the other hand, at least as presently oriented, get most of their benefits from legislative lobbying and political alliances. When their allies, particularly within the labor movement, grow weaker, they have less leverage. Kirkland's numerous foreign junkets, lack of concern for declining membership, withdrawal from Democratic Party gamesmanship (all of which Buhle notes), were especially disconcerting to public sector unions. So, their agenda required increased organizing and greater involvement in the Democratic Party. They are also smart enough to know that radical youth can be a big aid in new organizing. Some of the industrial unions have similar agendas, but with different political concerns along with growing dismay about the isolation of labor unions, in part made possible by the anti-union environment nationally, allowing, e.g., for the weakening of the UAW, in a previous stronghold, like Caterpillar. Such changes in leadership orientation may indeed provide new openings for insurgent movements and other important activities. Yet, there is little basis for thinking that the new leadership is more committed to rank-and-file democracy or to a break with the Democratic Party than was the old leadership, no less a more radical departure in a host of other venues.

This said, Paul Buhle's book is a good start, giving us a tremendous amount of useful material in understanding labor's history. His skewering of the reactionary leadership is on target, as is his tying them to the international strategy of U.S. imperialism. He is less clear on showing how the empire may have aided in the corruption of segments of the U.S. workforce, particularly on racial issues. And, finally, one needs to be clear on what alternative leaderships might have done differently that could have aided in dislodging the type of right-wing labor leaders we have all grown to detest.

Waiting for Sweeney

Staughton Lynd

ON ITS BACK COVER, *Taking Care Of Business* tells us — in words presumably approved by the author — that John Sweeney's election as president of the AFL-CIO signified "the disruption of Cold War business unionism" and was "a significant turning point" in the history of the labor movement.

The message that change in the labor movement comes from the top down is also suggested by the way the book is organized. *Taking Care Of Business* is a series of chapters, each devoted to the term in office of a particular president of the AFL or AFL-CIO. In the 1960s, New Left historians developing "history from the bottom up" poured scorn on conventional narrative histories of the United States that told the nation's story in a sequence of chapters each devoted to a particular Presidency. By organizing the story around a series of individual leaders, this narrative device not only trained the historical spotlight on "great white men" (as Jesse Lemisch put it) but also implied that what was needed was a new man at the top.

As in the case of histories of the United States, the not-so-implicit thesis of *Taking Care of Business* is that labor needed a new leader and may have found one in 1995.

The Legacy of Radical America and C.L.R. James

THE BELIEF THAT A NEW MOSES MIGHT LEAD THE LABOR MOVEMENT across the Jordan River is hardly original. Eugene Debs once commented that if he could lead the movement into the Promised Land, somebody else could lead it out again. The arguments made in *Taking Care Of Business* on behalf of Sweeney have been made on behalf of John L. Lewis (by Saul Alinsky), Walter Reuther (by Irving Howe), I. W. Abel (by John Herling), Arnold Miller and Ed Sadlowski (by a variety of liberal pundits), and Ron Carey (by the Teamsters for a Democratic Union).

What is startling, and saddening, is to find these familiar arguments made on behalf of "a middle-of-the-road union leader with a personal history somewhat muddied by the . . . practice of double-dipping" (p. 244) in a book written by our comrade and brother, Paul Buhle.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Buhle founded and edited the journal *Radical America*. The magazine made an extraordinary contribution. In its pages a New Left theory of the labor movement was roughed out.

In *Radical America*, George Rawick wrote about "workers' self-activity," with particular emphasis on wildcat strikes. Stan Weir reported on La Coordinadora,

STAUGHTON and ALICE LYND *have edited* The New Rank and File, personal histories by labor organizers active in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. *It will be published by Cornell University Press in Fall 2000.*

a union of Spanish longshoremen that operated effectively without fulltime staff. Marty Glaberman unearthed the fact that, during World War II, many rank-and-file members of the UAW voted in a union-sponsored referendum to continue the no-strike pledge, but voted with their feet in a contrary direction by taking part in unauthorized direct actions.

The magazine published early versions of the oral histories that grew into the book *Rank and File*, edited by Alice Lynd and myself. Similarly Jeremy Brecher, Peter Rachleff, Mark Naison and many others tried out their ideas in the hospitable forum that Paul Buhle provided.

A consensus took shape. *Radical America* was skeptical about electoral campaigns for top union office. Instead the magazine emphasized actions that workers could take on their own initiative: its themes were self-activity (Rawick), working-class agency (E. P. Thompson), the emancipation of the working class by workers themselves (Marx). The organizational face of this practice could be glimpsed in steward councils, as in Great Britain during World War I; parallel central labor unions, like the Russian soviets of 1905 and 1917; local general strikes, for instance in Seattle in 1919, or Toledo, Minneapolis and San Francisco in 1934; and, as advocated by Lotta Continua in Italy, general assemblies of workers on the shop floor. The occupation of factories by 10,000,000 French workers in 1968, and later, Polish Solidarity, were viewed as confirming contemporary events.

Paul Buhle also explored the work of C. L. R. James. More than anyone else writing at mid-century, the West Indian Trotskyist provoked new thinking on the Left about both trade unions and the structure of a workers' party. The pamphlet "Punching Out," drafted by Glaberman and first published by James' organization in 1952, argued that under a collective bargaining agreement with a no-strike clause, union representatives become cops for the boss.

As to a workers' party, James, while defending the practice of Lenin in its place and time, argued that the workers' movement had outgrown the need for a vanguard party and that the working class as a whole should now act for itself.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 seemed to James and his colleagues to prove these ideas experimentally. Without a vanguard party, without even a workers' press, and in the absence of war or depression, the workers of Hungary organized themselves into councils, overthrew a government, and would have completed a revolution but for invasion by Soviet tanks.

Paul Buhle has not forgotten the labor theory of the New Left. He invokes it rhetorically, especially in his introduction and conclusion, where one finds references to the "ideals of the Industrial Workers of the World" and to "legacies of solidarity" associated with the IWW and the Knights of Labor, such as the strategy of "working to rule" and the vision that "an injury to one is an injury to all."

Indeed he remarks:

> The reversal of 1995 lacked one decisive element. The new leaders did not stand at the head of — or invite — anything like 1940s-style antibureaucratic unrest or Wobbly manners back into their ranks. It remained to be seen, therefore, how leadership could rebuild the labor movement without tapping vast unreleased energies and hidden talents from below.(205)

This is a curious composite of metaphors. The New Voice leaders are first presented as officers who missed an opportunity to "stand at the head of . . .

antibureaucratic unrest," surely a problematic undertaking. Then they are pictured as "rebuild[ing]" a structure with inert materials. Finally these same leaders are viewed as "tapping" (or not tapping) the molten energies of the rank and file. None of these metaphors suggest what any reader of *Radical America* or C. L. R. James would have expected: the *self*-organization of workers, the *self*-emancipation of the working class.

Has Buhle abandoned this project? And if so, why?

Sweeny's Performance to Date

SWEENEY HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE AFL-CIO for four years, that is, for a period equal to the first term of a president of the United States. Three or four years ago it may have been appropriate to view him in the context of what seemed to some "possible" (see pp. 16 and 248) or to characterize this or that failing as a "post-Kirkland hangover" (p. 299, n. 84). Surely it is now fair to evaluate him on the basis of what he has or has not done.

Remarkably, Paul Buhle's own list of Sweeney's deficiencies is not a short one. The New Voice, Buhle concedes,

1. displays no "unusual commitment to democratic union procedure" (p. 205)
2. consistently appeals for a "cooperative" relationship with business (p. 250)
3. has had little inclination to challenge United States military intervention overseas and has uncritically supported the State of Israel (pp. 251, 284 n. 21), and
4. offers "obeisance to almost anything that the Democrats have to offer" (p. 260).

Buhle, I feel sure, also deplores the fact that, notwithstanding rhetoric about "blocking bridges," Sweeney failed to respond to pleas for help from the Detroit newspaper strikers until *after* the strikers had unconditionally offered to return to work; and is distressed about Sweeney's decision to celebrate Labor Day 1999 by ringing the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange.

The critical issue is what these deficiencies *mean*, or to say the same thing in another way, to explain why Paul Buhle and so many others on the Left continue to voice hope in Sweeney despite his demonstrated shortcomings.

What Sweeney's Performance Means

AT ONE POINT IN HIS JOURNALISTIC NARRATIVE, Buhle pauses to ask some crucial analytical questions: Why has the American labor movement produced leaders like Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland? What is the explanation for declining union membership and the movement's loss of moral authority? "Was it corruption, poor leadership, conservatism, or something more subtle . . . ?" (p. 201).

His answer is — in my opinion — stunningly accurate: "Even had the AFL-CIO been led by progressive, idealistic men and women, it is hard to see how a labor movement committed to the dogmas of business unionism could have avoided the impasse" (p. 202).

The problem then becomes why Paul fails to see where this accurate analysis must lead him when it comes to Sweeney and the New Voice group. Let us concede, as I do, that Sweeney and the men and women around him are progressive and idealistic as compared to the AFL-CIO leaders whom they replaced.

It is Buhle's own analysis that requires us to insist that so long as these new leaders are committed to business unionism, the labor movement that they lead will continue to be essentially what it has been up to now, and will continue to "take care of business."

And surely, the New Voice leaders *are* committed to business unionism: to what labor historian David Brody calls "workplace contractualism," the goal of signing collective bargaining agreements complete with management prerogatives and no-strike clauses; to the dues check-off as the indispensable foundation of union bureaucracies; to quantitative increases in union membership ("union density") as the critical indicator of labor well-being; and to the capitalist system as the inevitable context of all of the above.

Show me anything that Sweeney has said or done inconsistent with the foregoing "dogmas of business unionism."

I believe that Buhle misses the logical consequences of his own analysis, perhaps in part because of several misjudgments.

Buhle exaggerates the causal linkage between an inclusive approach to race, gender and nationality on the one hand, and labor radicalism on the other. He fails to see the possibility of what one might term *inclusive business unionism*. John L. Lewis illustrates this species of the business union genus. Like Sweeney, Lewis believed in organizing new members but did not believe in union democracy. Like Sweeney (see p. 245), Lewis worked with leftists but only when they implemented his agenda and only so long as it suited him. Like Sweeney, Lewis undermined efforts to create a labor party. And like Sweeney, Lewis reached out to black, foreign-born, and female workers but only to organize them into business unions.

A second consideration that may blind Buhle to the logical consequences of his own analysis is his enthusiasm for top-down institutions like the Organizing Institute (p. 258). Buhle notes that the institute sponsored "student blitzes" and that this organizing style "tended to obscure the difficult problems of establishing and building from a local support base among the workers to be unionized." This bland critique greatly understates the harm done by this blitz organizing.

The objective of such organizing is to increase the number of workers who belong to unions and the amount of dues they pay. Far from consulting workers, devising strategy with them, or otherwise empowering potential union members, the blitz organizer induces workers whom he or she hardly knows to vote for a union the worker has barely met.

Typically the blitz organizer is recruited from a college campus, is trained at a central think tank like the Organizing Institute, and has never labored at the worksite sought to be unionized. He or she is likely to be parachuted into an unknown setting and to check out of the motel the day after the NLRB election, win or lose. The Organizing Institute is an expression of business unionism, not a "hopeful" departure from it.

Finally, Buhle seems not to see the extent to which AFL-CIO unions continue to practice labor imperialism, Sweeney style. In Puerto Rico, for example, AFSCME, SEIU, and CWA are hustling to enroll Puerto Rican members. Sweeneyism in Puerto Rico is reminiscent of what Buhle describes as Gompers's "insist[ence] upon the right to create AFL-style unions" in Puerto Rico and the Philippines (p. 77) or of the attempt by AFL leaders in the late 1930s "to estab-

lish their own imperial affiliate in Mexico" (p. 137). Canadian workers showed what they thought of "international" unions headquartered in the United States when they left the UAW. The path to the future is being charted *outside* the AFL-CIO in horizontal relationships like the "strategic alliance" between Mexico's *Frente Autentico del Trabajo* and the United Electrical Workers.

Conclusion

WAITING FOR SWEENEY WILL PROVE TO BE A DEAD END. My deepest concern about *Taking Care Of Business* is that it nurtures the essentially liberal — *not* radical — mindset of suspenseful waiting to see who will be elected leader, and then when that leader has been chosen, to see whether he or she lives up to pre-election promises.

Surely such a scenario is disempowering. It prompts us to look outside ourselves for leadership, and to forget that it is pressure from below that causes the Sweeneys of this world to act. We do not belong bowing and scraping at the door of the throne room. The very last words of *Taking Care Of Business* affirm that the answer to the problems of the labor movement is "ordinary working people acting as their own leaders." Left intellectuals should be accompanying them in that task.

Business Unionism Still Rules

Kim Moody

PAUL BUHLE'S *TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS* IS MORE THAN A LIVELY LOOK at labor's living dead, Gompers, Meany, and Kirkland; it is an important piece of the puzzle of a labor federation almost unique in the world in its 100-year embrace of capitalism, its purposeful use and lingering tolerance of racism, and its enthusiastic enlistment in American capital's imperial project from the Spanish-American War through the bombing of Yugoslavia. I say the "living dead" because although with the death of Lane Kirkland in August all three are dead, the weight of their reign lives on in countless visible and invisible ways.

Buhle's book is particularly valuable because it offers a political history of the struggle over the decades that produced business unionism as we know it today. Particularly in the Gompers era, when the opposition was both larger and more socialist in character, we can see the triumph of business unionism not as some inevitable process of maturation, but as the conflict of human actors at all levels of the movement — albeit in shifting economic and political settings that

KIM MOODY *is director of* Labor Notes. *He is also the author of* Workers in a Lean World: Unions in the International Economy (*Verso 1997).*

often favor the "pure and simple" unionists. Alternative directions, however, arise again and again in varying degrees: mightily in the 1930s with the CIO, promisingly in the late 1960s with organizations like DRUM and in the wildcat strikes, and again in our own time with rank and file groups like the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (and many others) and finally the 1995 victory of the "New Voice" slate.

Of course, Buhle is writing history, and the outcome by the mid-1990s was not much in doubt: business unionism still rules and, indeed, penetrates deeply into the fiber of the AFL-CIO and its affiliates. To the central question of how business unionism triumphed not only once, under Gompers, but over and over, Buhle offers three major answers: the labor leadership's embrace of racism, imperialism, and capitalist politics in the form of the Democratic Party. All three are, of course, intimately related in the history of the working class in the U.S. In fact, the embrace of American capitalism requires at least the tolerance of all three. And embrace it they did.

While *Taking Care of Business* is more an historical narrative than a theory, Buhle strongly implies a causal relationship. The development of a racial form of craft unionism based on market control and exclusion, the enlistment in American capital's imperial project at least from the Spanish-American War on, and the covert/overt alliance with the Democratic Party (itself a carrier of both racism and imperialism) all called for the bureaucratic insulation of leaders who now devoted time, effort, and resources to things their "pure and simple unionism" appeared to consider unimportant.

As Buhle shows, these kinds of activities, conducted as they were within range of the real centers of power in the U.S., became increasingly how the AFL and then the AFL-CIO defined their function within the broader labor movement. It was not the general staff of some industrial army, the coordinator of centralized bargaining, or the ideological partner of some left-of-center working class party. Instead, it was the champion of U.S. capital in the struggle with rival capitals and later a rival social system.

It could, until recently, imagine that this alliance with U.S. capital at home and abroad and even its acceptance of its unequal class and racial structure cleared the way to successful collective bargaining. Its relative success in bargaining in the years after World War II only reinforced the link between the prosperity of the unionized minority and that of U.S. business worldwide in the minds of the Meanys and Kirklands. In a fanatically anti-Communist inversion of Lenin's theory of imperialism, their view of the world brought with it the illusion of influence and the increasing distance from the practice of unionism on the ground. Buhle chronicles this and the incredible sleaze and global immorality that flowed from it extremely well.

HOW, THEN, DOES BUHLE PROPOSE TO GET US OUT OF THIS MESS? To his credit Buhle avoids the temptation of presenting John Sweeney and the "New Voice" leaders as the saviors of the American working class after the dark ages of the Kirkland years. To be sure, Buhle sees the new AFL-CIO leadership as more alive, more genuinely concerned with growth, and more open to the left — or some of the left. But he also recognizes that "the distance between the bureaucracy and ordinary union members has not been significantly lessened, nor has the historic dependence upon the Democrats been reconsidered." But if salvation is not to come

from above, the conclusion of *Taking Care of Business* is not altogether clear about how the major changes needed to make organized labor a force for social change once again will come about.

The concluding chapter presents a collection of many of the "good things" going on in today's unions as indicators of a better future. Few have much to do with the "New Voice" team and many predate it in their origins, as Buhle points out. Still, there is no alternative picture — only some pieces of the puzzle yet to be assembled, with others missing. Nor is it clear why some examples are chosen and others not. While Buhle clearly sees change coming from well below the heights of the AFL-CIO, we are left asking if a simple accumulation of "good things" at various levels is enough to undo the century of bureaucracy, racism, and inertia we have just read about.

Of course, no author is required to hand us the answer or predict the next rank-and-file upheaval. But more attention to and analysis of the various insurgent movements inside and around the unions might have given a clearer sense of the direction of the democratic, demographic, and political changes American labor so badly needs. There is, after all, much to be learned from the limited successes and even the more frequent failures of past and present efforts to move American unionism in a different, more democratic, inclusive, and progressive direction. A deeper look at some of the major rank and file movements like the Miners for Democracy and Teamsters for a Democratic Union, both mentioned favorably but scarcely examined as possible alternatives, and the handful of smaller, more democratic, politically independent, and socially-minded unions like the UE, the former OCAW (now part of PACE) or the ILWU would have offered a clearer way out of the business union mess.

These shortcomings notwithstanding, *Taking Care of Business* is a first-class piece of work and a lively look at many of U.S. labor's deadliest flaws and most lifeless leaders.

They Won and We Lost — But Why?

Michael Hirsch

THE DEFINITIVE BOOK ON AMERICA'S CORPORATE-FRIENDLY LABOR LEADERSHIP has just been written. That alone is good news. What makes the publication singular is that its author is a graduate of the New Left, which drew inspiration from C. Wright Mills's admonition to abandon the "labor metaphysic" if it hoped to develop a world view and a politics that were genuinely emancipatory. Accordingly, New Leftists went on to create a radical movement disdainful of most U.S labor organizations, though certainly not their better traditions and victories. So it wasn't predictable that the young radicals of the 1950s and 1960s would, in later decades, contribute so large a number of activists and staffers to every contemporary union, community, and environmental struggle in the last 25 years.

But that is prologue. Not only are former student radicals now ensconced in unions at every level, but Paul Buhle, one of the New Left's best, the founding editor of the SDS history journal *Radical America*, author of *Marxism in the United States* and an editor of *The Encyclopedia of the American Left*, would write one of labor's most comprehensive histories.

Taking Care of Business: Samuel Gompers, George Meany, Lane Kirkland and the Tragedy of American Labor will become the standard work on the labor movement leadership of the twentieth century.

All the heroes are here, and the villains too, and their stories are told by a writer with a grasp of the facts, a feeling of connection to the events, and a narrative style that makes the book as gripping as its content is exhaustive.

Now, that is, as Brecht said, the praise that proceeds the panning. Because the book has gaps and gaffs that make its argument — that the rise of business unionism was not inevitable or its future secure — contentious where it should be definitive.

Some backers of the current national leadership will find his treatment ungenerous if not viperous, and we failed to get any AFL-CIO staffer to contribute to this symposium. Buhle may understand socialism, the corridor gossip on him goes, but he's clueless about what unions do or about the deals even decent unionists must cut to live to fight on.

Others will think Buhle suspends his critical judgment and gives the New Voice insurgents and AFL-CIO President John Sweeney a free ride. Sweeney was a colorless timeserver, double-dipper, and notorious faction balancer when he headed the Service Employees union before leading the coup that gave the AFL-CIO a new cachet if not a new life. And Buhle's treatment of Laborers leader Arthur A. Coia, (Buhle gives him the wrong middle initial), the only labor

MICHAEL HIRSCH *is a member of the editorial board of* New Politics. *A lifelong unionist and a frequent writer on labor issues, he was the editor of this symposium.*

top to actively support NAFTA and widely viewed as the bought Clinton Administration shil in labor circles, is remarkably and unnecessarily supportive if not adulatory. Coia is no hero, and being the swing vote for Sweeney does not make him one. For critics of Buhle, the "tragedy" of American labor, its cronyism, its patronage machines, and its trivializing of democratic union rights, will manifest itself under Sweeney and any likely successors, possibly well into the new century.

And then there are the usual scattered, niggling slips and howlers that get in the way of a story worth telling. Buhle faults the 1977 steel challenge of insurgent Ed Sadlowski for never reaching beyond "Big Steel," when he means "basic steel," whose workers were even then a minority of the union. ("Big Steel" was the name for U.S. Steel.) Bill Kornblum has written persuasively that the election was largely stolen, but Buhle does not cite Kornblum. And Buhle's charge that the insurgents had "no real program to meet the threat of factory shutdowns" asks the impossible. The first major plant closing, in Youngstown, would not be announced until six months after the race, and no one, including *Fortune* magazine, anticipated Steel's collapse.

But few would deny Buhle's observation that key elements of the old AFL-CIO leadership's ethos — its racism and exclusionary practices in a highly variegated working class, and its seamy involvement in destabilizing unions overseas that threaten corporate hegemony — are not of the same order as they were earlier in this century.

And Sweeney was not just the beneficiary of a new sensibility, but rose to be its tactician.

BUHLE RIGHTLY EMPHASIZES HOW EMPIRE ABROAD AND RACIAL AND ETHNIC EXCLUSION AT HOME constituted the primordial soup in which a revanchist leadership seeking — hamhandedly and unsuccessfully — to be an equal partner with business could fester, but he offers no seamless theory for why the national labor leadership was historically so craven, so callous toward the unorganized, and ruthless toward socialist critics. Nor does he tell us why, with rare exceptions, it was so late in seeking the help of "friendly enemies," in the face of a decades-long corporate assault following the 1970s recession. The old leaders never quite understood that fighters for working people such as the late Burton Hall, or Herman Benson or Herbert Hill — regular writers for this and other left periodicals — had to be made into allies, too,

That common-sense notion of cultivating friends and working on things with which you could agree is something a mainstream political hack understands. It was a staple of Tammany Hall politics, and even Lenin recognized that opponents in contingent situations could be "useful idiots." Not so the old AFL-CIO tops. How could they have been so thick, and so ultimately destructive in presiding over the decline of a labor movement that now represents just ten percent of the workforce?

And of course it is problematic to write a history of labor by looking at the dead AFL-CIO presidents, a group of men who led few or no strikes and, in Lane Kirkland's case, never organized a union, negotiated a contract, or even grieved a health and safety violation. Whatever they were, those peculiar birds nesting in the AFL-CIO aerie were too removed from the lives of workers and front-line officials to be considered "leaders."

Buhle's fixation on casting the battle between labor's socialists and accommodationists in almost apocalyptic terms, as a battle between the forces of light and darkness, doesn't help, either. Now that is my old-time religion, too, and we all suffer because Gene Debs could not defeat the Gompersian anti-Christ. But our collective history consists of more than vindicating the pre-war socialists. Surely the tragedy of American labor is the inability of any type of unionism, even honest and militant unionism by people who were far from socialist, to wrest more concessions from corporate America.

A real history of labor must allow that, when workers bargain, strike, engage in job actions, or corporate campaigns, they rarely do so to destroy their employer. What they do is class struggle, too, and their history is more than a battle between socialist idealists and renegades.

Buhle is right to say that creating new "models of solidarity" means returning to the vision and courage of the Knights of Labor and the Industrial Workers of the World, "whatever their practical weaknesses." But they were not, as Buhle says, "in considerable part destroyed by the machinations of Samuel Gompers's AFL." State and vigilante terror played its part, too. They were destroyed not because they were outcoached, but because Capital had the better team.

Ultimately, Buhle never successfully answers the problem he himself raises, that "the presence of a forceful, avowedly, institutionally, and, on a broad spectrum of issues, politically conservative leadership at the center of labor's institutions is practically unique in the United States." Why is internal union life — forget the easy sociological explanations about escaping from the tedium of work — so self-interestedly petty and fractious? How did we get to a situation where working people, even today and in so many industries, must make their peace with the mob, or where, as Buhle says, "the ILA was less a union affiliate than a branch of organized crime."

Why do unions so often resemble dysfunctional families, where a key to social mobility is sitting through mind-numbing meetings, accepting brutality, enduring thugs lightly, and kissing rings. Why did my own father, who as a young immigrant with limited English and who was made ship recording secretary by his crew of merchant seamen because he was even more literate than they, have to learn the Americanizing lesson "that you cannot win unless you run on a ticket." This, after bravely contesting for patrolman — and doing surprisingly well — on no one's ticket but his own.

I DON'T PRETEND TO HAVE THE ANSWERS ABOUT WHY THINGS WENT SO WRONG. Like George Bernard Shaw or Robert Merton, I haven't trafficked in big ideas in years. But what is troubling about the book is that the elements here in themselves do not constitute an explanation, either.

Surely a part of the answer lies in the centralized, institutional structure of collective bargaining and national contracts. Or the fact that unions present themselves as experts in negotiating rather than as organizations for collective action. Or that democracy and workers control are treated even by those with a Marxist bent as luxuries instead of — as Gramsci and so many others insisted — venues for training people to run the world differently.

The race need not belong to the swift, but what is it about our history that predisposes those carrying the most baggage or the most meritocratic pretensions to win so many of the big fights?

And of course race and empire were fundamental to shoring up stability and dividing working people, as Buhle shows. But those are the preconditions for business unionism, not the explanations.

So there is no "why" buttoned down here, as in why is there no class-struggle unionism in the United States. But you needn't look further for the who, what, when, and where of an actually existing, horrific history of union blunders, careerist excesses, and squandered opportunities. It's mostly all in here, and it will be a long time before Buhle's work is improved on or eclipsed.

Paul Buhle Responds

FEW AUTHORS ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO ENJOY SUCH A SYMPOSIUM of hard-thinking and hard-working activist-intellectuals; and before responding, I need to remind NEW POLITICS readers who have not read the book's acknowledgments that *Taking Care of Business* owes its real origins to an unpublished essay by Julius Jacobson on George Meany. Thus I am doubly in debt.

The small section of the book ruminating on the post-Kirkland Era has attracted a vastly disproportionate amount of attention here. With but few exceptions, my kindly critics prefer to assume a great deal of common ground on the past and move on to the present. The main contribution of the book is elsewhere, and so I hope that NP readers will bear with me as I touch briefly on the present crisis of labor, shift gears to the past, and finally return to the issues now at hand.

The main thing to say about the specific criticisms made of John Sweeney and the "New Voices" leadership is that most of them are on target and badly needed. Indeed, *Taking Care of Business* begins on a note of disappointment with current labor leadership and proposes to trace the dilemmas backward.* The four years of the new regime have not been, despite some upbeat moments, very encouraging. Yet even the most acute and critical assessment would be inaccurate if it did not make sense of the sea changes that the AFL's Old Guard fought furiously to prevent in 1995, and which it continues to seek to reverse. Even a palace revolution is a revolution of sorts, especially one that invites prominent enemies of the former power structure into the new one.

Any social movement (even a guerrilla band) needs a good, clear understanding of the new rulers. To take a case in point, George Meany went out of his way in 1968 to congratulate the cops who cracked heads in Chicago. Neither he nor Lane Kirkland would have shown their faces in Seattle or embraced environmentalists on any grounds. That John Sweeney led the troops uneasily and even halfheartedly, dampening efforts to bring workers from afar and seeking to wall off unionists in Seattle's streets from other protesters, striving in vain to protect free-trader Al Gore from embarrassment, was to be expected. It seems to be the essential character of what I will describe further down as "Sweeneyism."

---

*Michael Yates, "The Road Not Taken," *Monthly Review*, vol.51 (November, 1999), lauds *Taking Care of Business* for its warning to activists not to be swept away with enthusiasm for the Sweeney leadership; apparently my critics missed this warning, or (more likely) they read an admittedly ambivalent, fifteen-page, final chapter in one way while Yates read it in another.

Michael Goldfield's careful analysis of local-market craft unions versus global market industrial unions as basis for the overturn of the increasingly incompetent Meany-Kirkland (in later years, Kirkland-Shanker) AFL leadership has much to commend it. But as I observed in *Taking Care of Business*, a casual glance at the Advisory Board of the Jewish Labor Committee reveals most of the top, bitter-end supporters of Kirklandism. Morton Bahr of the Communications Workers was (and apparently remains) an ardent Kirklandite with intense and hawkish international views unaffected by membership sentiments. So was Jay Mazur of UNITE. On the other hand, Arthur A. Coia of the Laborers, a mainly localist union, cast a decisive vote for Sweeney. And so on through a lengthy list of exceptions to Goldfield's useful guidelines.*

It would be easy and mistaken to characterize this line-up, alternatively, as a reflection of the Israel Lobby. The free-spending Lobby doubtless plays a role, or (according to insiders) a leading official of the bricklayers would never have had a Lear jet at his personal disposal. Nor would Lane Kirkland have as likely found a soul mate in the world's leading unpunished war criminal (since Pol Pot's demise), Henry Kissinger. Basically, such labor hardliners are ideological Cold Warriors or Imperial Liberals who love to talk about democracy but believe supremely in the iron fist. For them, the more frequent and unrestrained the U.S. wars, the better: they've never seen one they didn't like, except of course in Vietnam when the U.S. seemed to be losing, and then they looked to weapons-lobbyist Senator Henry Jackson and accelerated bombing of that tiny jungle country as the best solution. These men naturally regard peaceniks, environmentalists or uncorrupted radicals of any kind here or abroad as the spawn of the 1960s if not of Old Moscow, suited to be vilified if not eradicated. The positions the Old Guard takes and activities it avidly supports would, if conducted from the Sweeney office, bring internal crisis and the withdrawal of the most dedicated, efficient and idealistic activists.** That's one measure of difference.

In that light, Peter Rachleff's revelation of the CIA ops' persistence within the international apparatus reveals something shocking: the holdover of human rights violators of long standing, a persistence that I had until now believed to be confined to sinecures and small assignments in parts of Eastern Europe. If the time-tested tricks presently conducted by the AFT in Russia persist within such key sectors of AFL foreign operations, then we need a public campaign to call an immediate halt to activities which clearly make the touted cross-border and solidarity work illogical and even impossible. Friends of unions should lobby together for those familiar (but almost never honored) goals of today's purported civil societies, "transparency" and "clean hands." That campaign should include more long-buried truths about the past, including the role of the CIA's pet intellectuals' activities in the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its partner-in-

*Michael Hirsch criticizes me for romanticizing Coia. No such thing: I used his example to point to the oddities of the anti-Old Guard coalition, although I may be guilty of building up the role of the only Rhode Island-based union since the dissolution of the National Textile Workers in the 1930s.

**The statements issued by the AFL-CIO during the nuclear-tipped war on Serbia (and the regional environment) echo the change clearly. A sort of "pray-for-peace" sentiment replaced the bomb-them-to-pieces Kirkland/Shanker position stated and restated so often from the Vietnam War to Central America and beyond.

stealth, the American Committee for Cultural Freedom intellectuals who not surprisingly served simultaneously as the favorite scholar-commentators (and more than occasional convention speakers) of the Cold War unionists.*

The ability of Cold War-era personalities to hold onto power even after public disgrace suggests the continuation of the quiet struggle around the AFL's center of gravity. The Old Guard holds more cards since Hoffa Jr.'s elevation, and one journalist intimately close to the UFT/AFT leadership recently predicted in *The Forward* (which has repeatedly baited Sweeney and his potential successor Rich Trumka, urging that Sandra Feldman be placed at the head of a restored Shankerite leadership) that the successful organization of high-wage, high-tech workers would free labor from a future tied to "the likes of strawberry workers."** The suggestion is bald: once unionization was mainly for white, male skilled workers, the aristocracy of labor; in the future it should properly be for that new aristocracy, the professional workers, and the devil take unschooled immigrants along with the vast majority of non-whites and women toiling at nonunionized workplaces.

This is a sentiment which—along with absence of any real democracy in the AFT's upper layers—chills the heart of many an NEA member perennially facing a merger which looks a lot more like being swallowed whole. It's something that we need to keep carefully in mind when interpreting the Sweeney leadership's moves or apparent stasis. By all means let us write up a bill of particulars about New Voices (the one suggested by several writers here is a good start) — and then seek to explain why the Old Guardists, still fiercely nostalgic for the Reagan State Department and the unlimited control of the AFL's international role by the intelligence agencies, are out for John Sweeney's head.

NOW LET ME TURN TO THE HISTORICAL SUBJECTS WHICH OCCUPY over ninety percent of *Taking Care of Business*. Michael Hirsch issues the most retrospective criticism by suggesting that the Knights of Labor and Industrial Workers of the World fell "because capital had the better team." I never doubted it. But the Knights easily outnumbered the AFL in 1886, and without the campaign carried on by Gompers against cooperation of local AFL unions with them, without Gompers's own destructive behavior, the Knights might well have survived the onslaught after Mayday as a vital union, not as the ghost that entered the 1890s when the AFL shrank so quickly that the Knights might have become once again the nation's leading union.

A crucial moment for the IWW came in its earliest days when important AFL unions (such as the brewery workers) wavered, then were pulled back into line by Gompers's threats; the second crucial moment came during the mass strike waves of 1909-13 when AFL leaders sought and often succeeded in breaking Wobbly strikes outright; the third came during the severe repression, when

*A splendid new volume not yet published in the U.S., Frances Stonor Sauders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999) covers much of this territory, revealing for instance Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s role as CIA functionary Cord Meyer's personal line into the liberal community; meanwhile, as a speech-writer for Hubert Humphrey and "expert" on American Communism, Schlesinger received the warm attention of Cold War unionists, articulating for them, in turn, the logic of unions such as the Screen Writers Guild blacklisting their own members.

** Ira Stoll, "Laborite Wages Union Fight from Telegraph to Internet," *Forward*, Sept.3, 1999.

Gompers personally prevented efforts of AFL unionists to offer solidarity to class war prisoners. Could the Wobblies have survived? Perhaps not, but history does not give us absolute answers, and if we consider what a full expression of solidarity by today's AFL-CIO for the peaceful demonstrations (and joining the demonstrators!) in Seattle might have meant for that moment, we can multiply it many times for eras when the labor movement had vastly more influence.

William Gould's generally astute analysis takes us squarely back to the Gompers Era and the purported leap forward marked by the National War Labor Board and assorted labor legislation during Woodrow Wilson's administration. I won't spend any time on the political context, because NEW POLITICS readers know that while the NWLB took shape, socialist newspapers were being suppressed, Wobblies railroaded into trials and long prison sentences by the same administration, a preparation for the all-out Palmer Raids of 1919-21. Repression was the other side of government mediation, and Gompers like Wilson regarded the combination as Harry Truman would later treat the concurrence of the Cold War with international aid programs: "two halves of the walnut."

Some of the basic NWLB rules for bargaining were re-established in the National Labor Relations Act in 1935. But Wilson gave the NWLB no mechanism of enforcement, himself acting only on specific cases through his war powers' executive authority. This would be a weak precedent in any case, but more important, it ignores the historical context. If the NWLB crystallized the moment of government support for labor representation at the bargaining table, then why were unions which had been during the labor shortage of the war so often and effectively wiped out, in many cases with government assistance to the employer, only a few years later? Why did it take the Depression and more to the point, the dramatically radical, solidaristic strikes of 1934 (Minneapolis-St. Paul Teamsters, Toledo Auto-Lite, the San Francisco General Strike and the Textile General Strike) to impel another administration to the next level of union recognition? The question should answer itself, and the Roosevelt Administration had no dire need for a precedent amid so much other unprecedented social legislation. Nor did it need memories of the Wilson war boards to make do in the Second World War; the New Deal itself supplied all the required precedents, if precedents were, indeed, required.

The "advances" made by labor organization during the two wars and during the Depression were in many cases real, but couched within the terms of awards that could be readily withdrawn or quickly turned against unionists. Here we leave Gould momentarily and turn to Goldfield and the question of the CP-influenced unions, one of the most difficult and understudied in all of post-1920 labor history.* Significant advances in scholarship have been made in just the last few years, but large areas remain clouded, especially the relation of local events and personalities to the changing political tides set in Washington, New York and Moscow.

To go back to this beginning, the thin written history of unions influenced, reshaped or launched by the Trade Union Educational League and the Trade Union Unity League offers little homogeneity, let alone conformity. The pre-

*Most of the recent scholarly developments are recorded in the specific union entries in the new edition of the *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), edited by Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas.

Stalinized Communists formed union factions, occasionally took over fading unions and restored them as much as possible (the Auto Workers Union being an admirable case in point) but most often they spent their time usefully propagandizing for a fightback against the "American Plan" anti-union campaigns and for a program of industrial unionism (or "amalgamation" of crafts).* As David Montgomery among others has argued, the isolated TUUL unions by contrast mostly had no chance of contracts and therefore returned to Wobbly-style leadership and support of strikes already in progress. For a variety of reasons having less to do with Russia than with the suppression of the wartime Left and the post-Wobbly legacy of union conservatism, the TUEL and TUUL lacked the historic opportunity to evoke the kind of vision which have made the Knights of Labor and the Industrial Workers of the World the foremost representatives of labor democracy. Tragically, so did their Left-led successors, for more complicated reasons.

The National Industrial Recovery Administration offered so little of substance that the Communists could cling to W. Z. Foster's badly imported idea of a "Soviet America." Local anti-Stalinist Marxists and independent radicals operated best on instinct, including that old favorite of many American unionists, workers' control. But the Wagner Act and National Labor Relations Act (and Board) offered quite a lot to the workers who Communists and their rivals wanted to organize—if and only if the partners on labor's side promised to be compliant. This was not a new situation for veteran socialists, whose most conservative figures had long since become the over-paid bureaucrats of the garment trade. But it was a new situation for younger and more militant socialists, for Communists (and those occasional Trotskyists with influence). Why did they accommodate themselves so quickly to arrangements that Wobblies would have scorned? That remains a large and fascinating question. When I posed it to Len DeCaux, former editor of *CIO News* (and himself loosely connected with the CP, that is to say, not under discipline), he answered readily: they were out so long, they didn't want to make trouble once they got in.

It's a simple explanation with a more complicated addendum. In the view of many political veterans from different sectors of the 1930s Left, the launching of the Second New Deal in 1935-36 allowed Franklin Roosevelt to hold the country in a sort of class-struggle stasis with the rules drawn rather carefully on both sides. Sometimes labor seemed on the verge of breaking out, as during the wave of sit-down strikes that took many a Marxist by surprise. But as Governor Frank Murphy proved in Flint, refusing to defend automobile manufacturers' property against sitdown strikers, even the most dramatic acts could be turned to New Deal advantage.

Hopes for a national labor or farmer-labor party, stronger in the mid-1930s AFL than the incipient CIO, were put on hold because of FDR's immense popularity among immigrant (European) workers in particular, and because the framework of a deal had already been quietly worked out, key labor figures (like the leftwing Milwaukee socialist and Amalgamated Clothing Workers

*I wish to acknowledge a conversation of mine with the late Phil Raymond, AWU leader who was unceremoniously pushed aside by the Party once the UAW took the field. Interview in the Oral History of the American Left, Tamiment Library, New York University.

leader, Leo Krzycki) abandoning the SP to support Roosevelt's reelection. The theme song of many a Leftist might have been "After Roosevelt...." None of them quite envisioned FDR's successor as a political thug like Truman, although many (longtime conservatives or recent converts from the CP alike), were eager enough to support him. Personal success, upward mobility and the cooperation of the government in stabilizing unionism and insulating union leadership through the dues check-off had made a world of difference by that time.

The apathetic attitude of most early CIO unions to women and nonwhites, and the immediate bureaucratic hold on such unions as the United Steelworkers, raises a host of other issues but none of them so far from the DeCaux sentiment above. Goldfield missed my point (perhaps I neglected to state it with sufficient clarity) that the social crisis of the 1930s, the downright lack of public faith in capitalism, prompted leftwingers to see any form of unionization, whether democratic or top-down, as the harbinger of better things certain to come.

Institutional success also prompted them to agree readily with the logic of NLRB mechanisms which, as H.L. Mitchell pointed out, meant for instance that members of the deeply interracial Southern Tenant Farmers Union—unable to pay dues, facing a glum future amid the mechanization of agriculture accelerated with New Deal assistance—did not qualify for the CIO and were effectively squeezed out of the CP-led Cannery Workers union which avowed its interracialism and worked hard trying to organize Chicanos and Filipinos in Western fields. The early United Auto Workers offers another story, but one just as ambiguous: the short-lived split-off AFL autoworkers union guided by Jay Lovestone (with funds from David Dubinsky) was a Jim Crow operation. Only with its demise did Reuther become the champion of racist ex-AFLers, offering him a hammer against his opponents and accelerating a faction struggle so complex that the details do not bear repeating here.*

Simply to recall some of the smaller unions where leftwingers (not only Communists) held wide influence speaks to the sincere efforts of thousands of ordinary radicals to overcome the imbalance of the largely white, "productivist" industrial union movement. The Food and Tobacco Workers, Marine Cooks and Stewards, the Teachers Union, Mine-Mill, cannery workers and United Public Workers among others were distinguished by their commitment to interracialism and to spread unionism beyond the northern factories, by the personal honesty and low salaries of their officers (relative, of course, to other CIO and AFL unions). Only a few of the Left unions, notably the National Maritime Union under Joseph Curran, became AFL-style havens for sluggers; nor did many others besides the NMU turn the famous blind eye toward mobsterism in the time-honored fashion of the building trades, the musicians'

*The Workers Party carried on a noble effort against the No Strike pledge and (unlike Goldfield's contention) was not the main supporter of the SIU/SUP, an honor or dishonor that belongs to the wartime Socialist Workers Party. The small group around C.L.R. James abandoned the WP in 1948, rejoining the SWP and abandoning them both two years later for splendid isolation. The WP is guilty as charged for supporting Reuther. In my considered view, the group around Bert Cochran, which tried to hold onto a Left anti-Reuther bloc as the CP was being pulverized, deserves the greatest credit in this instance.

James Petrillo, and the famously double-talking David Dubinsky.

But they were not models of internal union democracy anymore than their leaders were visionaries. As planned by Roosevelt administration officials to limit unrest, regularize negotiations and afford recognition, NLRB operations placed negotiations in the hands of specialists whose work (on the labor side) could be rejected by membership vote but not refocused by the demands of local unionists. Contrary to what Gould suggests, this was no conspiracy but a simple matter of policy whose goals most labor leaders shared with management and government: to replace "chaos" (intermittent working class upheaval and frequent disruptions) with "order." As Staughton Lynd and others have argued, the moment of triumph in achieving recognition, with all the benefits of unionism for the members, was also the moment when the grand vision of the Knights and Wobblies practically passed out of range. Communists consoled themselves with naive expectations for Washington and Moscow, making a return to sharpened class conflict, during the Hitler-Stalin Pact period, confused and inadequate even when voicing demands of workers suddenly facing a tight labor market for the first time in a generation. Socialists went along with the tide. Trotskyists fought a backstairs struggle for rank-and-file prerogatives.

A more consistent and democratic approach than most Communist leaders and those close to the Party offered would have been of inestimable value. But willingness to compromise early and often had been an important element of (institutional) success. Ben Gold, the most incorruptible figure in the needles trade and the one Communist (or near-Communist) whose success preceded the NLRB, was held in high estimation by the manufacturers because he brought reliable production as well as high wages and good benefits to the trade. Sidney Hillman, who often worked in close coalition with the Communists while managing to be intimate with FDR ("Clear it with Sidney!"), may be said to have finessed the CIO as an election-base for Roosevelt, convincing the closed-minded New York ex-plumber George Meany that industrial unionism was no more than a smoke-screen for political advance. Neither Gold nor Hillman and none of their compromises are of the same order as Sam Gompers's racism, global schemes and campaign of dirty tricks against the Left. But once more: neither did their styles of unionism lead toward the promised land, unless that was redefined from socialism to workers' consumerism.

That is surely a contribution to the elusive "seamless theory" that Hirsch is seeking. I'm not at all puzzled by the cravenness of most labor leaders, if Sidney Hillman and John L. Lewis have been the best figures in the mainstream since 1920. "Honest and militant unionism," whether in Hollywood (where the Left was pitted against the mob-connected IATSE and where FBI informer Ronald Reagan, who considered "industrialism" of the CIO a form of communism), Chicago or New York, was only temporarily shaped by class-struggle programs and then returned predictably to an imperial model of divide-and-conquer, at home and abroad.

My contribution to the discussion of unionism's crisis and decline during the post-World War II years has been to argue that wartime industrial relations and the rightward dip from "Doctor New Deal" to "Doctor Win the War," as well as the Communist unionists' pliability, opened the door to a revival of the AFL mentality within the labor movement at large. Contrary to C.L.R.

James (among others), the State Socialist- or State Capitalist-minded union leader, indifferent to private ownership but determined to hold onto direction of working class activity from above, was not to play a central role in the U.S. The crisis of labor could be managed, even as a dramatic succession of national strikes and city general strikes broke out in 1945-46. Racial divisions emphasized by the changing workforce had already become palpable, and a cultural conservatism (to return women from the factory to the home, preferably a new home in an all-white suburb) soon followed. The AFL comeback, with Meany as its peerless leader, was complete with the conversion of the willing (like Curran and Mike Quill) to anti-Communism and the expulsion of CP-led CIO unions.* Sure of their success in the new, brave world of Cold War America, the AFL chiefs were programmed for failure; or better, for their own version of a glorious exit from the stage when the children of white unionists entered the middle classes and the unworthy (but especially nonwhites) were left with worsening union jobs or no union jobs.**

Perhaps that outcome was already inscribed in the cultural conservatism of the 1930s widely observed by social historians and by no means absent from working class life. The imperial glory of the 1920s and the further racialization of American life with the return of the Ku Klux Klan, anti-immigration laws and the heavily propagandized invasion of Nicaragua, all had their effects. But on balance, I do not view these as decisive. Capitalism had failed Americans of the 1930s, and it was the combination of the New Deal (with benefits like Social Security virtually unimaginable a few years earlier) and the suddenness of war's approach which made a genuinely revolutionary vision, Knights- or Wobbly-style improbable. As in the case of the New Left, movements had hardly begun, local activists trained themselves, than the historical moment had passed; only for the movements of the 1930s, the institutional remnants often survived to comfort and oppress the next generations.

WILLIAM GOULD ASKS IF THE POSTWAR REVIVAL OF EUROPE THROUGH THE MARSHALL PLAN was not a good thing and the support of the Plan by the labor movement (emphatically including George Meany) not evidence of idealism. This goes near to the heart of issues right up to the present. My first response is that the recovery of capitalism under the sign of the mushroom cloud launched a military-industrial-consumer society which has laid waste the world's resources and opened Europe to a perverse model (cars, highways, and constant change of fashion) that Asians and Eastern Europeans now try, hopelessly (except for the

*Contrary to Stanley Aronowitz's suggestions, I do not find George Meany "nimble" or especially intelligent, albeit shrewd. Like a hammer-headed shark, he found his direction early and kept moving ahead until the rightward turn of labor caught up with him. A different Meany would have been able to make sense of the CIO a decade earlier and turned the insight to his advantage, actually brought nonwhite workers and women workers into the Federation during the 1950s and enhanced his own status greatly. As I note in *Taking Care of Business*, Meany instead goes down in history as the bloated Cold Warrior, enemy of the peace movement, affirmative action, environmentalism and feminism, thus the architect of organized labor's decline.

**Mike Hirsch seems to think that this does not explain the sheer incompetence of union leaders two generations later, and obviously the folks at AFL headquarters don't think so, either. They are, in my view, looking at the problem from too close up.

super-rich minority) to attain. My second response is that the Marshall Plan was fashioned to exclude the Soviet Union, and what we have learned since is that if Stalinism could survive isolation and military competition, it could not survive the opposite. As to Russia's "aggressive" intent: the betrayal of Greek Communists tells us otherwise; Stalin urgently wanted detente and an end to all unrest on "his" greatly extended borders, something that Truman had absolutely no intention of granting. The American imperial model, perfectly shared by the president and AFL leader, was to prevail.

And so the Cold War and the Security State (it's recorded that Truman uttered a sigh of relief at the news of the Korean war; he now had no problem instituting NSC-68, instituting a massive secret apparatus), the arms race (which produced hundreds of thousands of new jobs and dozens of new communities, many of them full of workers destined to become Reagan Democrats), and the nominal labor commitment to civil rights (Congressional lobbying on one hand; firm resistance to racial integration of unions and union leadership itself on the other).

Throughout the last half-century, with but few exceptions, attention has focused upon the public balancing act of labor and the federal government, as if the rest of things had been settled. I appreciate Gould's expertise in labor law, but the real problem lies in labor culture. Decades before the rust bowl gained its cognomen, the union movement gave up its chance to become a rich racial and gender mix too hearty to be rusted by the loss of industrial jobs. In a smaller compass, decades before the UAW had lost most of its base, its leaders might have drawn in the budding African-American leaders represented in the National Negro Labor Council and revitalized the aging membership, unionizing related occupations in something far more real than Walter Reuther's half-hearted Progressive Alliance. Reuther had decided firmly against that kind of alternative.

Again and again (and Kim Moody is right in saying that *Taking Care of Business* should have spent more time here), initiatives of the 1980s and earlier 1990s, like Miners for Democracy and Teamsters for a Democratic Union, have been blocked by a combination of old-fashioned thuggery and modified Reutherism. Union reformers rising to the top (here Arnold Miller comes to mind) learn to say the right words but cave in when the going gets tough; or like Ron Carey, whose leadership of the UPS strike remains controversial, are trapped in contradictions familiar for generations, an unwillingness to trust ordinary workers with decisions that affect their lives, alongside an extreme willingness to turn to the "experts" who will take care of the problem. This is not to say that the lessons of MFD or TDU are mostly negative, but that business unionism (aided by employers and the government) has a thousand ways of recuperating its losses to rank-and-file activity, if not to the corporations. Jane Slaughter, like Moody, has written eloquently on these issues elsewhere and here (like Rachleff and the Lynds) offers many reasons why the Sweeney regime, at its best, has not broken with a way of thinking and acting which cannot mobilize organized (let alone unorganized) working people, and which therefore cannot win.

If I'm dissatisfied with this perspective, it is not a matter of affirming John Sweeney's good intentions or analyzing his consciousness. Rather, it is that the situation of 1995-99 may very well not be the one facing us in a few years. Our job is not "waiting for Sweeney" (I regret that anyone should have interpreted *Tak-*

ing Care of Business to suggest it) but acting and trying to understand how organized labor might respond, top to bottom, to the changed moods that the return of social movements and the appearance of social crisis will surely bring.

Rachleff is right to say that nothing short of global solidarity can meet the crisis facing labor. That brings us squarely to Seattle, an explosion of popular energy sandwiched between the growing perception of corporate irresponsibility and the emergence of the next presidential race. John Sweeney finds himself rather like Eugene McCarthy of 1968: to prove his bona fides to the powers-that-be, he needs to be able to show that he can cool down workers and their allies, delivering progressives and even radicals (at least, all but the "irresponsible" ones) to the Democratic Party. But that kind of proof undercuts his claim to importance, because without a significant degree of unrest, he and the AFL-CIO become bit players in the big global game.

What is Sweeneyism? An increasingly desperate attempt to hold onto business unionism with (some) dramatically new rhetoric, (some) hitherto unimaginable allies, and (some) claims to global solidarity of workers, intermixed with old-fashioned economic nationalism and corporate-friendly international trade policies. It has been more pragmatic, in practice, than any American unionism since John L. Lewis's perambulation between the AFL, CIO and a never-never land of his own. But unfortunately, that "more" is not saying very much at all. Given the crisis of the Federation, it is phlegmatic and defensive, like mainstream unionism since at least the 1930s (and perhaps the 1910s) seeking to minimize its losses in the field while hoping to recover them in the political sphere.

Stanley Aronowitz is 105% correct in saying that more work must be done on the various differences between AFL-Central, the internationals at top and at their base, and that I did not do nearly enough of it in the limited space of *Taking Care of Business*. Contrary to public pronouncements or media events and good (or bad) high level appointments, revival will show itself first at the local level. And here Kim Moody (his suggestion filled out partly by Jane Slaughter) is on target arguing that the hopeful observations in my conclusion do not add to a fighting program. I never thought that they did.

But I probably see that potential program somewhat differently from my critics, because I continue to view the palace revolution, and similar smaller-scale developments, as having altered our tactical situation in subtle but important ways. Insiders tell me, for instance, that the most sluggish of current union presidents, Jay Mazur of UNITE, is going to retire within a year, giving way to the most energetic organizer the South has seen for two generations, Bruce Raynor. This is a move from the top, but not to be disregarded or treated as mere symptom. UNITE suffers under the weight of the old ILGWU, in which (as Bob Fitch has been pointing out lately) sweatshops could usually be found within a subway's ride of union headquarters, most frequently with the collusion of union officers. This kind of corruption has gone on for generations, despite all the "liberal" pronouncements (and many deeply conservative ones on international issues) on "free trade unionism" as the vehicle for social progress. Will we respond to Raynor, who comes out of the more progressive textile workers' union tradition, as another Mazur? Only if we are very foolish.

The same principle rules for the admirably progressive president of the Wisconsin AFL, David Newby (I'll admit to prejudice: he comes out of my old

union, the Madison-based Teaching Assistants Association), to Bill Fletcher of the Sweeney office and to a large handful of others who would not be benefited by mentioning their names. I do not view them as saviors (and they do not view themselves that way, either); and I know that they are under constraints. But I see them as a foothold on a different kind of unionism that is not going to arrive until Americans sense crisis again.

Seattle gives us some mighty hints about what that perception of crisis may be like. It does not give us the fighting program to which Moody alludes, and for which the continuing discussion in NEW POLITICS over the decades has been one of the best guides. What I hope we may see is a rising consciousness of possibility which will wipe out the defeatism and cynicism of the last period, and prompt the contact between socialists, interested union or would-be-union members, and enraged citizens (especially young people) who are sick of the race to the bottom, of working long hours with long commutes, of the individualism and loneliness that the corporate model of global economy provides along with the terrors of misdirected science and the prospect of endless wars.

I won't bother to recite the rest of the symptoms, here and abroad, except to repeat the obvious: that the wild stockmarket speculation will finally see an end, and all hell will almost certainly break loose as pensions and the personal hopes (realistic or unrealistic, earned or unearned) of tens of millions of people go right down the drain.

Since Gompers's day, and perfectly identified in Gompers' own mentality, U.S. organized labor has believed in an exploitable world without limits with its avowed ideal as more, more and more for union members, not more education (except as a means of social mobility), not solidarity (except among relatively privileged groups), not even the remotest glimmer of awareness about American responsibility for the problems in the world (except of course in all forms of denial). Nonwhite peoples around the world and in the U.S., were frankly regarded, at least until the rise of bilious Cold War-era rhetoric, as part of the landscape to be exploited. For the last forty years, from Black Power (and Red, Yellow and Brown Power) to the Oil Crisis, from Vietnam to Central America and the dawning awareness of extinction, history has been catching up with us as a nation. Now is the time to get ready for the consequences.

The "Chinese Question" and American Labor Historians

Stanford M. Lyman

> *The general public in this country, unfortunately, does not know or understand the Chinese. This is due partly to the remaining effect of the propaganda against the Chinese during the anti-Chinese agitation here, but primarily to the present prevalence of certain elements in this country, which makes this knowledge and understanding impossible.*
>
> J.S. Tow, *The Real Chinese in America(1923)*

> *There must be candor in disclosure, honesty in inquiry and resolute determination in attack, or we will fail again, as we have so often failed before.*
>
> C. Eric Lincoln, *Race, Religion and the Continuing American Dilemma* (1999)

A SPECTER IS HAUNTING AMERICA'S LABOR HISTORIANS: It is the apparition of the Chinese worker. Long gone from his once insecure place in the fields, factories, industries, mines, and railways on the western frontier, as well as from the shoe and cutlery manufactories where he once served as a short-term strikebreaking laborer in the Northeast, the Asian immigrant from what was once called the Middle Kingdom is today being raised from the ignominious grave to which earlier labor historians had consigned him. But now he serves as a foil in an ongoing debate over whether organized labor's history contains a rich heritage of left-multiracial virtues or a clandestine legacy of right-racist vices. Arrayed on each side of this battlefield of words and documents, accusations and counter-charges, are some of the finest minds and some of the newest Ph.D.-minted members of the historians' profession. Those who seek honor for a non-racist labor heritage are led by the late Herbert Gutman and count among

STANFORD M. LYMAN *is Robert J. Morrow Eminent Scholar and Professor of Social Science at Florida Atlantic University. A specialist on Asian American studies, minorities and sociological theory, he is the author of* Chinese Americans, The Asian in North America, *and* Chinatown and Little Tokyo: Power, Conflict and Community among Chinese *and* Japanese Immigrants in America. *His most recent book is* Postmodernism and a Sociology of the Absurd And Other Essays on the "Nouvelle Vague" in American Social Science.

their number Eric Arnesen, Bruce Laurie, Leon Fink, Alan Dawley, Alex Lichtenstein, Daniel Letwin, and numerous other epigoni. Those who examine the patterns and consequences of white working-class racism are a dissident element among labor historians, and include Herbert Hill, Alexander Saxton, David Roediger, Nick Salvatore, Noel Ignatiev, and Gwendolyn Mink, among others. To this force and counterforce must now be added works addressing the role of the Chinese workers and the anti-Chinese movement in the annals of American labor history. In support of the followers of Gutman there has recently appeared Andrew Gyory's *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act*;[1] while several works on labor matters within and affecting America's Chinese by Peter Kwong[2] stand in virtual but unstated opposition to the former's roseate thesis, as do portions of the research conducted by John Kuo Wei Tchen and Herbert Hill.[3]

When it comes to bringing the Chinese back into the history of organized labor in America, followers of Gutman must fight on two fronts. For it is an undisputed fact that America's first labor historians took great pride in the role played by organized labor's exclusion of the Chinese worker not only from the United States but also and equally significantly in his (and her) exclusion from trade union membership and eviction from jobs once dearly held. E. Salyer is thus quite correct when she observes, in a blurb written on the back cover of Gyory's book, that "he challenges the standard interpretations which have stood for years and become incorporated into the 'textbook' versions of American history." Although Salyer has exaggerated the extent to which standard textbooks had adopted the outlook of the previous generation's labor annalists, she is referring to Gyory's attempted repudiation of the thesis about Chinese workers and organized labor's response, best represented in a statement made by the much revered Selig Perlman in 1922:

> The anti-Chinese agitation in California, culminating as it did in the Exclusion Law passed by Congress in 1882, was doubtless the most important single factor in the history of American labor, for without it the entire country might have been overrun by Mongolian labor and the labor movement might have become a conflict of races instead of one of classes.[4]

Whereas Perlman and such other traditional labor historians as John R. Commons[5] and Philip Taft[6] justified the anti-Chinese actions taken by America's incipient trade union movement by treating their only slightly bowdlerized versions of the rhetoric employed by the Sinophobes as part of the *Zeitgeist*, Gyory — as the disciple who voluntarily accepted Gutman's challenge that someone accommodate the issues in the Chinese question to the theses central to the "New Labor History"[7] — insists on denying that white workers and their labor institutions were possessed by a vigorous and pervasive anti-Chinese animus.

To simplify his argument, Gyory lumps his opponents into a single category. He passes lightly over Perlman's statement on the matter, and is equally complacent over related comments made by Commons, Taft, and such other labor historians as Joseph G. Rayback and Gerald R. Grob. But, immediately, Gyory conflates their perspective with that of such present-day critics of the racist practices of organized labor as Herbert Hill,[8] Roger Daniels,[9] and Ronald Takaki,[10] — each of whom might be said to have agreed with the traditional labor historians that the anti-Chinese attitude and actions of the formative

national labor movement were central aspects of its development, but, unlike the latter, each of whom *denies* that this perspective and those actions were good, proper, ethical, or necessary. Gyory aims some of his most withering fire at Gwendolyn Mink. In 1986, Mink had argued that white workers' support for Chinese exclusion had become "a peculiar bridge between unionism and national politics."[11] In Gyory's opinion, Mink has erred most egregiously by "repeatedly stressing, with virtually no original evidence, that workers in the eastern United States backed the cries of their brethren in California and that their support for Chinese exclusion thereby 'nationalized labor politics' "; however, even worse, Gyory retorts, Mink has echoed "the work of [Alexander] Saxton and [Herbert] Hill and anticipated that of [David R.] Roediger."[12] Rejecting the findings of laborite Sinophobia in studies done decades earlier by Mary Roberts Coolidge,[13] Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer,[14] and Stuart Creighton Miller[15] — each of whom Gyory criticizes for adopting and elaborating upon what he regards as a false "national racist consensus"[16] on organized labor's history — Gyory counters with a postmodernist deconstruction of the racist process, viz., "race is . . . constructed differently at the same time by people in the *same* social class."[17] And, given his assumption that this assertion is a heretofore unrecognized truth, Gyory states, "Workers' myriad attitudes toward Chinese immigration demonstrate . . . and reveal the dangers of generalizing too broadly about the extent and uniformity of racism in any single group."[18]

But, if the workingmen and their associations are not the leading sources of America's anti-Chinese movement, then who are the culprits? Gyory's answer is, as Leon Fink[19] writes in a blurb appended to the cover of *Closing the Gate*, one that "rescues our understanding of the tragedy of Chinese exclusion (and by extension other American racial practices) from the glib generalities reliant on a resort to 'racist culture' in favor of a painstaking — if painful — account of specific political agency." That "political agency" is specified by Gyory: "The single most important force behind the Chinese Exclusion Act was national politicians of both parties who seized, transformed, and manipulated the issue of Chinese immigration in the quest for votes."[20] And thus begins his investigation, one that seeks nothing less than a "not guilty" verdict for the now nearly century-old indictment charging that America's labor movement has been scarred by its support for Sinophobic as well as other forms of a virulent racism.[21] Should Gyory succeed in his endeavor, he will not only relieve America's labor movement of its stigmatizing anti-Chinese heritage, but also (if we read between the lines of Fink's parenthetical statement above) absolve that movement of charges that its organizational practices restricted African Americans, Hispanics, and women, reducing the benefits that might have been gained from interracial solidarity and cooperation.[22] Eliminating its racist legacy might even succeed in returning the image of America's labor movement to that presented in 1891 by Edward and Eleanor Marx-Aveling.[23] More relevantly, it would provide an enormous assist to the posthumous fulfillment of Gutman's project: treating a broadened understanding of the class struggle as the unifying feature of America's labor movement, relegating labor union racism and workers' gender prejudices to insignificance.[24]

GYORY HAS CHOSEN TO UNDERTAKE A DAUNTING TASK. Leaving aside debates over whether the labor movement was (and, perhaps, still is) racist, whether the

exigencies of the times justify or fail to lend adequate support to the exclusionary position taken by the major unions, and whether workers did or did not hold to the same outlook as their own union leaders, there still remains the scholarship on this and related questions carried out by sociologists and historians of the Chinese, a body of research to which any labor historian should attend. Of these, Gyory did pay special attention to one work: *Chinese Immigration*, a well documented analysis of American Sinophobia, published in 1909 and written by sociologist Mary Roberts Coolidge (1860-1945).[25] A scholar-activist who launched modern sex research,[26] demonstrated in behalf of women's suffrage, authored the first major work on the domestic and marital lives of middle class women,[27] and conducted first hand investigations of the social and cultural life of the Native Americans of the Southwest,[28] Coolidge's study of the Chinese question has long been recognized as a forerunner of critical *engagé* research on this topic. For Gyory, it is of utmost importance to restrict the findings of Coolidge's "California thesis," which, as he summarizes it, "blamed workers, and particularly Irish immigrants, for fanning the flames of racial hatred." Hence, he complains about the fact that "Coolidge's thesis has remained the dominant explanation for Chinese exclusion," bemoans the fact that "[s]ucceeding generations of historians have refined but not overturned her argument," and proclaims, without presenting a scintilla of evidence in support of his statement, that Coolidge's *Chinese Immigration* is "marred by class-prejudice, numerous inaccuracies, and a polemical tone."[29]

The "succeeding generations of historians" to which he must be referring would have to include Elmer Sandmeyer, as well as such social scientists as Rose Hum Lee, Betty Lee Sung, and Peter Kwong. With the exception of his unpersuasive denunciation of Coolidge's exposé of the corrupt practices of American port officials in China,[30] and his dismissal of Sandmeyer's study as one that though "a more scholarly and balanced account" than Coolidge's, "essentially reaffirmed Coolidge's thesis,"[31] Gyory does not address the arguments about labor and racism contained in the works by these investigators of Chinese life in America. However, their findings deserve at least a hearing, if not a central place, in studies of the Chinese workingmen and working women. His neglect of these works is a glaring omission; it violates what is perhaps the single most important tenet of the New Labor History — viz., the demand for a "rich and detailed study of the many varieties of past American working-class experiences."[32] Unless, that is, Gyory intends to evict the Chinese worker from the annals of American labor history! But more on this point below.

Gyory does not bother to mention, much less refute, Rose Hum Lee's statement that America's Chinese immigrants "were excluded from skilled occupations by the labour unions' concerted efforts to bar them from shoe, textile, and tobacco making, heavy machinery and other industries."[33] Nor does he acknowledge the comparative point to be made with respect to the allegation that Chinese workingmen were a peculiar species of "cheap labor," although Betty Lee Sung had done so some 31 years before his book was published: "The greatest antagonism against Chinese immigration in former years was directed against the threat of cheap labor. Not that the Chinese were different from other immigrant nationalities in this respect . . . But it was felt that because of the greater endurance and efficiency of the Chinese laborer, he was a threat to the job tenure of the white laborer."[34] Moreover, Gyory fails to recognize what Peter Kwong has

shown, viz., that the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated unions continued their hostility to the Chinese worker[35] well into the 20th century. "Capital," writes Peter Kwong in his recent and devastating critique of the conditions under which undocumented workers live and labor in the United States, "counts on labor's traditional racism and exclusionary practices, for it recruits precisely those whom organized labor excludes."[36]

On December 17, 1943, Congress approved H.R. 3070, entitled "An Act to repeal the Chinese Exclusion Acts, to establish quotas, and for other purposes." It became Public Law 199, thus ending 61 years of prohibited entry for Chinese.[37] Gyory, who claims his "book answers a simple question: Why did the United States pass the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882?" insists and seeks to demonstrate that "most workers evinced little interest in Chinese exclusion," and that "Organized labor nationwide played virtually no role in securing the legislation."[38] In effect, when, in the same paragraph, he quotes an otherwise unidentified midwestern congressman declaring, "To protect our laboring classes . . . the gate . . . must be closed,"[39] Gyory seems to be implying that the laboring classes were being protected from something — Chinese immigration — of which they had no fear and little concern. But not even his own distorted picture of the events leading up to the passage of the Exclusion Act will sustain this remarkable thesis. However, even if one were to accept the latter thesis for purposes of discussion, it would still be necessary to account for organized labor's persistent pursuit of exclusion after the original law had been enacted, a pursuit that continued up to and including the Congressional debates over H.R. 3070 — during which, to give but one example, Lester M. Hunt of the Teamsters' Union argued that the repeal was being "instigated by the communists and that Congress was being coerced into passing the bill"[40] — and to which the American Federation of Labor offered "stiff opposition."[41] Gyory has not attended to this profoundly important question. His investigation ends in 1882, 61 years short of where it should have gone.

THERE IS A TRIADIC STRUCTURE TO GYORY'S ARGUMENT. Its architectonic is that of a three-legged stool upholding New Labor History's precepts as set forth by Gutman[42] and elaborated upon by David Montgomery[43] and Leon Fink.[44] One leg purports to show the white workingman's commitment to an antiracist abolitionism, an antislavery emancipatory outlook, and a position not unlike that of the postwar Reconstructionists. Because they were steadfast in these beliefs, Gyory insists that the white workingmen of the East Coast were either hostile to, indifferent toward, or only occasionally aroused to action by the anti-Chinese rhetoric and Sinophobic prejudices of both their West Coast compatriots and their labor movement's own leaders. Instead of race prejudice, Gyory insists there was manifested a vague but powerful toleration of worker solidarity amidst ethnic diversity. As he would have it, it was that sense of interracial union that was manipulated by unscrupulous politicians who turned the legitimate fears of these workingmen into support for the exclusion of Chinese from the United States. The second leg of Gyory's argument gives substance to these fears by reviving the "coolie" thesis, viz., the belief that virtually every Chinese who set foot on America's shores was an involuntary, "imported contract laborer." Denying that this epithet and allegation were products of an anti-Chinese stereotype, Gyory virtually elevates the anti-coolie hysteria of the 19th century to a place in

the rational belief system of white workers as well as an appropriate rationale for public policy. The third leg consists of a subtle arrangement of the temporal aspects of labor history such that organized labor's anti-Chinese activities after the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act are omitted altogether, in effect treating them as matters of minor significance, events outside the scope of Gyory's study, and thus outside the question of labor's responsibility for the treatment and condition of the Chinese labor force in America. Each of the legs of this three-legged thesis is dependent on the other two, and each deserves critical attention.

Abolitionists

"CONTRARY TO ALEXANDER SAXTON'S CLAIM that 'not much of abolition rubbed off on them,' " Gyory contends, "the abolitionist movement — in which many workers had taken part — and the ideals of the Civil War had indeed affected both working-class ideology and working-class demands."[45] This statement serves a two-fold purpose in Gyory's rhetorical strategy. Simultaneously, it gives substance to the New Labor History's imperative that the culture of both immigrant and native workers be made a central feature of any investigation;[46] in addition, it puts a positive ideological spin on the white workingmen's opposition to Chinese contract labor. "In the cacophony of voices in the Reconstruction era," he writes, "workers claimed the free-labor legacy of the Civil War . . . East of the Rockies, workers clothed their protest (against Chinese immigration) not in the rhetoric of race versus race or native versus immigrant but in that of freedom versus slavery."[47] Thus does Gyory convert the coded rhetoric of latent Sinophobia into a manifest defense of workers' liberation.

However, as a New Labor Historian concerned not to over-generalize a group's beliefs, Gyory might have inquired whether there in fact existed a common and uniform attitude toward abolition among the antebellum white working classes, and whether that same uniformity of thought and conduct had held during the postwar period. The evidence on this matter has long been available. It will not support such a thesis.

That a persistent, pervasive pro-abolitionist stance did *not* characterize the outlook of white workingmen has been demonstrated in numerous historical investigations. Indeed, insofar as antebellum attitudes toward African Americans carried over and were projected onto Chinese workers, they were not of a kind that would likely lead to an opposition to exclusion. Paul Goodman has noted the diversity in the responses of white workingmen to abolitionism — "a small number joined the movement, others sympathized and signed anti-slavery petitions that did not commit them to immediatism, but many more remained indifferent or hostile and bitterly prejudiced toward free African Americans." Moreover, Goodman goes on to observe that "Most anomalous were the radical, egalitarian workingmen who flocked to the Jacksonian Party in coalition with slaveholders and planters who held them and all free labor in contempt."[48] Nor was this much different in New York City where, even before the Draft Riots of 1863, white laborers "feared not only the competition of Negroes in the skilled trades but also the loss of social status which resulted from associating with them."[49] In 19th-century Chicago, as Eric L. Hirsch's investigation

has emphasized, "Anglo-American workers often accepted a hegemonic ideology promoted by the largely Protestant middle and upper classes . . . Nativism and antiradicalism were part of the ideology . . . "[50]

For Irish workers, the majority of whom would become the mainstay of the pro-exclusion forces, it is simply not true to say, as Gyory does, that later studies merely adapted Coolidge's so-called "California thesis" to the national scene. Rather, recent studies show that the complex civic, occupational, social, religious, and marital situation of the Irish workers is related to their decision to move against first the African Americans, then the Chinese.[51] Essentially, the Irish workers were moved by racially-based status considerations. Unlike black slaves and many free Negroes, the Irish had the right to vote, to join political parties, to seek niches of influence, power, and control in urban politics — each providing a competitive advantage in the struggle to get ahead in America; each threatened by identification and association with those non-whites who had been declared aliens ineligible to citizenship in the United States, i.e., blacks in 1857,[52] Chinese in 1878.[53] What the Irish and other European immigrants sought and gained was not only what Roediger, inspired by W. E. B. DuBois, calls the "wages of whiteness,"[54] but something more comprehensive, the social, moral, and civic status of white men.[55] Thus, the rejection by the Irish miners of Pottsville of Daniel O'Connell's 1842 exhortation that the Irish workers "treat the colored people as your equals, as brethren";[56] thus, the antebellum Irish parade to New York City's polls shouting "Down with the Nagurs!";[57] thus the spread of anti-Negro assaults in what began as the New York City draft riots of 1863 to Albany, Troy, Yonkers, Hartford, and Boston — and, in New York City, to attacks on Chinese peddlers suspected of having liaisons with white women[58]; thus James Brewer Stewart's observation that "the unskilled Boston dock worker was always quick to repulse any challenge to his sense of fraternal 'whiteness' with the Winthrops and the Adamses"[59]; thus the Catholic anathema pronounced on California's Chinese workers by the *metis* priest Father Bouchard;[60] thus Denis Kearney's vitriolic verbal volley heaping invective on Chinese domestic servants for imperiling the jobs deserved by Irish women;[61] and thus the addition of the long-queued, cunning "heathen Chinese" to the repertory of low-brow Irish vaudeville.[62] The Chinese became not merely the indispensable enemy[63] of Irish workers' opportunities, but also morally inferior people, those farthest down, but, more significantly, the people to be kept out of the labor movement and the country itself.

Reconstruction, Redemption and Anti-Chinese Racism

GYORY ATTEMPTS TO DOWNPLAY THE INFLUENCE OF DENIS KEARNEY'S DEMAND that "The Chinese Must Go," claiming it was given undue importance by selective and biased journalists, but he has an even bigger problem with the anti-Chinese rhetoric of an East Coast journalist, John Swinton, a Sinophobic demagogue who "would later emerge as the nation's preeminent labor editor of the 1880s, proprietor of a radical newspaper that bore his name."[64] Because, in 1870 Swinton published an editorial in the *New York Tribune*, denouncing the Chinese as "inferior," "depraved," practitioners of "indecent and obscene, foul and mortifying vices," and asked, "Can we afford to admit the transfusion into the national

veins of a blood more debased than any we have known," and answered his own question, stating that it entailed but an easily understood conflict: between "the *roast rat* against the *roast beef*,"[65] (an adumbration of the infamous paper by Samuel Gompers and Hermann Gudstadt, issued by the American Federation of Labor in Washington, D.C., in 1902,and entitled, "Some Reasons for Chinese Exclusion. Meat vs. Rice. American Manhood against Asiatic Coolieism. Which Shall Survive?") Gyory finds it necessary to play down the effect that Swinton's polemic would have on rank-and-file white workers: "His anti-Chinese screed," he asserts, "proved an ugly and ironic segue to his brilliant career: Ugly because of its virulent racism; ironic because workers, for whom he intended it, largely dismissed his argument and disregarded his remedy."[66] However, Gyory's interpretation of this key event, offered without evidence to back it up, does not receive support from the research of John Kuo Wei Tchen, who points out that Swinton had "articulated a pan-Euro-American nationalism that would foreshadow dominant American racial ideology for . . . years to come." Tchen calls attention to the fact that Swinton, in "contrast to the distinction . . . others made between 'coolies' and free immigration, . . . [had] emphasized unresolvable racial differences as the primary grounds for anti-Chinese protest," and he underscores Swinton's claim that "The life genius, and power of the American Republic is with the European race."[67] Tchen concludes, "I disagree with Andrew Gyory's contention that Swinton 'convinced very few if any members of the working classes,' "[68] pointing out that after Swinton, the sloppy usage of the term 'coolie labor' became "a synonym for all Chinese men, eliding significant differences of contracts among Chinese laborers into a term used to refer to all Chinese laborers," and going on to observe that "Hence all Chinese labor in the United States became equated with 'coolieism' which was, as (the editor of the *New York Herald)* wrote, 'but another name for African slave labor.' "[69] It is not going too far to say that Gyory carries off these same elisions in his revival of the "coolie myth" and his tendentious defense of the late 19th-century white workingmen.

Gyory's "politicians" thesis pales into insignificance if one compares its explanatory value with that of John Kuo Wei Tchen's briefer but even more comprehensive investigation of the origins and development of exclusionism among the Irish of New York City.[70] Tchen presents a socio-cultural analysis that comes closer to E. P. Thompson's demand for the inclusion of popular culture features of workers' lives,[71] extends the "whiteness" studies of Roediger and Ignatiev, and combines these with a showing of how ideologies supporting race and gender hierarchies were fitted together to form a Sinophobic and exclusionist orientation. "Irish competition with blacks and Chinese undoubtedly existed," he concedes, " . . . yet it is not a sufficient explanation for Irish anti-black and anti-Chinese feelings and actions." [72] Added to job competition, Tchen points out, was the rise of fears about "amalgamation," already present in the New York City riots of 1834 and 1863, but exacerbated to a much higher degree by the appearance on New York City newsstands of David Goodman Croly's and George Wakeman's pseudo-scholarly, sensationalist pamphlet, *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the White Man and Negro*.[73] The few Irish-Chinese marriages that had occurred in the early decades of Chinese arrival in the city came to be regarded thereafter as a threat to white civilization. Further, Tchen shows, after Irish minstrels, comedians, and actors began to add scathing stereotypes of Chinese to their popular variety shows in the

Bowery, in the process providing Irish workers with a legitimation of their belief that there was a people further down in the social and moral scale than themselves — further down, that is, than the Anglo-American Protestants held them to be — they facilitated their own ascent into the economically and politically privileged "white" race, leaving behind both black laborers and their erstwhile fellow workers, the Chinese. "The Irish did not magically become white," Tchen points out. "Irish men were able to become Americanized by actively participating in racial masquerades of the established political culture . . . , by so doing they became increasingly viewed as 'white.' "[74] And, employing general fears of race mixing and Sinophobically stereotyped low-brow cultural displays, New York City's Irish Catholics could "defuse longstanding Anglo-American and European-Protestant hatred toward them . . . [by] symbolically displac[ing] such low valuation placed on them onto an even lower group."[75] Precisely "because they had prerequisite talents and skills for entering into New York's commercial stage culture just at the point of its expansion, the Irish were in a unique position to enhance their own image in mainstream society while creating new 'heathens' to displace their longstanding negative image."[76] Thus Tchen, carrying forward themes developed earlier by Ignatiev and Roediger, provides elements of "the cultural background that made possible the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act."[77]

Gyory's assertion that white workers were moved in both their attitudes and their responses to former slaves and to Chinese immigrants by the ideals of abolition and Reconstruction, is further contradicted by the evidence amassed by historians. Thus, Howard Rabinowitz concludes his comprehensive empirical investigation of what happened to the freedmen-and-women during the actual postwar quarter century on a doleful note: "For the majority of urban Negroes . . . the first 25 years after the war were years of frustration and disappointment. The year 1890 found them at the lowest levels of the economic ladder with little prospect for improvement."[78] Organized labor, observes Eric Foner, in "its own conception of equality remained in many respects thoroughly conventional. Composed mostly of artisans and skilled industrial workers, unions proved unwilling to expand their membership beyond the ranks of white men." Moreover, he goes on, "In California, where indentured [sic!] Chinese immigrants by 1870 constituted a quarter of the wage labor force, the agitation for their exclusion, more than any other issue, shaped the labor movement's development."[79]

But were the Chinese workers so different from white laborers in their aims and efforts? Gyory, in effect abandoning any attempts to understand the culture of the Chinese worker, displays no interest whatsoever in such social, economic or community-wide institutions of the Chinatown Chinese as clans, *Landsmannschaften*, or labor guilds.[80] Nor does he give any recognition to such Chinese individuals as the crusading newspaper editor and progressive opponent of exclusionism, Ng Poon Chew,[81] or to the founder-editor-publisher, in 1883, of the first anti-exclusionist East coast Chinese newspaper, Wong Chin Foo,[82] who appropriately entitled his short-lived but influential publication the *Chinese American* (*Hua Mei Xin Bao).* In any true labor history of the late 19th century, Wong Chin Foo should be included, for he was the principal leader of the Chinese community's attempt to overcome the citizenship provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act, and in 1892 founder and secretary of the *Chinese Equal Rights League of America*, an association of English-speaking Chinese dedicated

to securing the civil rights of all Chinese in the United States. According to the *New York Times*, the League's members "wore American clothes, . . . patent leather shoes and white neckties,"[83] thus displaying openly the lie of unadaptability broadcast nationwide by the spokesmen for the white labor unionists.

In contrast to the argument Gyory is advancing, labor historian David Montgomery, in his occasional but pointed mentions of Chinese workers, has in effect argued that the latter showed themselves — by their willingness to labor long and hard at dangerous tasks under life-threatening conditions,[84] and, even more to the point, by their ability to organize themselves into labor guilds and proto-unions that were willing to and did in fact go on strike — to have the very characteristics that should have made them candidates for recruitment into the burgeoning labor movement. Although Professor Montgomery is not the first to take note of the fact that "when laborers unionized as laborers . . . their organizations were based on ethnic ties," he should be credited with being one of the few who observe that "the context of the exclusion movement also inspired purely Chinese unions of cigar makers, jean makers, and laundrymen."[85] Moreover, Montgomery does not treat these Chinese labor guilds as antithetical to the aims or the organizational structure of the white workingmen's associations of that era, but rather, he compares them favorably to those formed by Greek and Italian workers.[86]

But, Montgomery's studies go even further, in effect undermining much of Gyory's argument. Montgomery published his findings more than a decade before Gyory had produced his. Of great significance in this regard, is Montgomery's analysis of Chinese-initiated work stoppages and strikes, and his reports on the Chinese laborers' willingness to participate in the very unions whose white members scorned their efforts, rioted against them, and clamored for their exclusion from both the labor market and the country. "Although few in America were aware of it at the time, [the Chinese working on the Central Pacific section of the Transcontinental railway] staged, in June 1867, one of the largest-scale strikes of the century."[87] As Montgomery goes on to observe, demanding a wage comparable to that being paid to white workers, insisting on a ten-hour day, and calling for abolition of whipping for those who quit, the Chinese refused to leave their makeshift tents for a week, won their wage demands, and returned to work. Anti-Chinese violence in Vancouver, Tacoma, Seattle, Denver and Los Angeles, as well as the wholesale expulsion of the entire Chinese community from Humboldt County, California, nevertheless continued as one element in the white workingmen's campaign of ethnic cleansing of the labor market.[88] "White workers and farmers," Montgomery asserts, "who flocked to the Pacific Coast in search of high wages and fertile valleys quickly and virtually unanimously came to look on first the Chinese and later the Japanese as the carriers of poverty and social decay."[89] And, in direct contradiction of the thesis that Gyory is espousing, Montgomery points out, "The labor movement itself played a leading role in the struggle to exclude Chinese and Japanese from American life altogether."[90]

Contract Labor: The Chinese Workingman as a 'Coolie'

A CENTRAL FEATURE OF GYORY'S ARGUMENT distinguishes between the right of Chinese laborers to *emigrate* to America — which, he claims, white workingmen did

not oppose — and the right of capitalists to *import* Chinese to America under conditions of contract — which, he insists, was the sole objection made in the white workers' exclusionary demands. The former was lawful under American statutes until 1882; the latter allegedly aroused the ire of white workers to what Gyory believes was a real socioeconomic evil, contract labor. It was this evil that provided a legitimate basis for extending a prohibition on entrance to the United States to any people who were brought into the country in that condition.[91] Thus, to buttress his claim on this crucial point — (and, incidentally, to refute a charge that Herbert Hill had brought against Adolph Strasser, Cigar Makers' International Union president, viz., that this colleague of AFL leader Samuel Gompers was one of "two men, above all others . . . responsible for organized labor's crusade against Asian workers,"[92] as well as a similar accusation made by Gwendolyn Mink, namely that Strasser had "defended the anti-Chinese posture of [his] California colleagues and actively involved [himself] in the exclusion movement[93]) — Gyory quotes the testimony of Adolph Douai and Adolph Strasser, two labor leaders who in 1878 testified on the Chinese immigration issue before the House of Representatives' Hewitt committee, convened to investigate the causes of the ongoing economic depression of that era. Douai, editor of the *Arbeiter-Union*, claimed, "We would not restrict anyone . . . We demand that Chinese emigration under contract ought to be stopped immediately," but "[n]ot otherwise."[94]

Strasser, pressed over and over again by Chairman Hewitt as to the precise nature of his opposition to Chinese immigration, insisted, "I am not opposed to the Chinaman, or any nationality; but I am opposed that John Chinaman or anyone else should be imported here as a coolie under contract. I don't agree that the Chinaman must go. I cannot agree with that, because you might as well say that someone else must go. That is wrong; I cannot agree to that. I am not in favor of that; but I am in favor not to tolerate the direct importation of coolies by contract." When Hewitt asked him, "You won't allow anyone to be brought here under contract?" Strasser replied, "I am opposed to it."[95] However, Gyory's attempt to relieve Strasser and most of the East Coast white workers from the charge that they possessed and were possessed by a generalized Sinophobic bias will not survive closer scrutiny.

Perhaps, first, it ought to be noted that, despite all the posturing before Congressional committees and other public venues, the opponents of contract labor succeeded, as the wording of the Chinese Exclusion Act plainly shows, in prohibiting the coming to America of *all* Chinese laborers, whatever their contractual condition: "sec.15. That the words 'Chinese laborers," wherever used in this act, shall be construed to mean both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining."[96] Indeed, subsequent renewals of the act enlarged the meaning of the term "laborer" to include salesmen, clerks, buyers, bookkeepers, accountants, managers, storekeepers, apprentices, agents, cashiers, physicians, restauranteurs, and laundry operators,[97] hardly "coolies" by any stretch of the verbal imagination, no matter how it might be attached to this kind of rhetorical imagery. Moreover, the original act and subsequent as well as earlier judicial rulings, put two additional burdens on Chinese who wished to emigrate. The first was denial of citizenship: Section 14 of the Act provided "That hereafter no State court or court of the United States shall admit Chinese to citizenship; and all laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed."[98] Four years earlier, in the Federal District Court proceeding *In re Ah Yup*, a Chinese immi-

grant alien was declared to be "Mongolian," and being, therefore, neither "white" nor of "African nativity" nor "African descent," to be ineligible for citizenship in the United States.[99] The second burden took the form of an extension of legal disabilities already applicable to Chinese men to their wives: "The wife of a Chinese labourer," observed Huang Tsen-ming, Associate Justice of China's Judicial Yuan in 1936, "or a Chinese woman not previously a labourer, who married a Chinese labourer, was held to have or acquire the status of the husband, and was not permitted to enter the United States."[100] Just as Chief Justice Taney had in 1857 denied United States citizenship to Dred Scott and all other African Americans, foreclosing for them the possibility of being included in the Constitutional compact embracing "We, the people,"[101] so, in the court ruling of 1878, ratified by section 14 of the Exclusion Act in 1882, did the justices and legislators do the same to Chinese immigrants. While the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution revoked the Dred Scott ruling on African Americans' citizenship, Chinese immigrants in American would not become eligible for naturalization until such a provision was included in the repeal legislation of 1943. Organized labor from either the East or West Coasts did nothing to aid in the repeal of this law, and in fact did much to encourage its continuance. To give but one telling example: In 1924, Hugh Frayne, a New York representative of the A.F.L., told the Congressional committee holding hearings on immigration restriction, "Labor is for the entrance of suitable immigrants from all nations except the Asiatic ones."[102]

Gyory seeks to re-attach legitimacy to the fear that a "coolie trade" from China would swamp America and subvert the aims of its progressive labor movement. In this sense, his thesis seems to support the argument made by Perlman and quoted at the beginning of this essay. However, he doesn't want to attribute this apprehension to white workers if it is considered a racially prejudiced stereotype; rather, he wishes to assign it to the white workers as a prescient perspective if it is based in fact. Thus, although in his text and in a footnote citation[103] he indicates that he must know about Persia Crawford Campbell's distinction between the "credit-ticket" system, by which a great many Chinese came to America,[104] and the coolie trade proper, outlawed by poorly enforced American laws of 1862 and later years,[105] by which Chinese were brought to Peru,[106] Cuba,[107] the British West Indies,[108] and other areas where exploitation of Asian laborers was the order of the day,[109] he purposefully allows this distinction to be obscured and glossed over, making 19th-century Chinese immigration to the United States appear to be but one more instance of the nefarious and multi-faceted coolie trade. Hence, Gyory places a greater emphasis on the "Koopmanschap affair"[110] — an ultimately abortive scheme hatched at a convention of planters meeting in Memphis, (1869), whereby about 200 Chinese were inveigled, shanghaied, or kidnapped from the interior of Guangdong province and brought to New Orleans by Cornelius Koopmanschap in order to supply the South with agricultural laborers[111] — than on the more common means by which Chinese came to this country. For example, when Gyory recounts that in the three years before the Chinese exclusion law was passed, fears were noised in the press and by white labor agitators, warning that the Chinese were moving eastward into the workplaces of white laborers, he opines that "The ghost of Koopmanschap hovered ominously," and that in effect the white worker was being told "You are replaceable, and your replacements are ready."[112] Just as,

earlier, Gyory, having discussed the meaning of the word "coolie," had posed a series of rhetorical questions: —

> But were all Chinese who signed contracts 'coolies' and 'almost slaves'? Could an impoverished Chinese man sign a contract and not be a 'coolie'?

And then answered them: "Possibly, probably, but no one knew for sure."[113] — so, in his discussion of the fears attending the rumors of a "Chinese labor invasion" of the East, rumors spread by Sam Quong, a recent immigrant, Mrs. Timothy Sargent, a promoter of Chinese domestic services, Gifford Parker, a merchant in the China trade, and planter Henry Scharett, he concedes, "There may have been little truth to their statements, but no one could be sure, and in the end it really didn't matter."[114] But, of course, it was possible to ascertain the truth *then*,[115] and it did matter *then* — to the Chinese who were to become the victims of these base canards, and to the white workers who should have been able to figure out for themselves, since they were not told by their leaders, that dividing the working class into excludable and eligible workmates on the basis of race would do untold damage to labor solidarity and the need for workers to speak to capital in a multi-ethnic but single voice.[116] And it should matter *now* to Gyory in particular and to labor annalists in general. For the unrepentant mendacity of the charges hurled at the Chinese by both the rank and file and the leaders of the American labor movement continue not only to dirty labor's escutcheon but also to falsify labor history itself. What yesterday's white workers need is not a new form of historiographical exoneration for their racist misdeeds, but rather an acknowledgment of the role they played in the anti-Chinese movement and a recognition of the proactive effects their involvement in the "Chinese Question" had on both Chinese life chances in the United States and the labor movement itself. These desiderata, sad to say, Gyory does not provide.

Although contract labor was by no means unknown in other sectors of the labor market in the United States,[117] it was alleged to be a peculiar feature of Chinese immigration. To be sure, from time to time, the importation of Chinese under fixed contracts was proposed in order to supply certain regions with low paid agricultural workers — the three outstanding instances being the abortive "Coolie Bill" proposed in California in 1862,[118] the antebellum pro-slavery "fire-eaters" attempts to seize Cuba, make it a slave State, and, as an added bonus, import portions of that Spanish colony's small Chinese population as "warrantee" workers on Mississippi's plantations,[119] and the aforementioned Koopmanschap affair,[120] which in fact was the final and failed large-scale attempt to substitute Chinese for Freedmen on the South's plantations.[121] However, much like the Chinese indentured in the Caribbean in the same era,[122] the few Chinese who were brought to the South in the post-Civil War era resisted confinement to their proposed serfdom on plantations, settled as shopkeepers in small Southern towns such as Greenville, Mississippi, and served for decades as middlemen proprietors selling goods to blacks, brokering commercial and occasionally local political relations between blacks and whites and, in the Delta region, inter-marrying with African American women and parenting what would become bi-racial families.[123] These Chinese were hardly a threat to the white workers who organized against them. Moreover, many of these Chinese went to court demanding their civil rights under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution[124]. In 1927, to take one example from many that might have

been chosen, one Chinese family, with the support of the community, brought an unsuccessful suit to the United States Supreme Court seeking desegregation of Mississippi's white/colored school system.[125] The Chinese coolie, as envisioned in the paranoia of the Sinophobes, and in the portrait of him provided by Gyory, was for the most part, a figment of the white racist's fertile and fetid imagination, an element in the propaganda taken up not only by politicians — as Gyory would have us believe — but also by organized and organizing labor's leaders regardless of party affiliation — as a reading of the *Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League* would reveal.[126]

The actual means by which most Chinese immigrated to the United States was by incurring a debt, i.e., by purchasing a "credit-ticket" in order to pay for their transoceanic passage, and, perhaps, provide for their basic needs when they first arrived. "Two middlemen systems evolved," write leading Chinese American historians Him Mark Lai, Joe Huang, and Don Wong in their careful analyses of the means by which Chinese peasants and workers could depart from China and journey overseas, in order "to facilitate emigration." In one, the "credit-ticket" system, "passage money was advanced to the emigrant who then repaid his debt after arrival in the new land"; the other — the coolie system proper, it might be called — "involved emigrants signing term contracts of service in foreign lands in return for their passage." The distinction in practice was familiar to the peoples of Southeastern China, whose husbands and sons made up the bulk of Chinese going overseas. In the latter system, "Chinese were frequently tricked or coerced into going abroad. Cantonese called these dealings *maaijeutzai*, meaning "selling pigs."[127] In the former, although abuses were not unknown,[128] there was more than a semblance of free and voluntary migration. "During the nineteenth century," writes Liping Zhu, "the majority of Chinese immigrants came to the United States by means of the credit-ticket system . . . [But] other poor peasants simply signed a contract with either the Chinese merchants or foreign agents, who paid all expenses for transit to the United States in exchange for their labor for a certain period, which varied from two to ten years. These people were the so-called contract laborers."[129] However, Zhu goes on to emphasize, "From the beginning, the majority of Chinese pioneers to the American West were free."[130] And, unlike Gyory, who, in his attempt to denigrate Coolidge's comments on the consular service's corrupt practices, appears to be willing to accept the consular service's analogy of contract labor to slavery,[131] Zhu points out, "Unlike African slaves, the Chinese migrated to the United States voluntarily."[132]

Indeed, Chinese migrated to the United States in several different ways. Not only were there a small number of attempts to recruit contract labor from China, but also there was a more widely used debt-based approach to immigrating, not unlike the "padrone" system used by European workers who journeyed to America.[133] In the Chinese case, Chinatown associations rooted in clanship or district of origin acted as both labor brokers and debt-collectors.[134] But, in addition, there was a certain amount of utterly free and individualized migration, as has been emphasized in Tchen's pathbreaking study of New York City's pioneer Chinese.[135] Thus, the coming of Chinese to the United States should be contrasted to, say, that of those who went to Cuba in the early period, where, in the 1850s and for two decades thereafter, "From an economical point of view, the Chinese became the first viable alternative to the African slaves . . . [until, that

is,] the Chinese empire's cancellation in 1873 of the agreement that had authorized the traffic in coolies . . . " Moreover, in later years, "Spaniards, Chinese, and white and black Cubans served as [railroad] stokers, brakemen, and day laborers . . . [such that the Cuban labor-force's ethnic heterogeneity] at first [held] back the creation of a homogeneous class awareness."[136] Denise Holly, who carefully re-examined the Chinese Yamen's *Cuba Commission Report* of 1876, concluded:

> It is estimated that one million Cantonese left the two provinces of South China between 1840 and 1875, the majority coming from Kwantung . . . *The majority departed as free workers for the mines of California, Canada, or Australian Queensland,* and for the French, Dutch, and English plantations of Southeast Asia. Some Cantonese were recruited by Surinam and other Dutch possessions, and the English and French islands such as Mauritius and Réunion. Of the total number of emigrants, roughly 100,000 persons signed contracts to work in Peru, and 142,000 went to Cuba.[137]

And two more points are worth mentioning in order to lay to rest — hopefully once and for all — Gyory's raising of the coolie charge against the Chinese who came to the United States. Contrary to his claim that a great many Chinese were "imported" under contract into the United States, especially during and after the years when the Transcontinental Railway[138] was being constructed, it is to Robert G. Lee's discerning investigation into the origins and discontinuities of Chinese immigration to the United States that Gyory should have turned — for Lee shows, *inter alia*:

> While the Central Pacific did recruit laborers beginning in 1867, it had already hired many of its workers from among the Chinese already in California. After the completion of the trans-continental line in 1869 the Chinese still remained active in rail construction throughout the West, but there is little evidence to suggest that the other lines recruited fresh labor from China but rather used the massive work force laid off by the Central Pacific.[139]

Gyory also makes much of the fact that Calvin T. Sampson — the owner of the ladies' boot and shoe factory in North Adams, Massachusetts, in behalf of which he sought to break a strike by white workingmen belonging to the Knights of St. Crispin — negotiated a three year contract with Kwong, Chong, Wing and Co., a San Francisco-based enterprise, that Gyory calls "a Chinese emigrant agency." Kwong, Chong, Wing and Co. supplied "75 steady, active, and intelligent Chinamen" to act as strikebreakers.[140] But were the Chinese shoemakers of San Francisco "coolies" in the pejorative sense of that word that the white workingmen and Gyory favor? Rather than acquiescing to the white workingmen's protest — and praising those among the latter who differentiated between favoring the coming of individual Chinese workmen and opposing Chinese contractees,[141] a distinction that was not made by the National Labor Union in its resolution of 1869[142] — Gyory might have inquired into the nature and workings of the Chinese boot and shoe industry in San Francisco, from which the strikebreakers were drawn. Had he done so, he would have discovered, as Joel Franks's well-researched history of that city's 19th-century Chinese shoemakers shows, that "neither a trade union tradition nor labor militancy were foreign to their experiences."[143] In fact, before the 1870s Chinese shoemakers had formed their own labor guild, the *Li-Sheng Tang*. In 1876 Chinese shoemakers engaged in a vio-

lent job action, demanding, among other things, a return of the money given to a contractor who had placed 750 of their fellow workers with two Euroamerican firms. In this action the Chinese strikers not only went out in open defiance of Yee Chung and Co., the contractors, but also directly opposed the actions taken by the "Chinese Six Companies," i.e., the community-wide confederation of traditional associations that held sway over Chinatown's denizens for decades and that supposedly kept all Chinese in supine thralldom.[144] During the 1880s there was more strike activity by Chinese shoemakers. "In the summer of 1887, 300 Chinese initiated a work stoppage in many Chinese-run firms . . . [seeking a daily] pay raise of $1.15 to $1.40 . . . full wages without being compelled to pay board to their employers," and, in some cases, cessation of the practice of fining workers for failing to meet the daily production quota, an end to night work, and the right to work in production groups composed of fellows from their own clan, village, or region. Of these demands, the compromise eventually reached allowed the workers to board themselves, but neither a wage increase nor the end of "mixed" work crews, nor any of the other demands were granted. To break the strike, it should be noted, one of the Chinese firms brought in white strikebreakers. Franks likens these Chinese shoemakers to the more poverty-stricken members of the English working classes celebrated by E. P. Thompson;[145] Gyory, who as a disciple of Gutman is supposedly inspired by Thompson's pathbreaking work, makes no mention of them.[146]

If Gyory would have followed Gutman's precept, which the latter borrowed from Sartre and associated with a similar statement by Thompson, viz., that "the essential question . . . is not what has been done to men and women but what men and women do with what is done to them,"[147] he, that is, Gyory, might have looked much more closely into Paul C. P. Siu's magnificent, posthumously published monograph, *The Chinese Laundryman: A Study in Social Isolation*,[148] wherein he would have discovered the deeper meaning and the long-lasting effects of the Chinese Exclusion Act on those Chinese classified as excludable aliens and declared ineligible for U.S. citizenship, i.e., those who had to make a life in the face of organized white labor's extraordinary hostility to them. In confining his effective establishment of the boundary of the working class to white laborers, Gyory has moved labor history retrogressively to what David Roediger calls the "unexamined and indefensible proposition that the white males under consideration were somehow the 'American working class'."[149] He thus has imposed one more exclusion on the Chinese in addition to that inflicted by the Exclusion Act — ejection from membership in, as well as the history of, the American working class.

Periodicity: Montgomery v. Gutman and Gyory

IN GYORY'S INVESTIGATION, THE NEW LABOR HISTORY'S PECULIAR PERIODIZATION becomes a way to avoid discussing labor's role in the anti-Chinese movement in the years following Congress's adoption of Chinese exclusion. Herbert Hill[150] has taken notice of Gutman's and other New Labor Historians' peculiar approach to historical periodization, e.g., that Gutman "never explains . . . why he chose to limit the scope of his inquiry [into the situation characterizing the relationship of African American workers to the United Mine Workers of America]

to the years between 1890 and 1900, why that period in the UMW's history was especially significant, and why it deserves the special attention he gives it," or why Nelson Lichtenstein, in his biography of Walter Reuther, gives great emphasis to Reuther's support for "fair employment" legislation but says not a word about the union's response after the enactment of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Although Hill has noted how the "significance of historical events may be distorted if they are extracted from their temporal sequence without reason or explanation," a similar practice is to be found in Gyory's work. Thus Gyory's account of the Chinese Exclusion Act ends with the statute's enactment into law and says virtually nothing about how organized labor fought for another 60 years to maintain and enlarge Asiatic exclusion from both the country and the labor sector; how Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, East Indians, and other peoples declared to be aliens ineligible to citizenship in the United States — because they were neither white nor persons of African nativity or African descent — petitioned the courts either for reclassification as whites or for the exclusion law and the naturalization statute to be declared unconstitutional;[151] or how those laws made it a virtual impossibility for Chinese laborers in the United States to live a normal family life, leading an unknown number to rectify matters through smuggling, through the documentary creation of "paper sons," and through resort to the subterfuge that the Immigration and Naturalization Service came to call the "slot racket."[152] For Gyory, however, having freed the white workingman from the charge of anti-Chinese prejudice and discrimination, his work is finished. The Chinese are left to their limbo-like fate — silenced, marginalized, evicted, not even a segment of the American working class nor a part of the *history* of the American working class.

It is David Montgomery, contrary to the arguments advanced by Gyory, who takes notice of the fact that "The unions and the Knights of Labor in the Far West not only lobbied for legal prohibition of Chinese immigration but also, after passage of the Exclusion Act of 1882 unleashed an 'abatement' campaign to drive Chinese by force away from mines, ships and lumber camps and formed a League of Deliverance, which attempted to compel all San Francisco employers to replace Chinese workers with white union members."[153] White workers' hostility to Chinese workers continued even after the latter had conducted such strikes and threatened work stoppages as a successful cigar makers' job action in 1884 and an unsuccessful drive for a closed shop in 1885.[154] Indeed, the Chinese successes in these struggles may have increased white workers' hostility toward them.[155] And this hostility extended well into the 20th century and into other areas of work, including the kinds that seemed ripe for radical multiracial class actions. Thus, Calvin Winslow writes: " . . . [O]n the Pacific Coast, waterfront workers were mostly white. Chinese were excluded, and African Americans were relatively scarce until World War II."[156] Labor's support for racism was ubiquitous.

The Rock Springs Riot: A Moment in Exclusion's Proactive History

MONTGOMERY SEEMS TO QUALIFY HIS VIRTUAL INDICTMENT of white workingmen's continuing anti-Asian racism when he observes, apropos of the race-and-labor situation in Wyoming two decades after one of the worst outbreaks of labor-

inspired violence against the Chinese, "By 1908, in Rock Springs, Wyoming, scene of the bloody massacre of Chinese miners by white Knights of Labor in 1885, Chinese members attended UMWA meetings, according to one reporter, together with 'nearly every nation of Europe.' "[157] Gyory, it is important to notice, plays down white workers' anti-Chinese violence in the 1870s and 1880s, mentioning briefly the "Chico massacre" in 1877[158] but confining to a footnote his discussion of the riots in Denver (1880), Los Angeles (1881), Rock Springs (1885), and Snake River, Oregon (1887), as well as the 55 such riots reported in the research of Shih-shan Henry Tsai[159] — to which he adds, citing a *New York Times* report of December 13, 1995, apparently unaware of what it means to his general thesis, this enigmatic statement: "Violence against Chinese Americans continued throughout the 20th century."[160] To Gyory's East Coast white workers of the late 19th century, the Chinese Exclusion Act was merely an "indirect result of the labor uprising of 1877." For, although "workers would continue to express only minimal interest in immigration restriction, other groups would begin to see it as a solution for the nation's industrial problems." These "other groups" apparently are the politicians and the forces of monopoly capitalism; for Gyory concludes that "This atmosphere of violence and uncertainty breathed new life into the anti-Chinese movement among those seeking to eliminate or defuse class tensions[!]"[161]

However, both Gyory's dismissal of the massacre at Rock Springs in 1885, as well as Montgomery's sanguine statement about labor conditions there two decades later, deserve further attention. In fact, shortly after the white laborers' violent uprising that left over 40 Chinese dead, drove the rest out of their homes and torched the town's Chinese quarters,[162] the officers of the Union Pacific Coal Department that had first introduced Chinese workingmen into the Wyoming mines, determined to rid themselves of all of the latter and as many as possible of the unionized white workers as well, replacing both with nonunion Mormon miners and, more significantly, with new labor-saving machinery. A good number of the Chinese had already fled or would soon flee to China, while others moved to what they hoped would be a safer haven in San Francisco. Nevertheless, a few Chinese remained in the area, for 13 years protected by federal troops from continuing white workingmen's depredations.[163] The reports of the Dillingham Commission on immigrants in industries in the western states of the United States, published in 1911, pointed out that in Wyoming in 1908 there were but 23 Chinese miners at one mine and that this group was "practically all that are employed in the [entire] State."[164] On August 30, 1885, two days before the riot, there had been 331 Chinese and 150 whites in the Rock Springs coalfield, and two months later — before the Union Pacific commenced in earnest its 15-year program of ethnic cleansing against the Chinese — the number of Chinese coal miners had actually risen to 532 while the number of white workers had dropped to 85.[165]

The Dillingham Commission went on to observe that the "race present in largest numbers among the foreign-born was the Japanese," numbering 512.[166] When the Commission took note of the fact that the "mining communities in Wyoming present a somewhat unique situation with regard to the relations between the various races," it evidenced this anomaly with the statement that "*Even* orientals are eligible to union memberships, and the relations engendered by the association which such membership entails are *almost* fraternal." The

Commission reported that "Japanese and Chinese wear their union buttons with pride and are given the same treatment as other races."[167] However, this portrait of workers' racial harmony and equality is undercut by the fact the "Chinese and Japanese . . . races live apart from the others in 'bunk houses' provided for them," by the Commission's notice that "Natives and north Europeans are preferred in all cases by the operators for supervisory and other positions of responsibility," and by the fact that in contrast to European miners, the number of Japanese so employed was "decreasing."[168] Indeed, as Herbert Hill had documented, the coal mine operators were not the only ones unhappy with the dearth of whites and the presence of numerous Asian mineworkers in the region; in 1902 the United Mine Workers had unleashed a vituperative campaign in behalf of extending Chinese exclusion and followed that with a program of opposition to Japanese immigration.[169] The comity that both the Commission and Professor Montgomery say prevailed in Wyoming in 1908 was indeed an exception to labor's usual anti-Asian stance. But, as Yuji Ichioka's well-informed study of the labor-and-race issue at Rock Springs shows, the exception was the product of unique circumstances and did not set a precedent for labor-race relations in other venues: "Local conditions dictated the policy of admission [of Asian workers] in spite of . . . the union's antipathy to Japanese labor . . . Thus this notable exception to organized labor's exclusion of Japanese [and other Asian] labor was not the result of labor solidarity."[170]

Of course, adherents of Gyory's thesis are likely to dismiss this discussion of the Rock Springs riot and its aftermath by pointing out that he is for the most part willing to concede the racism of western white workers, while insisting on the nonracist perspective of the latter's compatriots on the East coast. But, even here, he is on shaky ground. Frederick Rudolph, a historian of the incident in North Adams, Massachusetts, where 75 Chinese shoemakers were brought to break a strike at the Calvin T. Sampson Shoe Company, (the incident that is the starting point for Gyory's investigation), on the basis of his painstaking analysis of what actually happened and what the consequences were, concluded: "Sampson . . . had provided the eastern workers with a laboratory which produced an indoctrination in opposition to Chinese labor and unstinting support to all efforts at Chinese exclusion."[171] And one more point: Whereas Gyory insists it is the politicians who took the lead and the unions that lagged behind in the opposition to Chinese immigration during the pre-exclusion years, Montgomery offers an important instance in New York City when that order was reversed: "Sensing that its opposition to black enfranchisement was . . . costing more votes than it was winning, especially among German workers . . . the Tweed Ring switched its target to the Chinese. In 1870 it *joined the unions* in a huge rally against the immigration of 'coolie labor' to the United States."[172] And, finally with respect to this aspect of Gyory's thesis, it might well be remembered that no less a figure than Selig Perlman had pointed out that "The National Labor Union came out against Chinese immigration in 1869, when the issue was brought home to the Eastern wage earners following the importation by a shoe manufacturer in North Adams, Massachusetts, of Chinese strike breakers"[173] and that, writing to the same point, John R. Commons and his colleagues observed, "The general agitation which this action [i.e., the bringing of the Chinese shoemakers to Massachusetts] provoked among all classes of labour served to bring the national labour movement into closer sympathy with the California point of view." Commons *et*

al., went on to note, "At the next convention of the National Labour Union in 1870 the general labour movement was ready to take the step from merely advocating the prohibition of Chinese importation to demanding total exclusion."[174] Gyory's Eastern workers had not been then, and are not now, above reproach.

The Leaders and the Led: Who, In Fact, Influenced Public Policy?

THROUGHOUT HIS BOOK GYORY IS AT PAINS TO DISTINGUISH THE ATTITUDE of rank-and-file white workers from that of the organizational and administrative leaders of the union movement. To be sure, Gyory in the end is forced to admit that in the spring of 1882, organized labor rallied behind the bill to ban Chinese immigrants.[175] But, he insists that at that moment the workers' support was new, that they were "[r]ecent converts to exclusion," and that they had come to endorse that approach to resolving the debate over Chinese immigration "wholeheartedly when passage in Congress became a foregone conclusion." Before that time, his study wishes to suggest, they had been only half-hearted supporters. They had, in the words of the labor paper *Carpenter*, which Gyory quotes approvingly, regarded the Chinese as "dangerous to public health and human decency," but not opposed their immigration — provided that it could be proven to be voluntary. Indeed, they only railed against "their importation in hordes, under slavish contracts made in their native country, and held sacred by their religious fears." However, since every praiseworthy white worker — and, it would seem, Gyory himself, since he steadfastly eschews a critique of their views — believed that virtually all Chinese immigration was involuntary, in almost every instance contracted in and from China, and but a part of the ubiquitous "coolie trade," this supposedly moderating dichotomy would appear to be the making of a distinction without a difference.

To Gyory the passage of the exclusion act was "a cheap panacea" for politicians, but for the white workers of 1882, "it was plainly the best they were going to get . . . Half a loaf — even not of their own choosing — was better than none."[176] The loaf they wanted, he argues, was an enforceable law prohibiting the importation of contract labor from anywhere in the world. However, when, in 1885, as Gyory points out in a footnote, "Congress finally acceded to workers' demands and passed the Foran Act, outlawing contract labor . . . the law proved difficult to enforce and [was] largely ineffective."[177] But, since neither the white workers, nor Gyory in his role as spokesperson for their instant mind set, could know that the Foran Act would be so deficient, why didn't white workers clamor immediately for repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, in effect trading in the half-a-loaf that they had only grudgingly accepted in return for the whole? Of course, nothing of the sort happened, and claims that neither law was accomplishing what it was supposed to led Congress, with labor's unstinting support, to revise and extend the Chinese Exclusion Act over and over again, making it one of what Lucy E. Salyer calls the "laws harsh as tigers."[178]

In point of fact, labor's leaders became so influential in the administration of the exclusion laws that, except for the appeals granted to Chinese by the Constitution-conscious judges of the Federal courts in California and the Pacific Northwest,[179] and the Chinese workers' protests and boycotts of American goods in both China and America's Chinatowns,[180] they might have succeeded in driv-

ing the Chinese out altogether: From 1897 to 1902, Terence Powderly, former head of the Knights of Labor and an outspoken Sinophobe, served as Commissioner General of Immigration and in 1900 was placed in charge of appeals arising out of the enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act and its subsequent modifications. Two years later, he was replaced by Frank P. Sargent, grand master of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and a friend of Samuel Gompers, the notoriously anti-Chinese leader of the American Federation of Labor, who served until 1908, and he in turn was succeeded for the next five years by Daniel Joseph Keefe, president of the longshoreman's union and a former vice-president of the AFL.[181] The alleged and much vaunted independence of white workers from their own leadership in fact came to nothing. Except for its possible influence on labor history, much the same might be said of Gyory's *opus*.

By and large, the men who founded, administered, lobbied, and conducted the meetings and conventions of America's labor unions favored the elimination of the Chinese worker from the labor market as well as the exclusion of the Chinese people from the United States. Gyory does not engage in a sustained analysis of these leaders and of their system of controls over the rank-and-file, and such omissions as these give implicit support to his belief in the class-rather than race-oriented populist consciousness of the latter. However, he does mention such leaders as Samuel Gompers, Terence Powderly, and Adolph Strasser, carefully downplaying or avoiding altogether their Sinophobic statements, writings, and programs. There is no shortage of material on these matters, so what follows can only be illustrative and will be presented in relation to Gyory's thesis.

Samuel Gompers (1850-1924)

GOMPERS APPEARS BRIEFLY IN GYORY'S BOOK ON THREE OCCASIONS: during a strike by New York City cigar makers in 1877;[182] as a supporter for the Greenback Party in the same period;[183] and as a contributor to the debates over the organizational structure of the newly formed Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Union at its Pittsburgh convention in 1881(that was to become the American Federation of Labor in 1886). [184] Although the Chinese question figures in each of these events, a reader of Gyory's book would never learn from reading it that Gompers was perhaps the most important of the advocates of Chinese exclusion and author of some of the most racist demagoguery presented during the anti-Chinese movement. One need but turn to Gompers' autobiography and to his earlier public writings to learn that he made no apology for his Sinophobic outlook or for the labor practices he instituted in its behalf. In addition, perusing these, one might uncover evidence and argument that works against the class-oriented workingmen's thesis advanced by Gyory. For instance, in his *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, published in 1925, Gompers claimed:

> . . . [W]e were contending against a menace to our trade [that] federal legislation alone could remedy. In 1878, of forty thousand cigar-makers in the entire country at least ten thousand were Chinamen employed in the cigar industry . . . California did not have authority to exclude Chinese workmen and Federal law was needed. Our International recognized that though competition with Chinese cigar-makers was then confined to the [Pacific] coast, the cigar industry of the East had to compete with the industry of the West in all markets, but alone it was not strong enough to secure protective legislation. During several strikes in the East,

> we had to meet the threats of employers to import Chinese strike breakers. This was an element in deciding the cigar-makers to give early and hearty endorsement to the movement for a national organization of labor unions, for the help of all wage-earners was needed in support of Chinese exclusion.[185]

That Gompers perceived the labor problem as a race problem is made clear not only in the words used to refer to non-white, non-Anglo workers in his autobiography, but also, and more viciously, in the pamphlets he wrote on the Chinese question and in his efforts to eliminate the Chinese presence from the American labor market both *before* and *after the passage of the exclusion act*.

From the mid-1870s Gompers would make opposition to Chinese immigration a central plank of his labor union platforms. He admired the adoption in 1875 of the "white label" by San Francisco's white cigarmakers. When, on November 8, 1877, the *New York World* reported, falsely as it turned out, that 300 Chinese cigarmakers would be brought to New York City as strikebreakers, Gompers addressed a meeting of the Cigar Makers' International Union, saying "he desired that a warning should be given that if the manufacturers imported any large number to New York they would be responsible for any violent action that might be taken to protect their wives and children, and provide them with bread."[186] In November, 1881, Gompers and his fellow unionists lent their support to a resolution reported one month later: "declaring the presence and competition of Chinese [laborers] with free white labor as extremely dangerous and demanding the passage of laws entirely prohibiting their *importation*."[187] But, less than a year later, the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited their *immigration*.

Gompers' fulminations against the Chinese, together with demands for stricter prohibitions on their immigration, did not cease after the Chinese Exclusion Act had been adopted. Fearful that the law would not be administered with appropriate acuity, Gompers presided over a meeting of the Federation of Trades and Labor Unions at which the organization's committee on legislation suggested that "a supplementary act" would be needed in order to ensure "the strictest enforcement of the present Anti-Chinese law."[188] On August 17, 1893, Gompers wrote to John O'Brien, an AFL organizer, applauding the latter's petition urging a more vigorous enforcement of the Geary Act of 1892, the law which had extended for another decade, and made more stringent, the provisions of the original Chinese Exclusion Act.[189] Six months earlier, Gompers had written to Hermann J. Schulteis, one of the clerks who had served on the U.S. Immigration Commission and who had authored the Commission's *Report on European Immigration to the United States*, suggesting that because the "Immigration, the Alien Contract Labor and several other laws which were enacted through the efforts of our organizations should at least have men to execute them who are known to be in sympathy with those laws . . . [that] in the appointment of men to fill those positions it certainly seems reasonable that the views of the Executive Officers [of the AFL] should be consulted and met."[190] These wishes would be granted later with the successive appointments of Powderly, Sargent and Keefe to head the agency. On April 4, 1894, in a letter to U.S. Vice-President and former Democratic Congressman from Illinois, Adlai Stevenson, Gompers suspended the subterfuge that Gyory would have his readers take to be both valid and reasonable, namely that organized labor opposed the immigration of Chinese labor solely on the ground that the latter came involuntarily as imported

contract workers. Hoping to prevent ratification of the proposed China-U.S. treaty of 1894, Gompers observed:

> The Scott Exclusion Act [1888] and the Geary Law [1892, upheld by the United States Supreme Court in 1893, by a vote of 5 to 3,with Justice Harlan absent] were not passed in response to maudlin sentiment nor a national antipathy . . . They became laws . . . at the earnest demand of the toiling masses of our country . . . It is needless here to discuss the impossibility of the amalgamation or assimilation of the Chinese in America with our people. That has been so clearly demonstrated as to need no elucidation at my hands . . . In the name of more than half a million of organized working men and women of America, I enter my most solemn protest against the ratification of the Treaty by your Honorable Body, and earnestly hope it will be rejected.[191]

The treaty was ratified, however. In subsequent years, Gompers would not only oppose American expansion into the Pacific because more Chinese would become part of the labor force, but would also attempt to evict from their jobs Chinese already at work in America. When, in 1898, the House of Representatives was considering a bill authorizing the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands, Gompers protested to Thomas B. Reed, Speaker of the House, reminding him that "It [had] required more than twenty years of constant organization, agitation, and education to legislatively close the gates of our country to the Chinese"; claiming, beyond all considerations of fact, that of the 100,000 inhabitants of those islands there were 50,000 contract laborers of whom approximately 80 percent were Chinese and Japanese; and predicting that the "annexation of Hawaii would . . . obliterate that beneficent legislation and open wide our gates, . . . [threatening] an inundation of Mongolians to overwhelm the free laborers of our country."[192]

Although — because he favored Chinese exclusion over both imperialism and the "open door" policies enunciated during the McKinley - T. Roosevelt presidencies[193] — Gompers failed in his attempts to thwart the ratification of the China Treaty of 1894, halt the takeover of the Philippines in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, and prevent the annexation of Hawaii, he was more successful in forcing union-sponsored cooperative industries to fire their Chinese workers. Thus, in one instance from 1897, Gompers chastised the Columbia River Fishermens Protective Union No. 6321, chartered by the AFL in 1894, for allegedly reneging on its promise to "have your work done exclusively by white labor . . . [and for having] entered into a contract with a Chinese boss to furnish the labor . . . [such] that now they are all Chinamen who are working there" . . . [as well as for posting a notice] that 'no white labor need apply.' " The union quickly surrendered: Sofus Jensen, an AFL organizer and the union secretary with whom Gompers had lodged his complaint, wrote back that while the story of the posted notice was false, the union had replaced "Chinese and coolie labor" with "American workmen."[194] The eviction of the Chinese worker from nearly every industry to which he and, in lesser numbers because of the restriction on Chinese women coming to America, she, had contributed would continue apace, abetted and coerced by white workers' strikes, until by 1911, there were few if any Chinese to be found in any of them, as the Dillingham Commission's statistics would show.[195]

As the 20th century dawned and with it the possibility that the already once-renewed Chinese Exclusion Act would expire, Gompers worked tirelessly to

secure permanent exclusion. In February, 1902, he testified before the Senate Committee on Immigration, insisting that "the exclusion of Chinese laborers from the United States is asked for by all of the wage workers of our country, particularly all the organized wage earners, regardless of any section of the country from which they hail and in which they are located."[196] And once again, but even more vehemently, he buttressed his argument with an attack on the social, moral, and civic aspects of Chinese society and culture:

> The presence in our country of a people entirely out of harmony and training with American comprehension of liberty and citizenship, who are alien to our customs and habits, as different from us in political and moral ideas as it is possible for two peoples to be, who are so thoroughly grounded in race characteristics that even the generations born and reared among us still retain them, can not but exercise a most demoralizing effect upon the body politic, the social life, and the civilization of the people of our nation.[197]

And, lest the Senators not be informed about the unsalubrious effects that Chinese immigration had already inflicted and would continue to inflict on America unless their coming was halted altogether, Gompers set forth a parade of horribles drawn, he claimed, from facts about the Chinese situation of the State of California:

> All impartial observers agree, and official reports confirm it, that the condition of affairs in the State of California, the people of which had and still have to bear the brunt of this Asiatic contamination almost incredible to our people, in which gambling hells, opium joints, dens of iniquity and vice [abound,] are but superficial evidences of a moral standard as degrading in its exhibition as it is demoralizing by its contact.[198]

A number of exclusionist measures were laid before the Congress in 1902, but Gompers found most of them wanting in severity and scope, including the one that eventually secured passage and the signature of President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1902, together with Hermann Gudstadt, Gompers co-authored the most infamous of his screeds on the matter, *Some Reasons for Chinese Exclusion. Meat vs. Rice. American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism. Which Shall Survive?*[199] (Perhaps it is needless to say, given his ideological stance, that this farrago of lies and tendentiousness is not mentioned in Gyory's text, notes or bibliography). Setting all claims of racial tolerance, ethnic empathy, or labor solidarity aside, the two veteran Chinese exclusionists reiterated and embellished with purple prose every accusation that had been made against Chinese immigrants, insisting on their mendacity, their womanless and hence immoral life style, their willing submission to cheap labor contracts made in China, their murderous intra-communal conflicts, and, lest these not be sufficient to undermine any notion of their worthiness to come to the United States, Gompers and Gudstadt added a new charge, viz., that Chinese male immigrants seduced chaste, prepubescent white girls and boys into drug addiction and prostitution:

> Passing through the upper end of Kearney street, in the vicinity of [San Francisco's] Chinatown, after nightfall one may see a number of what were once men and women, but are now but mental and physical wrecks of humanity. . . . Who and what are these beings, and why are they seen only in San Francisco, one of nature's most favored cities? . . . Some time in the past these poor, miserable, and degraded wrecks were the beloved children of fond parents . . . They have become

> what is known in the parlance of the street as "dope heads" — opium fiends in the ordinary language. In some manner, by some wily method they have been induced to use the drug. Time was when little girls no older than 12 years were found in Chinese laundries under the influence of opium. What other crimes were committed in those dark and fetid places when these little innocent victims of the Chinamen's wiles were under the influence of the drug are almost too horrible to imagine . . . [T]here are hundreds, aye thousands, of our American boys and girls who have acquired this deadly habit and are doomed, hopelessly doomed, beyond a shadow of redemption. Better death a hundred times than to have become a victim of this worst of all oriental opium habit.[200]

Gyory, who denies that Sinophobia infected much of the white working class and seeks to separate the thoughts and deeds of the rank and file from those of the trade union leadership, omits the latter from his investigation. In so doing, he does a disservice to the candidly stated beliefs of the white workers. To take one example, the *Report of Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, 1905*, includes the following:

> [We make] no pretense that the exclusion of Chinese can be defended upon a high ideal, ethical ground . . . Surely, America's workmen have enough to contend with, have sufficient obstacles confronting them in their struggle to maintain themselves in their humanizing movement for a higher and better life, without being required to meet the enervating, killing, underselling, and under-living competition of that nerveless, wantless people, the Chinese.[201]

The effectiveness of Chinese exclusion, coupled with the latter's forced expulsion from the agricultural and urban labor markets, led Gompers to turn his exclusionist/evictionist attention to another Asian people, the Japanese, and to nip in the bud a possibility that they might form a labor alliance with working-class Mexicans. In 1886, it had been estimated that seven-eighths of the work being done in California's vineyards and orchards was being carried out by Chinese.[202] However, a series of race-baiting strikes by rural and urban white workers, beginning in 1893, had driven most of the Chinese from the fields.[203] By 1911, 29 years after the Chinese Exclusion Act had been passed, Japanese, Korean, Mexican and a few southern and eastern European workers had replaced the once-thriving rural Chinese labor force in California. "The Japanese," the Dillingham Commission reported, "are at present the predominant race of hand workers in most districts, because they are present in large numbers and migrate most easily having few family ties and little property to keep them in one community."[204] Their family ties, however, would soon be strengthened by *shashin kekkon* ("picture marriage") and their settlement on the land as small holders hastened as they sought to overcome the obstacles created by California's and ten other States' Alien Land Laws.[205] However, the outcome of the Oxnard strike of 1903 and the hostile stance toward Japanese and Mexican agricultural laborers taken by Gompers and the AFL surely did much to convince the non-white, non-Anglo workers that labor solidarity meant little when race matters loomed in the minds of the union's leadership.

To put the matter briefly:[206] Rural Japanese and Mexican agricultural laborers had organized a union, The Japanese-Mexican Protective Association, (JMPA), in the early months of 1903. On March 18 of that year, the union, composed of 800 Japanese and 400 Mexicans, struck the Western Agricultural Con-

tracting Company, (WACC), protesting WACC's hiring through contractors (a common practice over which Gompers supposedly justified his opposition to Chinese immigration), payment in goods rather than money, and threats of a wage cut. The strike turned violent and eventually ended with a compromise agreement. When JMPA and another Japanese union applied for charters from the AFL, Gompers wrote the secretary of the local labor council: "If you think it wise that the Japanese be organized, you may do so, but no charter will be issued to them by the American Federation of Labor nor can they be accorded representation in an affiliated Central Labor Union." The local organizer protested this action as well as an earlier letter from Gompers that had insisted "That this charter is issued to you [Mexicans] with the express understanding that under no circumstances shall you take into your union any Chinese or Japanese." Gompers would not be moved, however; not even when F. C. Wheeler, an AFL district organizer, angrily wrote the union's national secretary, quoting the Mexican workers' statement that "We had a hard bitter fight and now when our victory is absolute and complete you ask us to deny our Japanese brothers the same right we ask for ourselves. We will not do it. We will stand by the men who stood by us." Gompers would later assure the secretary of the Honolulu Trades and Labor Council that the AFL had "steadfastly refused to issue charters to organizations composed of Japanese laborers." Lest anyone suppose that Gompers was pursuing some working class ideal in jettisoning the JMPA from the AFL, note his remark, reported in the September, 1905 edition of the *American Federationist*: "the caucasians are not going to let their standard of living be destroyed by negroes, Chinamen, Japs, or any other."[207]

GOMPERS' HOSTILITY TO ASIAN WORKERS WOULD CONTINUE THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE. In his autobiography, Gompers recalls an unforgettable if hasty trip he made into San Francisco's Chinatown. In that memoir, Gompers indicates the prejudicial source of his opposition to Chinese immigration. Class was not the issue.

> I made a trip through Chinatown — not the especially prepared route for tourists. It was an awful experience with all its hideousness. I had read Dante's *Inferno*, but Chinatown seemed to me a greater horror with its reeking smells, the human wrecks, gambling and mad licentiousness. The picture burned into my mind that night came to me vividly throughout future years when Chinese immigration was under consideration.[208]

So sure was Gompers that Asiatic immigration constituted a major threat not only to American labor but to American society that, from 1905 until his death two decades later, he entertained dark suspicions about some kind of evil force at work to thwart his exclusionist efforts.[209] Thus it was that in his autobiography he recalled meeting a man — never named — who informed him of a vast conspiracy whereby unknown numbers of Chinese were being smuggled illegally into the United States with the connivance and collusion of a clandestine network of district attorneys and court interpreters. Moreover, after his chosen enforcer, Immigration Commissioner Terence Powderly, told him that he had been ordered to "cease his activity" with respect to exclusionary enforcement, and Frank Sargent, Powderly's successor, had become so disenchanted with his inability to bring a halt to the illegal entry of Chinese that he gave up governmental service and returned to his presidency of the Brotherhood of Loco-

motive Firemen, Gompers became convinced that there were "Some . . . Federal officials . . . responsible for this smuggling [who] were so high up in administrative circles that they were able to prevent enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Law."[210] Moreover, these officials, he claimed, were not only exercising control over the Immigration and Naturalization Service, but also operating out of the Department of Commerce and Labor.[211] A few years later, when Woodrow Wilson had become President of the United States — and, as Gwendolyn Mink shows, the AFL had begun to conduct a "politics of union preeminence," entering into a relationship with the Congress and the Executive Office that, on the one hand, "regarded social insurance and wages and hours laws for men . . . as hostile incursions by government," while, on the other, sought "policies that would promote its own autonomy"[212] — Gompers shifted the focus of his heated exaggerations, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy (i.e., the very trio of qualities that Richard Hofstadter calls the "paranoid style" that has so often modified American public policy debates[213]) to a recently formed opponent of exclusionism, the National Liberal Immigration League, which, he insisted, was being financed by "the Hamburg-American Steamship Company, the Campagnie Générale Transatlantique, and the Steamship Companies and industries generally that found a financial profit in employing cheap immigrant workers."[214] Members of Congress were sufficiently impressed by Gompers' argument, made in behalf of the Burnett Immigration bill, already vetoed by President Wilson, to reintroduce the measure in both houses and overturn the President's second veto by a two-thirds majority.[215] On the Chinese question Gompers never repudiated his statement of 1894 in which he declared his opposition to the "evil effect of [the] Chinese invasion: [a] people . . . who allow themselves to be barbarously tyrannized over in their own country, and who menace the progress, the economic and social standing of the workers of other countries, cannot be fraternized with."[216]

Lest one take up Philip Taft's position that Gompers' Sinophobia was merely a representation of the attitude of the day, one might contrast Gompers' statement above with that of Jacob A. Riis, who traversed New York City's Chinatown at about the same time. Riis took note of the poverty, "dismal dreariness," "forbidding partitions," opium parlors, gambling dens, overworked peddlers, "teeming tenements," and womanless condition of the Chinese immigrant laborers. But, where these would lead Gompers to call for exclusion of the Chinese, the same conditions inspired Riis to call for more not less immigration from China:

> This is a time for very plain speaking on this subject. Rather than banish the Chinaman, I would have the door opened wider — for his wife; make it a condition of his coming or staying that he bring his wife with him. Then, at least, he might not be what he now is and remains, a homeless stranger among us. Upon this hinges the real Chinese question, in our city, at all events, as I see it.[217]

It is a true tragedy of scholarship that Gyory failed to consider this argument, failed, that is, to see that Chinese workers were as integral a part of the labor force as the Irish workers he lauds.

Adolph Strasser (1843 - 1939)

THIS HUNGARIAN-BORN FOUNDER OF THE AMALGAMATED TRADES AND LABOR UNION of New York City and Vicinity and Gompers' hand-picked nominee as president of

the Cigar Makers International Union (1877-1891) appears more often than any other union leader in Gyory's book.[218] And well he might, for throughout much of his long life[219] — he ceased his union activities as auditor, organizer, legislative representative, arbitrator, and troubleshooter, in 1914, turning for the final 25 years of his life to real estate in New York and Florida — Strasser served as Gompers' close colleague, coordinator, fellow union officer, and strategist for the AFL executive, as he had for it predecessors. Together with Gompers, Strasser developed his perspective out of a peculiarly American reformulation of the ideas of Marx's American correspondent, Friedrich Sorge, leader of Section One of the International Workingmen's Association, the latter having been founded by Karl Marx in 1864. If there is need for further evidence in support of one strand of the theory of "American exceptionalism"[220] — here referring to the manner in which European conceptions of class were transmogrified to become the thesis that a workingman's wages ought to be calibrated on the basis of his biosocial proximity to "whiteness"[221] — it will be found in Strasser's (and Gompers') adaptation of German Marxism: "If there was anything exceptional about the American labor movement compared to its counterparts in other industrial countries," writes Timothy Messer-Kruse, "it was the unique way in which the teleological underpinnings and revolutionary fervor of Marxism were deracinated and engrafted upon an essentially inward-looking and racially exclusive trade union movement."[222] For, as Messer-Kruse goes on to show, Strasser and Gompers, although each had independently "absorbed the passion, commitment, and historical materialism of their German American Marxist teachers, [together they created out of these one of] the most politically conservative working-class movements of the 19th and 20th centuries."[223]

A central plank of what would become the Sinophobic and racialist ideology of the burgeoning AFL was put together by Gompers and Strasser, the latter of whom adopted the insidious "white label" as a national tool,[224] analogizing the fight carried on by white California cigar makers against their Chinese fellow workers to his own ultimately successful effort to expel from that line of work the "tenement scum,"[225] i.e., rival socialist cigar makers who had broken with the Gompers-Strasser faction and formed the Progressive Cigar Makers Union. Gyory wishes his readers to believe that Strasser's testimony before the Hewitt Committee favoring the exclusion of all contract laborers from the United States regardless of race — which he reprints[226] — refutes the charges made by both Herbert Hill and Gwendolyn Mink that Strasser, together with Gompers, to use Mink's way of wording the issue, "defended the anti-Chinese posture of their California colleagues and actively involved themselves in the exclusion movement."[227] But, Mink's statement is in accord with the facts on this issue. Strasser took a major part in bringing California workingmen's anti-Chinese prejudices to the east coast locals and to the national executive council of what would become the AFL. On October 27, 1878, addressing a mass meeting of New York City's tobacco workers engaged in the struggle to end tenement house production of cigars, Strasser, according to a news report in the Nov. 5 issue of the *New York Tribune*,

> made a speech in which he said that when the Chinese cigar makers in California began to crowd the whites out of the work, the latter succeeded in passing a State law requiring every cigar factory to affix on each box a union stamp, by which cigars made by white men could be distinguished from those made by Chinese; and the public showed their condemnation of Chinese work by refusing to smoke

cigars made by Chinamen.[228]

The *Cigar Makers' Official Journal*, a monthly publication of the CMIU, established in November, 1875, began to editorialize against Chinese cigar makers on a regular basis after November 8, 1877 when, in the midst of the tenement house work stoppage, the *New York World* printed the aforementioned false rumor that cigar manufacturers had requested that 300 Chinese cigarmakers be sent to New York City to replace the whites on strike.[229] According to the notes supplied by the editor of Volume I of the *Gompers Papers*, "The journal subscribed to the view generally expressed in the American press of the time that *Chinese workers unlike other immigrant groups*, could not be assimilated into American culture."[230] Thus, the CMIU, over which Strasser presided for 14 years, took a position based not on the generality of working conditions or the universality of class consciousness, but rather one rooted in the assessment of each ethnic group's assimilability. Largely composed of German and Bohemian immigrants, — whose separate language-based locals Strasser managed to merge — the CMIU, whose rallies Strasser often addressed in German, had no doubts about the Americanization capabilities of these European workers but no sympathetic concern for the working and living situations of the Chinese laborers in the same industry.

Had Gyory consulted articles on the labor question that appeared in *Die Gewerkschafts-Zeitung*, a German-language publication that was published for only a few years in New York City and edited and contributed to by Adolph Strasser, Carl Speyer and Hugo Müller, he would have discovered more evidence of Strasser's support for Chinese exclusion. In the formative years of America's trade union movement, this journal had a significant influence not only on its German-reading subscribers, but also on August Sartorius von Waltershausen (1852-1938), a German economist who visited the United States in the 1880s, carefully consulted its pages, and wrote comprehensively and critically about many aspects of the labor movement.[231] In 1883, Sartorius published a lengthy essay entitled "Die Chinesen in den Vereinigten Staaten von America,"[232] which, while it concluded with support for exclusion, offered what David Montgomery calls "both a thorough account of the harassment and exclusion of Chinese by state and federal legislation, labor movement boycotts, and mob action between 1844 and 1882 and a serious informative effort to analyze the economic and institutional framework of the Chinese immigrant community itself."[233] Sartorius had met and talked with Strasser, among others, and adapted his own, already established racist outlook on the allegedly inferior races — (influenced, as Montgomery reminds us, by the writings of a German social geographer, Friedrich Ratzel [1844-1904], a right-wing National Liberal imperialist and Social Darwinist, who had also visited the United States and written on the Chinese question[234]) — to the Sinophobia of the white trade unionists.[235] Moreover, Sartorius praised the use of the boycott and the white label,[236] tactics championed and introduced to the East coast white workingmen by Strasser, describing with obvious approval how the boycott and the label were combined in a two-fold attack on Chinese cigarmakers:

> In the last three years during which the labor movement has made such extraordinary strides in terms of organization, the label system has been more successful than ever, particularly since it has been linked to boycotts. In saloons and shops

union members demand label cigars. If the owner or the manager does not supply them, the establishment is boycotted. When he accepts the workers' demands, they make further demands, for instance that he stock *only* label cigars (i.e., for all smokers). If he does not accede, the workers will again boycott his goods. In the smaller cities, where unionization is strong, this approach has been successful on many occasions.[237]

To understand Strasser's role in the anti-Chinese movement one must examine what he (and Gompers) learned from watching the fractious divisions within two American sections of the International Workingman's Association. Strasser and Gompers were at first sympathetic to socialism and to much of the efforts of IWA Section One, Sorge's largely German group. Sorge perceived as his greatest rival the leaders of the mostly American-born Section Twelve, headed by feminist, spiritualist, and candidate for the Presidency of the United States, Victoria Woodhull (1838-1927), and by the utopian socialist sociologist who had translated and published in *Woodhull's and Claflin's Weekly* the first English language version of Marx's and Engel's *Communist Manifesto,* Stephen Pearl Andrews (1812-1886).[238] Strasser and Gompers carefully noted how Sorge utilized expulsion and the boycott to rid the American branch of the IWA of its left-wing deviationists.[239] Thus, in 1872, when, Woodhull and Andrews formed the Equal Rights Party with Woodhull self-nominated for the U.S. Presidency and African American ex-slave Frederick Douglass as her vice-presidential running mate,[240] Sorge appealed to Marx for assistance in ridding the IWA of this wholly unprecedented move. Marx complied, denouncing Section Twelve members as "bogus reformers, middle class quacks, and trading politicians" and Andrews and Woodhull and their followers as "middle-class humbugs and worn out Yankee swindlers in the reform business."[241] Section Twelve was suspended and then expelled from the International, the electoral campaign failed, and Sorge and Section One emerged the victors.[242] What Strasser and Gompers learned from this incident was that their enemies might also be boycotted and if necessary expelled from the trade union movement. Whereas the Woodhull-Andrews group thereafter "rejected the trade union tactic of winning a larger share of the capitalist pie by controlling access to labor markets and rejecting women and racial minorities from their membership rolls," moving toward "egalitarian and inclusive unionism," Adolph Strasser and Samuel Gompers became two "of the most famous architects of the skill-, race-, and sex-defined trade union model,"[243] rejecting their older adherence to socialism in favor of "trade unionism, pure and simple."[244] The Chinese worker — and later other Asian, non-white, and non-Anglo workers — became the permanent, indeed the ideal enemy, a functional equivalent of the Woodhull-Andrews Equal Rights Party, toward which their Sorgean-derived expulsion strategy was irrevocably directed.[245]

Terence V. Powderly (1849-1924)

GRAND MASTER, (AFTER 1883, GENERAL MASTER Workman) of the Knights of Labor (KOL), (1879-1893); elected mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania, three times on the Greenback-Labor ticket (1878-1884); opponent of workingmen's strikes; active participant in the struggles between the KOL and the CMIU; for many years rivalrous enemy of Gompers and the latter's approach to trade unionism; advo-

cate of political rather than economic action with respect to the Haymarket affair (1886); clandestine member of the secret Irish nationalist society *Clan na Gael*; appointed U.S. Commissioner-General of Immigration (1897-1902) by President McKinley; and Chief of the Division of Information in the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (1907-1924),[246] Terence Vincent Powderly is mentioned but three times in Gyory's book.[247] However, a reader would not learn from these brief entries that Powderly was one of the most vitriolic and vituperative of the labor movement's Sinophobes. Powderly's role in the alliance of the KOL with the Greenback-Labor Party is mentioned in the context of the latter's program opposing "imported," i.e., contracted Chinese labor and favoring voluntary immigration; his statement, "I am disgusted with Kearney" is presented as evidence of the KOL leader's anger over the San Francisco's sandlot salesman of Sinophobia's attempt to win over Scranton's workingmen to his extraordinarily vilifying approach to Chinese exclusion. His receipt of KOL founder Uriah Stephens's request that Kearney "be favorably launched as an element in the Labor Movement on the Atlantic Slope" is presented without any report of Powderly's reply.

However, Powderly's own adamant hostility to Chinese immigration is not difficult to document. In part, in his case, it is related to a larger religious division — the jurisdictional dispute between the Catholic church and various Protestant denominations over the appropriate trade union gospel, ultimately over the salvation of the workingman's soul.[248] In California, the Catholic church had chosen to serve its new-immigrant Irish and Italian constituencies and turned its back on Chinese immigrants, its leading local priest becoming a well-known speaker favoring exclusion.[249] In the same State — until the few conversions they were able to effect dampened their ardor[250] — Protestant missionaries, called back from China, took up the cause of the Chinese and also sought to cure their souls.[251] With the spread of the anti-Chinese movement to the East, coupled with the migration of Irish Catholics to the Pacific coast, the religio-ethnoracial conflict that threatened to divide Irish Catholic workingmen from their white Protestant fellow workers was heightened but also deflected in great part by the Chinese question.[252]

Powderly took a leading position on the latter issue when he evicted Chinese workers from his own labor organization. When, in 1887, Chinese assemblies of the Knights of Labor were organized by District 49, Powderly ordered that they be disbanded forthwith, he having already "gone on record as not only opposing Chinese labor but also declaring that Chinese and Japanese were unfit to reside in the United States."[253]

Powderly's popularity with white workers — and, later, his coming-to-agreeable-terms with Gompers — arose in great measure from the rhetoric with which he peppered his anti-Chinese diatribes. Like Kearney — whom he may have seen as more a disturbing Orangeman than a disgusting rabblerouser — Powderly's speeches and articles were filled with Sinophobic vitriol. However, to influence his Irish Catholic followers and alleviate the worries of those papacy-fearing Protestant workers who, on most secular matters supported his position, he linked his advocacy of stronger anti-Chinese legislation to the protection and preservation of a generalized Occidental Christian civilization in America. Thus, on January 8, 1892, an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* quoted him censuring employers who opposed exclusion: "Standing behind them [i.e., the

Chinese] are Christian employers of this land, who would rather import heathen willing to work for barely enough to sustain life than retain a brother Christian at a wage sufficient to live as becomes a Christian. We do not want opium or the Chinese who grow it . . . "[254] In the same article, Powderly also aligned his concerns about Chinese immigration with those said to be worrying white laboring men, and, warming to his subject, to those frightened by the prospect of the destruction of the American polity itself. Thus, he warned his readers that "the substitution of the Mongolian slave for the American freeman, the abandonment of home for the street and slum and the final overthrow of the republic," were likely consequences of a weakened exclusion law.[255] A decade later, Powderly, having become Commissioner-General of Immigration, and after 1900 in sole charge of enforcing Chinese exclusion,[256] was still unsatisfied: "No graver danger has ever menaced the workingmen of America," he thundered, "than that which faces them when the possibility of lowering the bars at our seaports and border-lines to the Chinese is presented."[257] Again seeking strengthening of the exclusion law, Powderly laid out his own version of a parade of horribles, a comprehensive and irrevocable indictment of the Chinese whether considered as a people, a sociological entity, or a civilization:

BAR JOHN CHINAMAN TO ETERNITY!

> The opposition to the Chinese coolie is not alone because of his race or his religion, but because of the economic position he occupies in this country . . . They do not assimilate with our people, do not wear our clothing, do not adopt our customs, language, religion or sentiments. It is said that the Chinese, if given an opportunity, will become Americanized. The Chinese coolie will no more become Americanized than an American can take on the habits, customs, garb and religion of the Mongolian . . . American and Chinese civilizations are antagonistic; they cannot live and thrive and both survive on the same soil.[258]

Powderly closed this peroration with a dire prophecy: "One or the other must perish."[259]

Powderly served not only a five-year term (1897-1902) as U.S. Commissioner-General of Immigration and a one-year term as special representative of the Department of Labor and Commerce to study European immigration problems, but also accepted appointment as chief of the Division of Information in the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, a position he held from 1907 until his death in 1924. In each of these offices he (and his successor Commissioners-General: Frank P. Sargent [1902-1908], grand master of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, and Daniel Joseph Keefe [1908-1913], a sometime vice-president of the A.F.L.[260]) came into regular contact with and pressure from Samuel Gompers for whom the relentless pursuit of ever-stricter enforcement of Asiatic exclusion had, as we have seen, become a veritable obsession.[261]

Gyory, of course, makes no mention of any of this. Having ended his investigation with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, he does not report on how Powderly, Gompers and the other exclusionists were challenged by Rev. Wu P'an-chao (1866-1931), known in America as Dr. Ng Poon Chew, founder and editor of *Chung Sai Yat Po*, the first Chinese-language newspaper in the United States.[262] Ng, who succeeded in obtaining a reclassification of newspaper editors as educators rather than laborers, toured the United States in behalf of a repeal of the law,[263] published an eloquent refutation of the exclusionist position

in *The New York Times*,[264] and debated both Powderly and Gompers when, in 1905, they sought an even harsher measure prohibiting the coming of Asians to America.[265] Nor does Gyory take account of the study published in 1916, by Tien-Lu Li, Professor of English at Peking University, who, having not only examined the facts and forces associated with the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, the modification of the latter in 1880, the treaty of 1894, the Exclusion Acts of 1882, 1884, 1888, 1892, 1893, 1902, and 1904, the extension of the exclusion laws to Hawaii and the Philippine Islands after 1898, and also critically appraised both the pro- and the anti- exclusionist positions, concluded, "It is no solution of the problem that omits the main . . . question . . . the exclusion of Chinese laborers . . . If the present policy is sound, wise, and in accordance with eternal truth and justice, then let it be pursued and maintained, cost what it may. But it would do no harm to pause and think whether it is."[266] A singular shortcoming of Gyory's investigation is that he did not take up the kind of challenge that Professor Li had issued more than eight decades before his book was published.

Conclusion: A Heritage of Anti-Asian Hostility.

IN A STATEMENT DIRECTED AT BRITISH SUBSCRIBERS TO THE INTERNET BOOKSELLER AMAZON.COM U.K., Gyory wrote, "At the dawn of a new century, the Chinese Exclusion Act still casts a long, dark shadow over American society and our nation's treatment of immigrants."[267] True enough, but the argument of his book, especially his revival of the "coolie" mystique, darkens that shadow. Suspicions about the character, intentions, and loyalty of the Chinese in the United States, whether recently-arrived or American-born, did not disappear after the repeal of the exclusion laws in 1943. "Without a doubt," historians Philip P. Choy, Lorraine Dong, and Marlon K. Hom write, "Chinese exclusion . . . left a legacy of racism."[268] Some examples: When, in the midst of the Korean War, troops from the People's Republic of China hurled back the American advance, there were roundups of alien Chinese on the east coast of the United States.[269] In 1966, with the war in Vietnam raging and threatening to engulf the great powers in a wider conflict, Jerome Beatty, Jr., a *Saturday Review* columnist, hinted that America's Chinese could face the same fate as that which befell the Japanese Americans on the west coast in 1942:

> An unconfirmed rumor has come to my attention that our FBI is well prepared for a World War III in which our major enemy will be China. Detention camps have been secretly prepared in which will be "relocated" all the Chinese in the United States so that they may be screened, and prevented from sabotaging the war effort and signaling Peking with short-wave radios.[270]

Twelve years later, Ming Hai Loo, a 24-year-old Chinese American, residing in Raleigh, North Carolina, was gunned down by two white men who insisted he was Vietnamese and held him responsible for the deaths of American soldiers in Vietnam.[271] In 1983, Loren W. Fessler, a journalist who had served as an adviser with Chinese airborne troops during the Second World War, pointed out that "the legacy of anti-Chinese feeling built up in the nineteenth century remained strong all through the first four decades of the twentieth century."[272] But, ironically, his statement turned out to be premature. When, after two unemployed Detroit auto workers, on June 19, 1982, beat Vincent Chin, a Chinese American engi-

neer, to death with a baseball bat, calling him a "Jap" and screaming "It's because of you motherfuckers that we're out of work," and a local judge sentenced Chin's killers to probation and a fine of 3,000 dollars each, a federal attempt to charge Chin's murderers with violating his civil rights failed.[273] " . . . [H]ate crimes against Asians still . . . [occur]," Choy, Dong, and Hom point out, "testifying to the continued scapegoating of Asians in America during times of economic decline and unemployment."[274]

Nor is the current version of apprehensions about a "yellow peril" — the modern usage of a term introduced into the racist rhetoric of the Occident by Kaiser Wilhelm II around the turn of the 19th century[275] — limited to fears about job loss to Asian immigrants or to "outsourcing" of American manufactures to countries where a supply of cheap labor is available. By 1990 the Chinese had become the largest of more than 20 Asian peoples living and working in the United States. Their numbers had grown and the shortage of women among them had been relieved because of such post-repeal laws as the War Brides Act (1945), Displaced Persons Act (1948), McCarran-Walters Immigration Act (1952), Refugee Relief Act (1953), and two of the post-repeal Immigration Acts (1968, 1981).[276] One aspect of these changes has been a peculiar distribution of occupations. Foreign-born Chinese are to be found at both ends of the occupational scale: some in well-paying, professional, technical, scientific and hi-tech positions; while others are at the low end, working as waiters, dishwashers, hotel and restaurant workers, and in the garment industry. American-born Chinese are more likely to be found in the white-collar professions or in business.[277] Having avoided the blue collar sector where a lingering Sinophobic animus discouraged when it did not absolutely prohibit their entry, however, neither the foreign- or the American-born Chinese professionals have been able to put off the badge of suspicion and distrust the earlier exclusion had done so much to spawn: Thus, the allegations of espionage against government-employed Chinese scientists, engineers, and technicians employed at Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the corrupt practices admitted by two Chinese political fundraisers working in the arena of national politics[278] have sent a chill into the ranks of this most successful part of the Chinese American community. "Because of the incidents at Los Alamos," Raymond Ng, a Chinese American engineer employed at the Sandia National Laboratories at Livermore, California, pointed out, " . . . a cloud of suspicion appears to hang over all Asian Pacific Americans."[279] One can almost hear echoes of Gompers's and Powderly's warnings about the threat that Chinese civilization poses for America when one reads Caspar W. Weinberger's "Foreword" to the House of Representatives *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China* ("the Cox Report"), which stated, "Communist China's long march against the United States is as tenacious as it is diverse — from campaign contributions used to buy influence in the White House, to purchasing an interest in American corporations, to hi-tech spying, [and] to a plain old-fashioned military buildup and threats . . ."[280] Further, when it is reported that 450 of the employees at Los Alamos are "foreign citizens," and that this number includes "more than 30 from Russia, China, North Korea, and seven other 'sensitive' countries"[281] one senses that Chinese scientists, whether "imported" or American-born, alien or citizen, have become the era's current version of the "coolie menace." Unlike the Irish and other Euroamerican work-

ingmen, whose grandparents sought and achieved the perquisites of "whiteness" by excluding them and scorning their ancestral culture, Chinese Americans of whatever socioeconomic class are transformed into "honorary whites" when denied a place in affirmative action programs, but otherwise and all too often regarded as permanent "immigrants."[282] The deeper and more pervasive legacy of the Chinese Exclusion era has been captured by Lisa Lowe when she writes:

> A national memory haunts the conceptions of the Asian-American, persisting beyond the repeal of actual laws prohibiting Asians from citizenship and sustained by the wars in Asia, in which the Asian is always seen as . . . the "foreigner-within," even when born in the United States and the descendant of generations born here before.[283]

Gyory's book does nothing to dispel this national memory.

Chinese Exclusion and Labor History.

DESPITE HIS CLAIM THAT HERBERT GUTMAN'S "SPIRIT AND VISION infuses every page of this book,"[284] a closer reading of both mentor and disciple would suggest that Gyory has not been faithful to what might be called the non-materialist elements of his teacher's perspective. Of the shifts that occurred in Gutman's thought, the one most relevant to Gyory's study is the former's growing interest in the spiritual side of the white worker's mind.[285] Although most of the current New Labor Historians claim their patrimony from Gutman and E. P. Thompson — and, in one study, acknowledge the role of Christianity in inspiring urban black labor activism,[286] — their general tendency is to broaden the term "class" so that it encompasses religion, race, and culture but does not give up its primacy as the essential element in the struggle between labor and capital.[287] Although Gutman did not openly acknowledge a diminution in his faith in class and class struggle — as E. P. Thompson did in 1993[288] — he could not deny the instances in which his historical investigations revealed features of labor activism that were not understandable by traditional class analysis. Of these, his study of Gilded Age Protestantism and its role in structuring the consciousness of white workingmen is crucial.[289]

David Roediger has noted that "When [Gutman] attempted to discuss race relations within the working class, a desire to recover antiracist traditions led to straining the evidence and an unwillingness to probe the extent of white working class racism."[290] However, although his faults in that regard are clear,[291] his commitment to factual-based study caused him to uncover evidence that tended to undermine his unfailing conviction that class solidarity and class consciousness characterized the working class.[292] For example, his startling observation that in Protestantism there "was a religious faith that justified labor organization and agitation, encouraged workers to challenge industrial power, and compelled criticism of 'natural' economic laws, the crude optimism of social Darwinism, and even the conformist Christianity of most respectable clergymen,"[293] not only introduced a significant role for Protestant ideology in the working-class mentality, but raised the question of the role that Catholic ideas might have played in the minds of white laborers adhering to that religion. Gutman did not explore the implications of Catholic thought for working-class consciousness, although he claimed to have collected data on the subject.[294] Had he done so, he

might have uncovered how religious tensions within the working class were reduced by fomenting a campaign against Asiatic heathenism.

When Gutman flung down the challenge — as quoted by Gyory, who accepted it, — "This event in North Adams needs to be looked at in a fresh light. Who wants to tackle it?"[295] — he might have been posing precisely the kind of research problem that Gyory *did not* choose to solve. That would have been — indeed, should have been — an investigation that, taking Gutman's favorite aphorism, Sartre's statement that "The essential is not what 'one' has done to him,"[296] would have pursued the largely Catholic Irish workingmen's story in terms of their anomalous status as objects of both religious and racial bigotry — and how they sought to overcome their situation by seizing upon the "Chinese Question" and turning their own and other workingmen's attention to the "threat" presented by a "Chinese invasion."[297] Putting together their refusal to associate with black and Chinese workers, their boasted identification with a generalized Occidental Christian civilization that would exclude Asiatics, and their adaptation of Sinophobic stereotopy to both their labor actions and their low-brow culture — i.e., the kinds of facts uncovered in the research carried out by Tchen, Roediger, Ignatiev, and Hill — these workers trod the path to "whiteness" and full-fledged Americanization. Gyory has not told this story. In his eagerness to exonerate the white working class from its blameworthy participation in the movement for Chinese exclusion, he has given new life to the lie that the Chinese immigrant posed a real threat to white workers' economic, social, and moral well-being.

"All too frequently, and for too long," observes historian and Sinologist Franklin Ng, "the separation of Chinese American history, like that of black history, from immigrant and ethnic history has worked to the detriment of both."[298]

And, I would add, to the detriment of labor history as well.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Herbert Hill, "The Problem of Race in American Labor History," *Reviews in American History*, XXIV:2 (June, 1996), pp. 189-208.

Peter Kwong, *Forbidden Workers: Illegal Chinese Immigrants and American Labor*, (New York: The New Press, 1997).

Robert G. Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle Against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Yankee International: Marxism and the American Reform Tradition, 1848-1876*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, rev'd. edn., (London: Verso, 1999).

John Kuo Wei Tchen, *New York Before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776-1882*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

This article including all reference notes will appear on our website (www.Wilpaterson.edu/~newpol)

A copy of the reference notes is also available on request. Please send your request, along with $3.00 to cover costs to New Politics, P.O. Box 98, Brooklyn, NY 11231.

Chinese Immigrant Workers and The Contemporary Labor Movement

From Exclusion to Race and Gender Discrimination

Herbert Hill

HISTORICALLY, THE MAJOR CONFLICTS BETWEEN ASIAN WORKERS AND WHITE ORGANIZED LABOR, first the Chinese and then the Japanese, were located in California and in other western states during the second half of the 19th century. As Alexander Saxton demonstrated in his valuable study, *The Indispensable Enemy, Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*,[1] labor unions were a major factor in the movement to exclude Asians from the United States and after the adoption of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, organized labor assumed the leadership of the movement to exclude the Chinese already in the country from work and from equal treatment in the society.*

After World War II, with the enactment of various laws modifying exclusionary restrictions, a new Asian immigration to the United States began, and the Chinese workers' continuing experience with American labor unions now shifted from California and the West to New York City, more specifically to the garment manufacturing industry which by the 1960s needed their labor in large numbers. Chinese workers became vital to the garment industry in New York as both the traditional labor force and its later replacements abandoned the industry. In the course of

* The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years and those who were not lawfully entitled to reside in the United States were subject to deportation. Chinese immigrants were also prohibited from obtaining United States citizenship after the effective date of the act. The 1882 act was amended in 1884 to cover all subjects of China and all Chinese persons who resided in any other foreign country. With the enthusiastic support of the American Federation of Labor, the Geary Act which extended the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1892. In 1902 it was again extended and in 1904 it was made permanent. The Geary Act and the subsequent amendments to it were far more Draconian than the original act of 1882. For a detailed discussion see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*. (New York: Henry Holt, 1909, pp. 209-233)

HERBERT HILL *is Evjue-Bascom Professor of African-American Studies and Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. A collection of his essays, many of which appeared in* New Politics, *will be published in 2001.*

this development, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, a decaying labor organization mired in corruption, admitted Chinese immigrant women into membership.

Despite state and federal civil rights laws, even after adoption of Title VII, the employment section of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, many unions in New York and elsewhere continued their traditional racial exclusionary practices. For example, locals of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union did not organize Chinese restaurant workers in keeping with an old policy of the American Federation of Labor, stated by its president Samuel Gompers in 1904. In response to an inquiry from a union official Gompers had written:

> I am inclined to believe that it would be unwise and impractical to unionize a Chinese restaurant...the American labor movement has set its face against the Chinese coming into this country, and upon our demands that law has been passed for the exclusion of Chinese from the United States...the American labor movement stands committed against the Chinese...it would be the height of inconsistency of our movement to unionize the Chinese against whom we have declared.[2]

For Gompers, racism was a self-fulfilling activity. He was determined that non-Caucasians be kept down, their lowly status then being taken as proof of their innate inferiority.

Until 1978, Local 69 of the Restaurant Workers Union in New York had never admitted Chinese workers and had no plans to do so, yet in that year a small group of Chinese waiters organized themselves and upon their request were admitted into the union. Soon thereafter they were followed by Chinese workers employed in four other non-Chinatown restaurants who also requested union representation. According to the community activist and writer Peter Kwong,

> The waiters who joined the union were soon dissatisfied. Local 69 regularly refused to enforce contracts and allowed management to get away with violations of labor codes...Members at one restaurant accused the representative from their local of sitting by while they were replaced by non-union workers. Local 69 was a typical "business union," more interested in collecting dues than in representing its members.[3]

As a consequence of the failure of Local 69 to act on their behalf, workers formed the Chinese Staff and Workers Association and later, employees of the largest restaurant in Chinatown joined and voted "in favor of forming an independent union not affiliated with Local 69."[4] The experience of Chinese workers with Local 69 of the Restaurant Workers Union was to be repeated later with other unions in a variety of contexts.

A major source of conflict between Chinese workers and organized labor in New York City was the rigid exclusion of non-whites from union membership and jobs in the construction industry. Chinese immigrants, including skilled workers from Hong Kong, were repeatedly denied work because of the exclusionary practices of the construction unions. For generations, in New York and many other cities where union membership was a condition of employment in the building trades, labor unions had enforced racial policies that resulted in an all-white labor force, and these practices were applied to Chinese and other Asian

workers.*

In 1976, the New York State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights noted the continuing pattern of Asian exclusion from construction jobs and called for corrective action.[5] But repeated complaints to government agencies proved futile as the construction unions remained adamant in their refusal to admit Chinese workers. In response, in 1991 the Chinese Construction Workers Association was formed and has since conducted demonstrations at construction sites jointly with other non-white groups. These demonstrations, especially those at publicly funded projects, have forced some construction companies operating with lucrative government contracts to arrange for temporary work permits from the unions for non-white workers including Asians, for limited jobs for brief periods.

Chinese Workers and the ILGWU

THE CHINESE WORKERS' EXPERIENCE WITH THE GARMENT INDUSTRY IN NEW YORK and with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union is significant in the light of white labor's historic hostility to the Chinese. It is a late 20th century chapter in the continuing engagement of Chinese immigrants with American labor organizations.[6] It reveals many of the basic problems of the contemporary labor movement, internal corruption, suppression of union democracy, and race and gender discrimination that characterize the functioning of the ILGWU now known as UNITE.

Garment manufacturing is a declining industry in the United States and the union frequently points to foreign competition as the reason for its problems, but the union's role in this development cannot be ignored. The ILGWU was among the most active of American unions in preventing the development of militant labor organizations in many third world countries whose low-wage workers now effectively compete with ILGWU members for employment. In the decades after World War II, in the name of fighting Communism, the ILGWU and the AFL-CIO, with funds provided by the government and under the direction of the Central Intelligence Agency, engaged in extensive covert operations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe to eliminate not only Communist-controlled unions, but all militant unions that rejected control by American interests.

According to Thomas W. Braden, the official in charge of the CIA's "front" organizations during the 1950s, approximately two million dollars annually was given to the Free Trade Union Committee, a special unit of the AFL created for overseas activity by David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, Matthew Woll,

---

* An extensive history and litigation record documents the intransigent resistance of construction unions in New York to the admission of persons of color. Among these are Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Locals 28 and 638 of the Sheet Metal Workers, Local 46 of the Metal Lathers Union, Locals 14 and 15 of the International Union of Operating Engineers and Local 2 of the Plumbers Union. For a detailed examination of these and related cases see Herbert Hill, "The Racial Practices of Organized Labor: The Contemporary Record," in Julius Jacobson, editor, *The Negro and the American Labor Movement*, Garden City, Anchor Books, 1968, pp. 293-320 and Herbert Hill, "The New York City Terminal Market Controversy: A Case Study of Race, Labor and Power," *Humanities in Society*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Fall 1983, pp. 351-391.

president of the Photoengrainers Union, and George Meany, president of the labor federation. Jay Lovestone, a former head of the American Communist Party who had repudiated his beliefs, was chosen to be its executive secretary, with Irving Brown as its field agent. Later the AFL-CIO established additional "front" organizations financed and controlled by the CIA and other government agencies. Among these were the American Institute for Free Labor Development, the Asian-American Free Labor Institute and the African-American Labor Center. Under cover supplied by the AFL-CIO, the CIA in many countries infiltrated labor unions as was the case in Chile where they acted to "destabilize" the country and collaborated with repressive military forces.[7]

Paradoxically, by their involvement in such activities over a period of many years, the ILGWU and the AFL-CIO directly contributed to the loss of jobs in domestic industries and the decline of American labor unions.

According to the historian Xinyang Wang, "It was the efforts of organized labor, such as boycotting consumer goods manufactured by Chinese labor and forcing employers to dismiss their Chinese workers that made the Chinese gradually withdraw from what white workers claimed as their own domain."[8] Although unions in the New York area during the early decades of the 20th century were somewhat less belligerent toward the Chinese than their West Coast affiliates,

> the hostilities of labor unions continued to prevent most Chinese from entering the manufacturing sector of the city's economy. White workers were even reluctant to tolerate the presence of Chinese immigrants in the laundry industry. In the 1890s, 1920s, and 1930s, the white workers launched several major campaigns aimed at driving the Chinese out of their occupations.[9]

In 1901 at its second convention, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, recommended to its local unions that they admit all persons who applied for membership but that "no charter shall be issued to an organization composed wholly of Chinese or Japanese."[10] In 1902, the ILGWU convention declared that "all Asiatics" were barred from membership.[11] In the period immediately after its founding in 1900 and for the next 30 years, the ILGWU in keeping with its declared policy, and the policy of the AFL, did not organize Chinese or other Asian workers. In San Francisco, in the late 1930s, according to Xinyang Wang, "the ILGWU lifted its ban on Chinese members…in 1938, the seamstresses working for Chinatown's largest garment factory, the National Dollar Stores, walked out and organized themselves in ILGWU Local 341."[12] This was the first all-Chinese local of the ILGWU.* The change in racial policy had little application in eastern cities,

* The garment factories operating in San Francisco's Chinatown during the 1930s have a history dating back to the garment guilds organized by male garment workers in the 1860s. After World War I, Chinese women began replacing the male labor force and through the newly organized Union Guild, succeeded in changing the eleven-twelve hour day to a nine hour day with overtime pay. The tradition of labor militancy among Chinese women garment workers in San Francisco has continued into the modern period. One example of this tradition was the action begun on October 1, 1973 when 60 Chinese women employed at the San Francisco Gold Company "mobilized" the entire work force of 250 Latino, Filipino, as well as Chinese and black women, and succeeded in winning recognition of the ILGWU as the collective bargaining agent of the workers. "However, their victory was not completed. Lack of understanding by the union bureaucrats about the needs of Chinese immigrant workers, coupled with mas-

especially New York, where there were few Asians and where the unions' membership base was concentrated. But this was to change rapidly in the years after World War II.

Chinese American Population Growth

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT WAS REPEALED IN 1943, although the new admission quota for Chinese immigrants allowed only 105 to be admitted annually. However, if a person could prove that he or she had entered the country before the Immigration Act of 1924 or under other laws, admission was possible. In addition the War Brides Act of 1946 made possible the immigration of wives of those who had served in U.S. military forces and later the law was amended to permit the families of Chinese-Americans who fought for the United States in World War II to enter the country. In response to these measures, 9,000 women immigrated to the United States in a two-year period and these comprised over 80 percent of all Chinese immigrants who would arrive between 1945 and 1947.[13]

As a consequence, the traditional bachelor societies of Chinese communities in the United States began to be transformed into family communities. This development was in sharp contrast to the enduring pattern established in 1860 when the ratio of men to women was 9 to 1. According to Stanford M. Lyman, "The most significant feature of overseas Chinese settlement has been the imbalance in the sex ratio," which he concludes, has resulted in "the prolonged maintenance of an isolated and closed community among the Chinese in the ghetto and a reinforcement of hostile images of them."[14]

This historic transformation of Chinese communities was not, however, completed until 20 years later with the adoption of the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965, abolishing the national origins quota in favor of preference for family members of persons already residing in the United States.*

---

sive layoffs by the employers, led to much demoralization among the workers. From this experience, it was learned that the key to solving problems in workplaces lies not with a few union leaders but depends on the rank and file's control of the unions." Quoted in "Garment Workers Unite at SF Gold Co.," in *Chinese Working People in America*, The Wei Min She Labor Committee, San Francisco, United Front Press, 1974, p. 64. For information on the history of Chinese garment workers in San Francisco, see Dean Lan, "The Chinatown Sweatshops: Oppression and an Alternative," *Amerasia*, November, 1947, pp. 40-57.

---

* Representatives of the American Federation of Labor in 1943 opposed any change in the law regarding Asian exclusion. Typical of the AFL's response to the proposal then pending in the congress to admit a small annual quota of Chinese was the action taken by Frank X. Martel, president of the Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan, Federation of Labor. *The Detroit Labor News* of July 16, 1943, reported in a front page account under the headline "DO NOT TAMPER WITH IMMIGRATION LAWS NOW," the details of a letter sent by Martel to Michigan's congressional delegation urging opposition to any change in the laws barring "Orientals." According to the leader of the AFL in Michigan "America is already suffering the pains of trying to assimilate a race other than that of the dominant race of people....it ought not to be further complicated by the injection of the issue of trying to assimilate Orientals." The 1942 convention of the California State Federation of Labor reaffirmed its opposition to Asian exclusion and adopted a resolution stating that "the true credit for the agitation against Oriental

Also admitted beyond the annual quota of 20,000 immigrants from any one country outside of the Western hemisphere, and in addition to refugees, were spouses, parents and unmarried children, under the age of 21, of U.S. citizens.[15]

The changes in immigration law led to dramatic increases in the Asian and more specifically the Chinese population in the United States. The increase in the Chinese population between 1960 and 1970 was 84.3 percent, between 1970 and 1980, 85.3 percent, between 1980 and 1990, 104 percent. By 1997, there were an estimated 2.3 million Chinese immigrants in the United States and the total Asian population increased by 80 percent during the 1980s. In actual numbers, the size of the Asian American population grew from 3.8 million to 6.9 million with almost three-quarters of this increase attributed to immigration. According to Census Bureau projections, the Asian population in the United States will be doubled again by 2010, and is likely to exceed 32 million by 2050.[16]

Asian American men and women in all categories have labor force participation rates as high or higher than those of white men and women. In 1990, 60 percent of Asian women were in the labor force compared with 54 percent of white women and in 1996, 94 percent of the Asian population lived in metropolitan areas with the largest number of Chinese living in New York.[17]

The demographer, Douglas Massey, has speculated that "China might soon overtake Mexico as the largest source of immigrants to our country." (Almost 30 percent of all foreign born people in the U.S. are from Mexico.) It is anticipated that early in the new century there will be "an enormous outpouring of people from China…This will have a significant impact on immigration to the United States…."[18]

Local 23-25, ILGWU

According to a study of Chinese occupational patterns in American cities "Chinese restaurants, laundries, and garment factories are known to the Chinese as the lifeblood of the community…of the three, old immigrants who arrived before 1965 control the laundries, while new immigrants who came to the U.S. after 1965 dominate the garment factories."[19]

More specifically, Chinese immigrant women have constituted a major part of the garment industry labor force. Because of the War Brides Act of 1946 and the Immigration Act of 1965, the Chinatowns of America were inundated with women who needed to work, and the garment industry concentrated in New York experienced acute labor shortages.

The timing of the 1965 Immigration Act was fortuitous for New York's garment manufacturers. By that time the industry had already lost its traditional Jewish and Italian labor force,[20] while black and Puerto Rican women who had entered the industry in large numbers after World War II, departed during the 1960s. According to a 1996 study, "In the immigrants, New York's garment employers found a labor supply for positions that natives, white or black now

---

immigration should go where it belongs—to the pioneers of the trade union movement in San Francisco, Dennis Kearney, Frank Rooney, John O. Walsh, John I. Nolan, and many others of that day who in and out of season preached the gospel of exclusion of Orientals," *Proceedings* of the Forty-Third Annual Convention of the California State Federation Labor, Long Beach, September 21 to 25, 1942, p. 226.

shunned."[21]

Major reasons for the exodus of black and Puerto Rican women from New York's garment industry were the ILGWU's low-wage policy[22] and the fact that black and Puerto Rican workers were unable to advance into higher-paying jobs. The latter resulted from union control over entry into skilled work and union opposition to training programs.* As one report explained,

> Black and Puerto Rican members clustered at the low-paid, low-skilled ends of the industry, while they bore the brunt of the ILGWU's 'go-slow' stance toward employers. The union's policies were aggravated by its sharply hierarchical policies, which kept almost all power in the hands of its white, mainly Jewish leaders.[23]

In 1950, over 20,000 African Americans were employed in garment manufacturing in New York, by 1970 only 11,500, and by 1990, less than 3,000.[24] The author's personal observations almost a decade later indicate that by the end of the century there were few African-American men or women working in New York's garment industry.** Puerto Rican women also left garment work for similar reasons as other better paying jobs became available.[25]

In the midst of such rapidly increasing labor shortages during the 1960s, immigrant Chinese women, although unable to speak English, entered this arena of the labor market. Many had worked as seamstresses in China and with little choice, they were, in effect, forced to accept the low wages and unstable working conditions characteristic of the garment industry. It was not until the 1970s that the ILGWU organized most of the "Chinese shops" in New York City; the Chinese workforce had increased dramatically, and it became impossible for the union to ignore the Chinese women garment workers who had become essential to the survival of the industry and the union.

By the mid-1970s, the membership of the ILGWU in New York consisted largely of non-white women, mainly immigrants from China with some from the Caribbean (largely from the Dominican Republic) and from Central and South America. In 1978, Local 23-25 of the ILGWU with 25,000 members, was the largest local of the union in New York City and its composition may be taken as

---

* On August 22, 1963, the U.S. Department of Labor which administered the Manpower Development Training Act, received a 14 page statement on the "position of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America on the question of subsidized training programs in the apparel industry of the United States." The document signed by Lazare Teper, research director of the ILGWU and Milton Fried, research director of the ACWA, concluded by urging that "the Department of Labor as a matter of policy not sponsor or approve any training program for apparel workers under the Manpower Development Act." (Copy in NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Group III, box A184.) See also Herbert Hill, "Sewing Machines and Union Machines," *The Nation*, July 3, 1967, pp. 18-19.

** In the 1960s, a young black man responded to a suggestion from a researcher on the staff of the Harlem Youth Opportunities Center as follows: "You want me to go down to the garment district and push one of those trucks through the streets and at the end of the week take home $40 or $50 if I'm lucky. Come off it. They don't have animals doing what you want me to do. There would be some society to protect animals if anybody had them pushing those damn trucks around." *Youth in the Ghetto: A Study of the Consequences of Powerlessness and a Blueprint for Change*, Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., New York, 1964, p. 327.

an indication of the demographic characteristics of both the industry and the union. The membership of Local 23-25 was 94 percent female, with Asians and Latinos constituting 73 percent of the membership. Between 1972 and 1978, Chinese membership increased by 349 percent, with a 16 percent increase in Latino members, and a 64 percent decrease in white union members.[26]

A 1983 study commissioned by the ILGWU and the New York Skirt and Sportswear Association reported that "central to the revival of the industries' fortunes in New York City has been the emergence and growth of the garment industry in Chinatown," and that between 1969 and 1982 the number of Chinese women employed in garment factories in the vicinity of Chinatown increased from 8,000 to 20,000.[27] An indication of the importance of this development for Chinese families in New York City, is that by 1970, 43.7 percent of Chinese women in the New York metropolitan area were employed in garment making, mostly as sewing machine operators, and that approximately four out of ten Chinese families in New York and two-thirds of those who lived in Chinatown had a family member working in the garment industry.[28]

At the beginning of the 1990s, New York had the largest concentration of Chinese in the United States and in that year the Chinese garment making sector in New York consisted of over 450 factories employing almost 20,000 workers.[29] The ILGWU placed all Chinese workers in Local 23-35 which was described by Peter Kwong and Jo Ann Lum as "an ineffectual and decaying union."[30] From the 1960s until the end of the century, ILGWU negotiated wages were among the lowest of any unionized industry. A largely white male union leadership remained in power and continued to perpetuate itself through rigid bureaucratic control, while the union affixed its label to a new generation of sweatshops based upon the extreme exploitation of Chinese and Latino women.

A major cause of resentment among the members of Local 23-25, is that although women comprise virtually its entire membership, and despite the repeated protests of Chinese women, only men represent the union in negotiations with employers. Furthermore, not a single Chinese women is in a policy-making position. As a result of membership complaints, a few Chinese women were appointed to staff positions in the local union, but as one member explained, "They can do nothing, just hired to take orders, nobody is fooled."[31]

Since the 1980s, ILGWU leaders have had to confront an increasingly restive Chinese membership, a membership that is denied a voice in determining the union's policies and practices. Because members of Local 23-25 are denied the basic requirements of internal union democracy, few Chinese or Latino women have been permitted to rise to a position of leadership. While the union's procedures deprive the entire membership of its rights, the denial of internal democracy takes on additional significance since it prevents racial minorities and women from pressing for policies and practices that would eliminate discrimination and advance their interests.*

---

* Annelise Orleck in her study of women and labor unions, wrote that "The longer Dubinsky [president of the ILGWU from 1932 until he retired in 1966] ran the union, the more difficult it became for opposition candidates to campaign for high union office. Layer upon layer of new rules and regulations were added, making it virtually impossible for anyone but a small group of insiders to attain unionwide office." Annelise Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire, Women and Working-Class Politics in the United States, 1900-1965*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1991, p. 205.

By 1987 the membership of Local 23-25 was 85 percent Chinese and according to Peter Kwong, they worked "well below minimum union standards…working conditions are hazardous to safety and health. On the average, Chinese garment workers are on the job ten to twelve hours a day, six days a week and make only about $9,000 a year. These are 19th century sweatshop conditions."[32] Kwong also describes how the union organizes "from the top down," by arrangements with employers who make deals with the ILGWU and then inform the workers that they are members of the union. "In many factories shop representatives, whose job it is to take up workers complaints with the bosses, were in fact chosen by the owners. ILGWU business agents, get along better with the bosses than with their own members…. Local 23-25 is clearly not enforcing union contracts in Chinatown shops."[33] In a 1997 report Kwong wrote that "Almost 90 percent of the seamstresses working in the lower Manhattan Chinatown are members of Local 23-25…as union members their negotiated legal union minimum wage is supposed to be from $6 to $9.45 an hour…." However, because of the piece rate system which the union sanctions, "The average hourly rates do not come near the federal minimum wage, let along the union minimum…. As a result, a union contract is one thing, union wages another." Moreover, a 1992 survey revealed that non-union workers were often better paid than ILGWU members. It was reported that the average gross non-union wage in 1992 was $4.97, while the average union wage was $3.73 at a time when the federal minimum wage was $4.25."[34]

In 1989, a United States government investigation concluded that the majority of garment factories in New York were operated under "sweatshop conditions" in which federal, state and city labor laws were routinely violated. The report noted that "many Hispanic and Asian immigrants" were employed in these "sweatshops."[35] A later report released by the U.S. Department of Labor, revealed that employers with ILGWU contracts tended to have more wage and hours violations than non-union factories.[36] This of course indicates that the ILGWU did not enforce its agreements, especially where Chinese and Latino immigrant women were employed.

By 1990, Los Angeles was the second most important center of garment manufacturing, after New York. In contrast to New York, however, Chinese immigrants are only a minority, less than 10 percent of the garment industry labor force in Los Angeles, with Latino women in the majority.[37] In both New York and Los Angeles, garment manufacturing depends upon a work force consisting of Asian and Latino immigrant women, among the most oppressed and exploited of all groups in American society.[38] The racial and gendered characteristics of sweatshop labor are repeated in low-wage employment across the country and although there is a union presence in garment manufacturing in New York and Los Angeles, abysmal wages and working conditions continue in both the organized and non-union sectors.

Union Corruption

WHEN IN 1995, AS A RESULT OF DECLINING MEMBERSHIP, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union merged with the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union to form the Union of Needle Trades, Industrial and Textile

Employees, (UNITE), Local 23-25 became the largest local union in the merged organization. In 1997, the total income of Local 23-25 was over ten million dollars, with four million dollars derived from the dues paid by its members. Dues money was shared equally with UNITE which also operates as a business enterprise having as part of its activities stock market investments, real estate holdings and ownership of a bank, the Amalgamated Bank.[39] It is a highly bureaucratic organization controlled by careerists in the "union business." Corruption has long flourished in such an atmosphere with the knowledge and sometimes the complicity of high union officials.* The record of corrupt activities in the ILGWU goes back to the early years of the union and requires an extensive study that would illuminate important aspects of labor history.[40]

In Local 23-25 with a membership consisting largely of Chinese immigrant women earning sub-standard wages and paying union dues of $18 a month, corruption is widespread. Local 23-25 has been under investigation by the Racketeering Division of the U.S. Department of Labor since 1997 and indictments are expected at the conclusion of the investigation which continues into late 1999. In a separate action, on September 10, 1996, a Local 23-25 business agent known as Eddie Ko pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to taking bribes from employers.[41] Officials of other UNITE locals in New York had already served time in jail. Israel Mechlowicz, for example, manager of Local 10, a union of skilled cutters in New York, and Seymour Resnick, its assistant manager, were sentenced to jail terms in 1994.** "An isolated incident and a temporary set back," commented Jay Mazur, president of UNITE.[42] But the corruption was not isolated, and soon thereafter another group of Local 10 business agents was caught taking bribes from employers.[43]

Corruption at the expense of rank and file workers, has long been a characteristic of the ILGWU. An observer of the ILGWU's operations in New York noted the relationship between corruption and racial discrimination in the union. "The ILGWU's performance was particularly dismal in the one area where black men concentrated most heavily: the push-boys and shipping clerks fell into the jurisdiction of a corrupt local that turned a blind eye when union-

* A 1962 congressional investigation of the ILGWU's racial practices also revealed corrupt practices which greatly embarrassed the union, see *Hearings before the Ad Hoc Subcommittees on Investigation of the Garment Industry, Committee on Education and Labor, United States House of Representatives*, 87th Congress, 2d session, August 17, 18, 23, 24, and September 21, 1962. For the author's testimony before the committee see *Congressional Record-House*, January 31, 1963, pp. 1496-99.

** In 1963, Local 10 was defendant in a case before the New York State Commission for Human Rights that exposed the status of African-Americans and Puerto Ricans in the ILGWU and became a symbol of minority protest against the union (*Holmes* v. *Falikman*, Case No. C-7590-61,May 17, 1963, New York State Commission For Human Rights). See Joel Selden, "ILGWU Condemned for Racial Barriers," *New York Herald-Tribune*, July 2, 1962, p. 1; Fred Ferretti, "Crusading Negro Finds Road is Rough," *New York Herald-Tribune*, July 2, 1962, p. 8; "Union Told to Get Job for Negro," *The New York Times*, July 2, 1962, p. 22. For a detailed history of this case see Herbert Hill, "The ILGWU Today: The Decay of a Labor Union," and Hill, "The ILGWU: Fact and Fiction," in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor*, edited by Burton Hall, New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1972, pp. 147-160, and pp. 173-200.

ized employers kept workers off union rolls."[44] This practice was not limited to the push-boys local.

Corruption continues in many of the New York garment locals that are now part of UNITE, a point dramatically demonstrated when, on December 4, 1997, the operator of a large garment factory under contract to Local 23-25 was arrested by the New York State attorney general and charged with failure to pay almost 100 Chinese workers for 10 weeks of work. In addition, investigations revealed that when workers were paid, state minimum wage and overtime laws were consistently violated and that employees were forced to work 10 to 11 hour days, seven days a week, with most receiving less than the federal minimum wage. The state attorney general informed the press that this was "a union sweatshop." A reporter working from Labor Department investigative reports obtained under the Freedom of Information Act concluded that such conditions were widespread in at least 250 other factories where Local 23-25 held union contracts.[45]

An event which caused great consternation among union leaders was the class action lawsuit filed in federal court by Chinese and Latino women garment workers, against a major employer and UNITE. According to a front page report in *The New York Times* of April 27, 1998, headlined, "Garment Union Battles Its Own Workers," Chinese and Latino members of UNITE "sued not only Claiborne, one of the nation's largest clothing manufacturers, but their union saying that it stopped fighting on their behalf in return for a multi-million dollar payment." The lawsuit charged that the union at the expense of workers made arrangements for "putting money into union pockets even as membership dues declined."[46]

The workers contended that UNITE betrayed them by accepting for itself $20.5 million in settlement of a claim resulting from the company's violation of a contractual agreement to use union labor exclusively. The settlement also provided less than $2,900 for each eligible worker who lost work and earnings as a result of the contract violation. In return for the union's acceptance of the settlement, instead of insisting upon arbitration of the claim on behalf of its members, Claiborne agreed to give the union $13 million immediately and $7.5 million more over a three-year period. But the workers were the injured parties and UNITE should have collected the money for distribution to its members. Instead the funds went into the union's treasury.

Between 1994 and 1996 the union, according to the *Times* "collected $25.3 million in such liquidated damages, almost half of that from Claiborne. One union official said such payments had typically averaged about $10 million a year…." He also noted that the union's annual budget was further supported by "significant investment income." The union's practice in accepting payment from employers who break their agreements, instead of pressing for adequate payment to the affected workers has, according to the *Times*, "helped fatten industry profits and lower management risks…using cheap factories abroad can save manufacturers far more than they pay in damages, and the payments spare them the possibility of costly labor battles at home." It was reported that the Major Crimes Unit of the U.S. Attorney's office in New York, had begun an investigation of the Claiborne-UNITE transaction.[47]

Ms. Chun Hua Mui, a Chinese immigrant worker who is one of the plaintiffs, said that she was "outraged" that the union made the workers sign an agree-

ment not to sue UNITE before they could receive any payment. Ms. Mui told the *Times* that she and "about four dozen others refused and were denied their share." Worse, says Ms. Mui, "We were never consulted."[48]

There is reason to believe that Chun Hua Mui is not unique and that the conventional image of the Chinese immigrant as passive and docile in the face of mistreatment has little basis in fact.* The militancy of Chinese women garment workers was not limited to the courtroom as the leaders of the ILGWU discovered to their surprise in 1982 when 20,000 Chinese women, members of Local 23-25 demonstrated in Columbus Park, on the edge of New York's Chinatown against their employers and after two days of mass protest won a new union contract.[49]

A culture of corruption has long existed within many labor unions in New York and in other cities. Carl Biers, executive director of the Association for Union Democracy, recently described the activities in District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers in New York, "Million dollar junkets; hundreds of thousands of dollars in unaccounted credit card charges; prostitutes; dues money funneled to penthouse apartments and mansions in Georgia; forged votes in a contact referendum; a turkey kickback scam; and more."[50] Twenty-seven officials of the District Council and two vice-presidents of the international union have been indicted for crimes ranging from grand larceny to vote rigging.

James McGorman, a business agent of Local 32B-32J of the Service Employees International Union in New York pleaded guilty to charges of selling jobs to union members, a frequent practice in this union. The former leader of the local was John Sweeney, who left to become president of the international union and then became president of the AFL-CIO with multiple salaries intact.[51] In 1998, Edward Hanley, retired from the presidency of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union in an arrangement with the U.S. Justice Department, which had threatened to press for an indictment on federal charges if he did not remove himself from office.[52] In 1999, Arthur A. Coia, president of the Laborers International Union of North America, one of the nation's largest building trades unions, pleaded guilty to fraud charges and agreed to resign as part of a deal with federal prosecutors.[53] These are but a few recent examples of the corruption that pervades many unions. The list is long;

---

* In the past Chinese immigrants frequently initiated litigation to eliminate the oppressive practices they were forced to suffer. The 1886 decision of the United States Supreme Court in *Yick Wo* v. *Hopkins* (118 U.S. 356, 1886) significantly advanced the interpretation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and continues to be invoked in contemporary civil rights litigation. According to the constitutional historian Charles J. McClain, "between 1880 and 1900 Chinese litigants carried some twenty appeals to the Supreme Court....Indeed during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese mounted court challenges to virtually every governmentally imposed disability under which they labored." Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality, The Chinese Struggle Against Discrimination in Nineteenth Century America*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994, p. 3. See also Stanford M. Lyman, "The Chinese Before The Courts: A Prolegomenon to a Study of Ethnoracial Construction and Marginalization," in *idem*, *Postmodernism and a Sociology of the Absurd and Other Essays on the 'Nouvelle Vogue' in American Social Science*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1997), pp. 163-184.

the construction unions remain a cesspool of corruption,* and under Sweeney the bureaucratic machinery that spawns union corruption remains intact. The failure of the AFL-CIO leadership to take action against sordid practices reinforces a culture of union misbehavior that victimizes workers seeking the protection of union membership.

Emergence of Community Labor Centers

DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY, organized labor excluded the Chinese and all other Asians from its ranks and for generations thereafter maintained anti-Asian policies at the workplace and conducted campaigns against Asians throughout the society. The experience of Chinese immigrant labor in the United States in conjunction with the experience of other people of color, demonstrates that the history of American labor movements is largely a history of white solidarity not worker solidarity.

White working-class aggression against Asians has not yet come to an end, but with the profound demographic and occupational changes that are occurring in American society at the conclusion of the 20th century, a new labor force is emerging with Asian and other non-white workers as important components of work force concentrations. New York City provides a dramatic example of a changed metropolitan area labor force that is predominately non-white, non-male, and with the exception of declining garment making, non-manufacturing. By the mid-1980s, New York City's Chinese community with a population of over 300,000 was the largest in the United States and increasing each month by 1,400 persons. While the old Chinatowns in San Francisco, New York and Chicago were expanding, new ones were being built in St. Louis, Houston and San Diego and this pattern of growth is expected to continue well into the next cen-

* In 1921 Federal Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis declared that the construction industry and the building trades unions were "a thing diseased." Since that time a plethora of reports, studies and data from law enforcement agencies including the records of criminal court proceedings have documented the continuing pattern of corruption and racketeering by the building trades unions in New York City and elsewhere. The latest of these is the report of a three-year investigation by the Manhattan District Attorney's office made public in 1999, describing corrupt practices by the carpenters, laborers and bricklayers unions that made it possible for employers to evade "paying employees less than union scale and by evading hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments to union pension and fringe benefits funds." The report noted that "Through links to corrupt union officials, the Mafia got payoffs," that allowed companies "to violate collective bargaining contracts on projects that mandated the hiring of union workers." A former official of the carpenters union is quoted as stating that "companies cheat by listing only 3 or 4 men as working on the job while they have another 15 or more 'off the books.' They get away with it by paying off someone in the union to look the other way…and by exploiting minority workers who need the jobs and new immigrants who have no access to their rights or to information about what they are entitled to." Selwyn Raab, "Investigators Detail New Mob Strategy on Building Trades," *The New York Times*, August 8, 1999, p. 31. See also, John Hutchinson, *The Imperfect Union, A History of Corruption in American Trade Unions*, New York, E.P. Dutton & Co., 1972, pp. 25-61, and *Corruption and Racketeering in the New York City Construction Industry*, Interim Report by the New York State Organized Crime Task Force, Ithaca, ILR Press, Cornell University, 1988.

tury.[54] In these cities and elsewhere, the vast majority of sweatshop workers are non-white immigrant women.

The failure of organized labor to transform itself into an institution responsive to these developments will mean the continued long-term decline of labor unions. As demonstrated by the experience of women garment workers in New York, unions are unable to even minimally defend the interests of their members. Chinese and other non-white workers are increasingly developing alternative community-based worker organizations such as the Chinese Staff and Workers Association in New York and similar Latino and African-American organizations in other cities. The Chinese Staff and Workers Association is one of a growing number of independent "workers centers" in several cities that takes action on workplace and community issues and are seen by their members as rank and file controlled organizations that are critical of the established AFL-CIO unions.[55] Cooperation between the CSWA and the Asian-American Legal Defense and Education Fund has resulted in successful litigation to obtain back-pay for workers and employers are frequently sued on a variety of other issues on behalf of aggrieved employees.[56] In New York and elsewhere, union members are joining evolving labor centers as a form of resistance against bureaucratic control and union corruption.

In response to the discriminatory practices of the AFL-CIO construction unions, the Chinese Construction Workers Association engages in joint action with the New York Coalition to End Racism in the Construction Trades. Harlem Fightback, an organization of African-American workers and the Latino-American Workers Project joined with Chinese groups in mass demonstrations to protest the continued exclusion of non-Caucasian workers from jobs in the building trades. In 1997, in Seattle, community-based organizations and minority union caucuses, including the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance were also engaged in joint activity to open construction jobs to minority workers.[57] Such organizational cooperation among non-white groups is occurring in other cities with increasing frequency and is a significant development since it suggests the possibility of alliances among these groups on a variety of issues.

The effort to create a vigorous labor movement, responsive to the needs of the most exploited workers in the society, requires much more than recruiting more dues-payers into collective bargaining units; it requires fundamental institutional change with a major shift in the programs and priorities of organized labor regarding race and gender discrimination, corruption and union democracy. The recent actions of Chinese women garment workers against both employers and labor unions demonstrate the urgency of such a transformation.

NOTES

1. Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy, Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971.

2. Samuel Gompers to J.L. Sullivan, Secretary, Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Alliance and Bartenders International League, June 24, 1904.

3. Peter Kwong, *The New Chinatown*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1987, pp. 141-142.

4. Id., p. 145.

5. Statement of Franklin H. Williams, Chairperson, New York State Advisory

Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights on "The Forgotten Minority: A Review of Problems Confronting Asian-Americans in New York City," May 27, 1976 (Copy in author's files); Farnsworth Fowle, "Asian-Americans in New York Found 'Dynamic' and 'Growing,'" *The New York Times*, May 28, 1976, p. 21. See also Donald Shaughnessy, "A Survey of Discrimination in the Building Trades Industry," A Report of the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, New York, 1963 (Copy in author's files).

6. For a statement of organized labor's extreme hostility to the Chinese people at the turn of the century see Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt, "Some Reasons For Chinese Exclusion: Meat vs. Rice. American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism. Which Shall Survive?" Originally published by the American Federation of Labor in 1901, reprinted as a U.S. Senate Document in 1902 and reissued in 1908 by the Asiatic Exclusion League which identifies Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt as authors. For historical studies see, Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, New York, Henry Holt, 1909; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy, Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971; Herbert Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation and the Rise of Working-Class Racism," *Society*, Vol. 10, No. 2, January/February 1973, pp. 43-54; Gwendolyn Mink, *Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 71-112; and Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Yankee International, Marxism and the American Reform Tradition*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1998, pp. 207-8, 231-33.

7. See Thomas W. Braden, "I'm Glad the CIA is 'Immoral,'" *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1967, and *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities*, Book I, U.S. Senate, April 14, 1976. Among the many sources on this subject see: Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life, Jay Lovestone*, New York, Random House, 1999, pp. 197, 214-17, 223, 245, 338, 340; Beth Sims, *Workers of the World Undermined*, Boston, South End Press, 1992; and Sidney Lens, "Labor Lieutenants and the Cold War," in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor*, edited by Burton H. Hall, New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1972, pp. 310-323.

8. Xinyang Wang, "Economic Opportunity, Artisan Leadership, and Immigrant Workers' Labor Militancy: Italian and Chinese Immigrant Workers in New York City, 1890-1970," *Labor History*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Fall 1996, p. 486.

9. Ibid.

10. International Ladies Garment Workers Union, *Report of the Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention*, 1901, pp. 5-7.

11. International Ladies Garment Workers Union, *Report of the Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention*, 1902, pp. 23-24.

12. Supra, note 8, p. 490.

13. Supra, note 3, p. 20.

14. Stanford M. Lyman, *Chinese Americans*, New York, Random House, 1974, pp. 86-88.

15. Robert W. Gardner, Bryant Robey and Peter C. Smith, "Asian Americans: Growth, Change and Diversity," *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 40, No. 4, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C., October, 1985, p. 9.

16. William O'Hare and Judy Felt, "Asian Americans: America's Fastest Growing Minority Group," *Population Trends and Public Policy*, No. 19, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C., 1991; Sharon M. Lee, "Asian Americans: Diverse and Growing," *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 53, No. 2, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C., June 1998, pp. 15-16.

17. Id., pp. 12-14.

18. Quoted in "Immigration: A Dialogue on Policy, Law, and Values," *Focus on Law Studies*, American Bar Association, Vol. XIV, No. 2, Spring 1999, p. 12.

19. Bernard Wong, "The Role of Ethnicity in Enclave Enterprises: A Study of

Chinese Garment Factories in New York City," *Human Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 1987, p. 121.

20. The percentage of Jewish membership in the ILGWU had been declining since the late 1920's and continued to fall steadily thereafter. In 1924 Jews were 64 percent of the membership, in 1934 less than 50 percent and by the 1940's, less than 30 percent. See Arthur Liebman, *Jews and the Left*, New York, John Wiley, 1979, p. 362. See also Ben Seligman, *Contemporary Jewish Record*, December 1944, pp. 606-7; Will Herberg, "The Old-Timers and the Newcomers: Ethnic Group Relations in a Needle Trades Union," *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1953, pp. 12-19; *Jewish Labor in the United States*, New York, American Jewish Committee, 1954; and Roy B. Helfgott, "Trade Unionism Among the Jewish Garment Workers of Britain and the United States," *Labor History*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring, 1961, p. 209. By 1960, blacks together with Latinos constituted a majority of the central membership base of the ILGWU in New York.

21. Roger Waldinger, *Still The Promised City? African-Americans and New Immigrants in Post Industrial New York*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 155.

22. See Michael Myerson, "The ILGWU: Fighting for Lower Wages," *Ramparts*, October 1969, pp. 51-55; Arnold Witte, *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, October 5, 1962, p. 16; Murray Kempton, "The Wage Fight," *New York Post*, August 21, 1962, p. 22. See also Herbert Hill, "Guardians of the Sweatshops," in *Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans*, editors, A. Lopez and J. Petras, New York, John Wiley, 1974, pp. 384-416.

23. Supra, note 21, p. 149.

24. Id., p. 143.

25. See Altagracia Ortiz, "Puerto Ricans in the Garment Industry of New York City, 1920-1960," in *Labor Divided: Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Labor Struggles*, edited by Robert Asher and Charles Stephenson, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1990, pp. 105-25.

26. *The Effects of Selected Union Policies on Equal Opportunity in New York City*, A study prepared for the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., 1981, pp. 145-46.

27. Supra, note 3, p. 30.

28. Betty Lee Sung, *Chinese American Manpower and Employment*, Baltimore, U.S. Department of Labor, Division of Manpower Administration, 1975, pp. 104, 120-21. See also Paul M. Ong, "Chinatown Unemployment and Ethnic Labor Markets," *Amerasia*, Spring/Summer 1984, pp. 35-45, and Chalsa Loo and Paul Ong, "Slaying Dragons with a Sewing Needle: Feminist Issues for Chinatown's Women," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 27, 1982, pp. 72-86.

29. Supra, note 21, p. 123. While New York has the largest Chinese population, Los Angeles has the largest total Asian population, from 190,000 in 1970, to 926,000 in 1990. (U.S. Census of Population, 1990.)

30. Peter Kwong and Jo Ann Lum, "Letter to the Editor," *The Nation*, October 10, 1988, p. 314.

31. Author's interview with several members of Local 23-35 who requested anonymity, New York, May 8, 1999.

32. Supra, note 3, p. 148.

33. Id., p. 150.

34. Peter Kwong, *Forbidden Workers*, New York, The New Press, 1999, p. 122.

35. *"Sweatshops" in New York City: A Local Example of a Nationwide Problem*, United States General Accounting Office, Washington, D.C., 1989. See also *Daily Labor Report* (No. 123), July 28, 1989, Bureau of National Affairs, Washington, D.C. pp. A8-10.

36. Reported in Robert Fitch, "Look Behind the Union Label," *Village Voice*, January 20, 1998, p. 34.

37. Edna Bonacich, "Asians in the Los Angeles Garment Industry," in *The New Asian Immigration in Los Angeles and Global Restructuring*, edited by Paul Ong, Edna Bonacich and Lucie Cheng, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1994, p. 138. For a discussion of the racism and sexism of the ILGWU in the Los Angeles area see John Laslett and Mary Tyler, *The ILGWU in Los Angeles, 1907-1988*, Inglewood, Calif., Ten Star Press, 1989.

38. See Elizabeth McTaggert Almquist, *Minorities, Gender, and Work*, Lexington, MA, D.C. Heath & Co., 1979, and Teresa L. Amott and Julie A. Matthaei, *Race, Gender, and Work: A Multicultural Economic History of Women in the United States*, Boston, South End Press, 1991.

39. Supra, note 36, p. 34.

40. Unfortunately there is no full-scale scholarly study. Among the limited available sources see John Hutchinson, *The Imperfect Union, A History of Corruption in American Trade Unions*, New York, E.P. Dutton, 1972, pp. 86-92; and Burton Hall, "The ILGWU and the Labor Department" in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor*, edited by Burton Hall, New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1972, pp. 284-295. See also Don Hogan and Peter Braestrup, "Dress Union Shares in Blame for Rackets," *New York Herald-Tribune*, June 30, 1958, p. 1.

41. Supra, note 36, p. 37.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Supra, note 21, p. 150.

45. Supra, note 36, p. 34.

46. Diana B. Henriques, "Garment Union Battles Its Own Workers," *The New York Times*, April 27, 1998, p. 1.

47. Robert Fitch, "Sewing Suspicions," *Village Voice*, April 14, 1998, p. 36.

48. Supra, note 46, p. B-8.

49. Supra, note 3, p. 152.

50. Carl Biers, "Committee for Change Leads the Way in DC 37," *Union Democracy Review*, No. 125, July 1999, p. 1.

51. Robert Fitch, "Labor Pain" *The Nation*, November 25, 1996, p. 26. See also Robert Fitch, "Sweeney Among the Warlords," and Michael Hirsch, "Job Selling at the Janitors Local," both in *New Politics*, Winter, 1997, pp. 152-158 and pp. 159-161.

52. Martha Gruelle, "Former HERE Head Gets Immunity," *Labor Notes*, January 1999, p. 4.

53. Steven Greenhouse, "U.S. Says Labor Union Leader Will Resign and Admit Fraud," *The New York Times*, October 1, 1999, p. A16.

54. Supra, note 16, pp. 12-16. See also the report "Outlook: The Growing Asian Presence in the Tri-State Region," prepared by the Regional Plan Association for the Asian-American Advisory Committee and the United Way of Tri-State. New York, April, 1989.

55. See Pam Tan Lee, "Asian Workers in the U.S.: A Challenge to Labor," *Labor Notes*, July 1993, p. 11; Mary Hollens, "Workers Centers: Organizing in Both Workplace and Community," *Labor Notes*, September 1994, p. 8-9; Linelle Mogado, "Asian/Pacific American Labor Activists, Speak Out on Union Reform, Organizing," *Labor Notes*, October 1998, p. 16.

56. *CSWA News*, Chinese Staff and Workers Association—The Voice of the Chinese American Worker, Winter 1998-1999, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 6.

57. John Little, "Promoting Access and Diversity in the Northwest's Building Trades," *Labor Notes*, July 1999, p. 12.

Revising the History of Cold War Liberals

Julius Jacobson

THERE ARE TWO DISPARATE SCHOOLS OF HISTORICAL REVISIONISM which plague those committed to the revival of a socialist movement. The older revisionist school, of primary concern to the Left, focuses on the history of American Communism. No historian in this revisionist school is rhapsodical about the history of the American Communist Party. On the other hand, there is rarely more than a glimmer of understanding of the extent to which Stalinism internationally and the Comintern's subservient national parties, the American Party not excepted, have discredited the very idea of socialism. Instead, there is the pretense of presenting an allegedly balanced, historically objective history of American Stalinism (or Communism) noting its admitted shortcomings as well as paying tribute to its alleged contributions to social emancipation. To achieve what is a theoretically impossible task, history is falsified, torn out of context, leaving us with an apologia for a movement slavishly devoted to a totalitarian state.

Given their illusions, these historians are incapable of grasping the full dimension of the tragedy implicit in a Party which created such widespread psychological havoc and political disorientation among tens of thousands attracted to it only to learn through bitter experience its antidemocratic nature. It is something that evades those revisionist historians who fantasize about a Communist Party that never was.

A recent and most egregious example of this school is Ellen Schrecker's *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*.* Her analysis of Communism and anti-Communism, of the American Communist Party and those who opposed it, is simplistic, inconsistent and contradictory, at odds with reality, drawing conclusions that are politically libelous. In her worldview an anti-Communist is an anti-Communist is an anti-Communist. She does admit to differences between the anti-Communism of the socialist Left and the anti-Communism of the more conventional Right in the McCarthy era but, for her, anti-Communism is the

*_Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America_, Boston, Little Brown & Company, 1998.

JULIUS JACOBSON *is Co-Editor of* NEW POLITICS.

bottom line, the common denominator which places the anti-Stalinist Left and the McCarthyite Right as component elements of the "anti-Communist network."(xii) Thus there were "many McCarthyisms" including not merely the "ultraconservative version" but also the "left-wing [McCarthyist] version composed of anti-Stalinist radicals who attacked Communists as traitors to the socialist ideal." In her considered view, "[T]he Socialist and other left-wing anti-Communists functioned as a kind of intelligence service for the rest of the [anti-Communist] network."(75-6) And there were no exceptions. "These left-wing anti-Communists came in many varieties. There were Socialists, Trotskyists, Lovestoneites, Musteites, and a wide array of unaffiliated radical intellectuals and activists..." (76) Again, "these sects — the Trotskyists, Musteites, Lovestoneites, and all the other Leagues, Unions, Parties and factions that they spawned — were just as influential in the formation of the anticommunist network." There's a scholar and fine historian!

Had Schrecker not only been collecting footnotes but actually reading the sources, the reader might have been spared the absurdities found throughout this meretricious volume. Just one example:

> The term "Stalinist," which became a common epithet in left-wing anticommunist circles, expresses that particular understanding of the nature of American Communism. At the same time, the New York intellectuals developed a new interpretation of Soviet Communism. Again a single word, "totalitarian," encapsulates that understanding. It underscored the New York intellectuals' moral revulsion against Moscow by making few distinctions between Stalin's crimes and Hitler's and stressing the similarities rather than the differences between Communism and fascism.(81)

Had Ellen Schrecker actually read the literature of the left-wing anti-Communist circles, she might have avoided this howler. The fact is that the single word "totalitarian" had a different meaning for different elements of the anti-Stalinist Left; and in few cases, if any, did they fail to stress the differences between Communism and fascism. Leon Trotsky, for example, described Stalinist Russia as a "totalitarian abomination." He did draw parallels between Stalinist and fascist terror (does Schrecker believe none existed?) but far from being guilty of making few distinctions, had Schrecker bothered to read Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed* she might have learned that he believed that Russia, despite being a totalitarian society was, in his opinion (not mine), a form of a workers state which had to be unconditionally defended in the event of a war. And had she bothered to read the fascinating literature on the "Russian Question" produced by one of the sects – the Workers Party-Independent Socialist League of which she is so ignorantly scornful— she might have learned that this most theoretical of the anti-Stalinist groups developed the bureaucratic collectivist theory of the nature of the Soviet Union in which similarities were indeed noted between Stalinism and fascism but which placed far greater emphasis on the differences between the two incompatible systems.

What makes all this so bizarre is that immediately following this rebuke to the anti-Stalinist Left she writes, "Many of the charges that the New York intellectuals made about both Soviet and American Communism were true. In fact, what was happening in Russia was even more horrible than these people made it out to be." It is difficult for this writer who was part of that anti-Stalinist Left

in the 40s and 50s to believe that Schrecker believes that Russia was "even more horrible" than I and my colleagues did. But if she believes Russia was even more horrible than any of us imagined, why does she object to our use of that single word, "totalitarian"? How would she describe this most horrible society? The fact is that in all 550 pages of her book there is not a single paragraph one could reasonably describe as an analytical discussion of the social nature of Communism or the Communist Party or of the "even more horrible" Soviet Union.

MUCH COULD AND SHOULD BE WRITTEN ABOUT THE CONTENTS AND significance of Shrecker's tendentious tract but not at this point. What mainly concerns me here is the other, more recent school of historical revisionism which presumes to have discovered evidence that calls for a change in the popular negative view of McCarthy and McCarthyism. It is a school of thought, if one can call it that, far more ominous than the revisionist school discussed above. The revisionist history of the American Communist movement. as we have already noted, is of primary concern to the Left and has only long-range political implications. On the other hand, resuscitating McCarthyism could have imminent and dire political consequences, encouraging conservative and reactionary political currents in American life, promoting the politics and strength of neo-Conservatism, the Christian Right and more generally pushing the country as a whole further to the right.

This revisionism exists on many levels. There are those who openly rationalize, even justify McCarthyism largely on the basis of new documentation which falsely seeks to establish the American Communist Party as little more than a recruiting center for Soviet spies during the Cold War. But there are other and more subtle reevaluations or historical revisions, actually historical falsifications, which minimize the extent to which McCarthyism had taken hold in American life in the late 40s and 50s or make apologias for those Cold War liberals who so disgraced themselves during those dark decades. This brings us to a review by Theodore Draper of Eric Foner's *The Story of American Freedom* which appeared in a recent issue of *The New York Review of Books* that falsified the role of the leading Cold War philosopher, Sidney Hook, an apologist for McCarthyism, and denied the McCarthyist aspects of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

I sent a letter to the *New York Review of Books* responding to Draper's article. That letter which was neither printed nor acknowledged is printed below.

To the Editors:

Theodore Draper's frequent and vigorous reviews in NYR of books by revisionist academic historians who romanticize and mythicize the American Communist past have been notable for their scholarship and acumen, and his critical analysis made all the more effective for the absence of illiberal rancor or conservative bias. That is, until his flawed review of Eric Foner's *The Story of American Freedom* (NYR, September 23). I agree with Draper's characterization of Foner's discussion of the American Communist Party as "bizarre" and a "peculiarly truncated history" given Foner's ahistorical efforts to judge the American Communist Party on the basis of a glamorized account of the CP during the four years of the Popular Front when Communism was touted as Twentieth Century Americanism, and the same FDR denounced as a fascist in 1934 was trans-

formed by the Party into a national folk hero. Of course, with the Nazi-Soviet Pact which triggered World War II, the same FDR was once again the fascistic tool of Wall Street reaction and Hitler's Germany portrayed as the victim of British imperialism. As Draper properly points out, Foner takes little note of what immediately preceded and followed the Popular Front period, and what these extraordinary somersaults revealed about the nature of the American Communist Party.

However, Draper's review is marred on several counts. First of all, while Draper justifiably rebukes Foner for his erroneous suggestion that such social critics as Mills, Schlesinger, Riesman and others believed the U.S. was becoming "perilously close" to totalitarianism, there is, nevertheless, something unfair in his criticisms of Foner's alleged over-emphasis on all that he finds negative in the story of American freedom. Draper would prefer to accent the positive.

> Why did so many ordinary Americans think they were peculiarly blessed with freedom, while so many others lacked many of its attributes? This question never arises in Foner's book because he largely ignores ordinary Americans — manual workers, clerks, teachers, farmers, owners of small businesses among them and concerns himself primarily with the extremely oppressed, the underdogs, the dissatisfied.

The false assumption here is that manual workers and those who are extremely oppressed and *dissatisfied* are mutually exclusive categories. This contradicts the historic record, which includes the Great Depression, and present realities of those tens of millions of oppressed and alienated underdogs who were and are indeed manual workers. The miner felled by black lung disease, the auto worker stressed by assembly line speed-up are all assuredly dissatisfied but were they not also "ordinary Americans" ? Then there are the millions living on the edge, deprived of health insurance, the elderly who must choose between buying food or life-saving drugs, workers obliged to work at two or three jobs to make ends meet, the countless number of computer and clerical workers suffering from Repetitive Strain Injury. They too are "ordinary Americans" who are dissatisfied.

Draper implies that Foner gives too much weight to the condition of marginal elements in society. Yet, in his next sentence, he notes that Foner's "story is largely one of disillusionment with efforts to ameliorate the condition of African-Americans and women." Now, if one totals the areas of Foner's story and concerns — the most oppressed, the underdogs, the dissatisfied, African-Americans, and women — it turns out that the scope of Foner's account embraces the vast majority of the American population, including those Draper calls "ordinary Americans."

Draper's review is most vulnerable when he takes umbrage at Foner's complaint that Sidney Hook and the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF) sought, as Foner says, "to mobilize American intellectuals as foot soldiers in the Cold War" and that Hook and the ACCF leadership "made its peace with McCarthyism."

Foner's characterizations are historically unassailable and Draper's rejoinder falsifies the historic record and minimizes the depth of the McCarthyite witch-hunt and the extent of the betrayal by American intellectuals.

Draper's brief for Hook consists largely of a quote from Hook himself in his

self-serving autobiography, *Out of Step*, written thirty years after McCarthy had been retired. It is significant that Draper's defense does not draw upon the controversial book Hook wrote in 1953, *Heresy YES – Conspiracy NO*. But even the quotation Draper uses from Hook's 1987 memoir is damaging to his strained effort to establish Hook's democratic credentials. On the all-important question of the right of Communists to teach. Hook is quoted as follows:

> Faculty committees on professional ethics should not undertake any investigations except in the face of evidence of Communist Party cell activities such as anonymous publications of the cell, flyers, and other forms of activity for which the Communist Party took responsibility, that had an adverse bearing on the freedom to teach or learn. Someone identified as a member of the Communist Party should be confronted with the evidence of Communist activity, including the instructions referred to above, and given the opportunity to repudiate them or convince the faculty committee that his research and teaching did not conform to Communist Party directives.

The notion that Communist Party propaganda on or off campus could have an adverse bearing on the freedom to teach and learn is preposterous on its face. Where is the tangible evidence? Neither Hook nor anyone else to my knowledge has even come close to proving that Communist faculty, through their publications, have abridged the right to teach or learn. What did have an adverse affect on the freedom to teach or learn was the activity of McCarthy and those Cold War liberals who sought to limit, sometimes deny Communists, in and out of academe, the right to disseminate their views.

What is so telling and disturbing about Draper's quotation from Hook is that he omits the sentences immediately following his quote, in which Hook proposes a trial procedure for Communist teachers — *all* Communist teachers, make no mistake about that — that could have been inspired by the Stalinist mockery of jurisprudence. In Hook's proposed inquisition,"[T]he burden of proof would rest with the indicted Communist teacher," i.e., the accused would have to prove his/her innocence as in a Soviet trial or a Kafka novel. Hook continues, "Regardless of the legal technicalities of the Fifth Amendment, no faculty member has a moral right to refuse to answer the questions of the committee of his peers..." The problem is that his peers are not in cap and gown but in inquisitorial robes.

The above is damning enough but for a more exact measure of Hook's violations of the basic principles of academic freedom on behalf of his chosen camp in the Cold War, we need only turn to his *Heresy YES Conspiracy NO*.

This book is filled with contradictions. At one point, for example, he acknowledges that the number of Communist teachers is minute and represents no national threat. On the other hand, and what predominates, as a basic theme, is the portrayal of the Communist Party as a subversive network of conspirators. According to Hook, "More than two [Communists] on any campus will constitute themselves into a conspiratorial group in accordance with Party instructions."

What is more, "As a teacher," a Communist "cannot engage in the honest presentation and reasoned investigation of all relevant alternatives to the theories he is considering." Therefore, a Communist is not qualified to teach and membership in the Party becomes prima facie evidence for dismissal. But if a

failure to present "all relevant alternatives to theories" is a basis for dismissal faculties in U.S. colleges would be thinned to the vanishing point. Even Hook and many of his colleagues could not have met these standards.

According to Hook, the potential and actual damage wrought by Communist teachers are staggering. In New York City alone, he writes, "even if each [Communist] teacher, on a conservatives estimate, taught only 100 students in the course of a year this would mean that every year 100,000 students in New York City alone would be subject to educationally pernicious indoctrination. Of these it would be sage to say that, directly and indirectly, scores and in some years, hundreds would have been influenced by their teachers to join the Communist youth organizations..."

Simple arithmetic reveals that in just a decade one million students were subjected to pernicious indoctrination by Communist conspirators. And just in New York City! Add the students corrupted by Communist teachers throughout the country and we have tens of millions of susceptible young people subjected to Communist brainwashing. How is it possible then that at the time Hook presented this frightening scenario, in 1954, the Communist youth organization was virtually non-existent?

If in principle indoctrination is just cause for dismissal why limit the purge to Communist teachers. What about devout Catholic teachers? According to the Five Encyclicals of the infallible Pope Pius XI:

> Again it is the inalienable right as well as the indispensable duty of the Church to watch over the entire education of Her children in all institutions, public or private, not merely in regards to the religious instruction they're given but in regards to every other branch of learning and every regulation in so far as religion and morality are concerned. Nor should the exercise of this right be considered undue interference, but rather maternal care on the part of the Church in protecting her children from the grave danger of all kinds of doctrinal and moral evil.

In an article published under the Imprimatur of the Archbishop of Baltimore-Washington in 1946 a teacher

> ...must not speak in such wise as to give the impression that all forms of religious belief possess a natural right to exist and propagate. Only the true religion possesses such a natural right.

Why fire Communist teachers for alleged indoctrination and not devout Catholics? Hook tries to cope with this contradiction but fails miserably. He admits it is virtually impossible to find concrete evidence of Communist violations of teaching ethics. His only evidence is that it is the Party line which he seeks to establish with a quotation from William Z. Foster in a 1938 issue of the Party journal, *The Communist*. But the evidence of a Communist article that was 17 years old at the time that Hook wrote his controversial volume is less impressive than commandments laid down by an infallible Pope and an American Archbishop. The contradiction in Hook's position is easy to explain. The Communist Party represented a threat to American interests in the Cold War, the Catholic Church supported those interests and so did Sidney Hook and his colleagues in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

Hook's paranoia about the Communist threat, exacerbated by his Cold War

loyalties, was not confined to his hallucinations about the Communist threat to American education. The conspiracy was everywhere. Thus, whether on campus or not,

> Whatever may have been the case in the past, a man does not today somnambulistically stumble into the Communist Party. If he remains a member, this is prima facie evidence that he is a hardened conspirator and that he accepts his orders and directives.

According to Hook, then, America was threatened by roughly 30,000 hardened conspirators at the time of this paranoid delusion. And if this was true in 1953, does this mean that a decade earlier when the Party was approaching its peak strength during the war that the U.S. was menaced by 100,000 hardened Communist conspirators? After all, in 1943, despite the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union, the American Communist Party was not one whit less slavishly loyal and obedient to the dictates of the Kremlin totalitarians.

Moreover, in Hook's view, the physical threat of violence by these hardened conspirators was not only clear and present; it was permanent. Given the Communist Party's "organic tie to the Soviet state apparatus with all its engines of war, espionage and terror" its becomes clear to Hook that

> It is not the speech of members of the Communist Party which makes them dangerous but their organizational ties,[to the Soviet Union] for this in effect makes them a para-military fifth column of a powerful state, ready to strike whenever their masters give the word.

Since the Communist threat was of national scope, the assault on civil liberties by Hook and similar authoritarian liberals assumed broad national dimensions. Even the 1940 Smith Act which made it illegal for an individual to *advocate* or "conspire" to advocate the overthrow of the government by force and violence was rationalized by Hook and most of his ACCF colleagues. In theory, Hook was critical of the Smith Act but repudiated efforts to repeal this gross manifestation of pre-McCarthy McCarthyism. In his words "although the wisdom of enacting the Smith Law was doubtful the wisdom of repealing it is even more doubtful" since that would create "the illusion that the Communist Party is like any other party on the American scene, and therefore entitled to the same political rights and privileges as all other American political parties." (Of course, the first victims of this pernicious law were not Communists but 25 anti-Stalinist Trotskyists who were tried, convicted and jailed on trumped-up charges of conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government.)

Draper's denial notwithstanding, Hook did "make peace" as Foner charges, with McCarthyism. The fact that Hook called for a movement to retire McCarthy from public life does not contradict Foner's accusation. Hook was urbane, sophisticated, not a demagogue but an ideologue who really believed what he said and therefore was wary of the Wisconsin Senator who was vulgar and crude, clearly an unprincipled demagogue with an unstable personality and therefore should be removed from power. Sidney Hook's assault on civil liberties and academic freedom represented a force for McCarthy*ism* , freed of the liabilities of McCarthy. As with his glamorized sketch of Sidney Hook, Draper's characterizations in defense of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom are misleading, as when he writes that "[S]ome members were more aggressively anti-McCarthyite

than others... .” Not so. The ACCF as a whole, along with most of its leading personalities were apologists for McCarthyism, some promoting it more aggressively than others.

I assume that Draper read the book he refers to, *McCarthyism and the Communists* by James Rorty and Moshe Decter sponsored by the ACCF in 1954. Apparently he does not remember its contents too well, otherwise he would not have assessed it as a book attacking McCarthy. There are criticisms of McCarthy but there is also praise as when the authors note that “in spite of the exaggerations on both sides McCarthy’s central point was a valid one: the State Department’s security program had been lax and frequently ineffective.” At another point, they pay tribute to McCarthy, “In calling public attention to these and similar derelictions, Senator McCarthy and others performed a public service. The subsequent acceleration of the State Department’s security processes were certainly the result, at least in part, of the public pressures stimulated by the Senator’s activities.”

For the sake of the truth, and to understand the McCarthy period it is necessary to acknowledge the culpability of such authoritarian liberals as Sidney Hook and those in the ACCF who provided a rationale for the terrible assault on civil liberties and democratic rights during the Cold War.

The Communist *Party* was a reactionary social force manipulated by a totalitarian state. But it was not a Party of conspirators. It was a voluntary organization that appealed to and recruited hundreds of thousands who freely joined it in the belief that they would be fighting for democracy and social justice but were blind to the brutal reality of Stalinist totalitarianism. The notion of a mass conspiratorial Party misses the tragic dimensions of the experience of those who idealistically joined and later left the Party totally disillusioned, embittered and disoriented by their experience, not as conspirators but as rank and file Communists who wanted to build a better world. Those who continue to propagate the simple-minded view of a Communist conspiracy and deny the extent to which Cold War liberals aided and abetted McCarthyism serve to bolster romantic illusions about the nature of the Communist Party.

Sincerely,

Julius Jacobson

Book Reviews

Liberalism's Quandaries: World War II

NOBLE ABSTRACTIONS: AMERICAN LIBERAL INTELLECTUALS AND WORLD WAR II by Frank Warren (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999) 330 pp., $40 cloth.

Reviewed by Christopher Phelps

THIS WELCOME CONTRIBUTION TO INTELLECTUAL HISTORY describes the idealistic, crusading mission that American liberals ascribed to the Second World War, a war they viewed as an international struggle between democracy and fascism. To liberals, writes Frank Warren, the Second World War was "not simply a war to defend civilization, but...a war to transform the world." (3) He finds these aspirations noble but illusory: "much of liberal thinking involved abstractions that had very little to do with the reality of the war." (xiv) Liberal writers, Warren concludes, supplied the set of images that helped to define the purpose of the war for the broader public, but their unconditional support for the war undermined their greater hopes.

This study is original if only because it addresses an inadequately studied subject: the thought of progressive intellectuals during the Second World War. We have countless studies of liberal and radical intellectuals in the "red decade" of the 1930s, including Warren's own earlier reflections, *Liberals and Communism* (1966) and *An Alternative Vision* (1974). We have many studies of the Cold War in intellectual life after 1945. But there are too few studies of American intellectuals, liberals, and the left during the Second World War.

Warren takes as his subject Bruce Bliven, Freda Kirchwey, Tom Amlie, Reinhold Niebuhr, Max Lerner, and other liberal intellectuals who wrote for periodicals like *The New Republic, The Nation,* and *PM* in the early 1940s. That was the moment when the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939 had resulted in loss of trust for the Communist Party, increasingly seen, even among liberals who had sympathized with the Popular Front, as "a pliant, slightly ridiculous, tool of the Soviet Union." It was also prior to the day when liberals developed Cold War

CHRISTOPHER PHELPS *teaches history at The Ohio State University in Mansfield, Ohio, and is the author of* Young Sidney Hook *(Cornell University Press).*

fixations. They still sought sweeping social transformation. The objective of the war for liberals, Warren argues, was not simply the military defeat of the Axis powers but a "people's revolution" that would inaugurate a century of the "common man" and "democracy" in the broadest sense. Warren believes that these terms were anti-capitalist in direction. The challenge of fascism should be met not by resurrecting 19th-century liberalism, liberals argued, according to Warren, but by a better collectivism, a democratic rather than fascist one. In short, Warren holds, liberals hoped for socialism, though the word itself was used only by a few, like I. F. Stone.

To be sure, liberals sought to avoid a punitive peace — or Vansittartism, as they called it, after Lord Vansittart, the former English Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs who held the Germans inherently aggressive, authoritarian, and in need of reduction to total incapacity. Vansittartism, liberals argued, obliterated the crucial distinction between the democratic resistance of the German underground and the Nazis, with their big business and military backers. Instead of national humiliation, liberals called for a thoroughgoing destruction of the military, political, and social structure of Nazism. They sought to advance the forces and policies that would facilitate worldwide social transformation, not mere military victory.

Why did liberals, if Warren is right that they were animated by such large ambitions, endorse concrete policies that amounted in practice to nothing more than a reformed capitalism? It is not that they were blind to the fact that the war was not being conducted in a principled anti-fascist manner. But they were able to ascribe their disappointments in the New Deal and war policy to the vicissitudes of internal struggles between progressive and conservative forces within the administration, the Democratic Party, and American life in general.

Old establishment habits at the State Department, not Roosevelt, for example, were held responsible for policies that were not shaped by a consistent anti-fascism. (Warren does not remark on it, but there is a great irony to this liberal assessment, given that a mere five years later the right wing would begin making political hay with the charge that the Rooseveltian State Department had been riddled with Communists.) No matter what the administration did, liberals took FDR's commitment to their ideals to be impeccable. Indeed, writes Warren, "no wartime decision that contradicted or betrayed the liberal rhetoric and principles was fully attributed to Roosevelt himself," even though many of his policies indicated that "Roosevelt was motivated by military and geopolitical considerations and not by the ideological and moral concerns of the liberals." (45, 49)

Many liberals made a distinction between committed social reformers and career bureaucrats and politicians within the New Deal. The conservatism of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, for instance, could be discounted by pointing to Vice President Henry Wallace as the champion of "Roosevelt's fundamental goals, the goals he too often betrayed and whose opponents he too often tolerated, but the goals that, if liberals and labor were to organize more effectively, might yet be fulfilled." (71) But even Wallace, the quintessential progressive hero and martyr of the 1940s, was an embellished myth. Though capable of stirring liberal pronouncements, Wallace always believed in business-government cooperation and free enterprise. His *Sixty Million Jobs* (1945), as Warren notes, pointed "toward a greater shared prosperity under capitalism and not

toward any radical transformation of capitalism"; Wallace's rather fuzzy vision amounted to a "full employment capitalism" that "offered greater economic and social justice without major changes in the ownership of property." (88, 89) That fell far short not only of a consistent egalitarianism but of the left image bestowed upon Wallace by a majority of liberal intellectuals during the war years.

AT STAKE WAS NOT MERE CORRECTNESS OF ANALYSIS. All of the great hopes that social transformation would eventuate from the war evaporated. Warren locates the failure in the liberal intellectuals' strategic decision to try to achieve influence within an administration that routinely failed to live up to its putative liberal commitment, their development of a liberal rhetoric that was anti-business in its rejection of unfettered capitalism but hesitated to declare itself socialist, their failure to develop genuinely popular political institutions, and their failure to oppose policies and practices that grated against their own idealism. Liberals refused "to fully confront issues that brought into question the liberal interpretation of the war," he writes. (67)

Among wartime America's most flagrant shortcomings were the internment of Japanese Americans, violations of civil liberties like the imprisonment of Trotskyist leaders under the Smith Act, the tardy and inadequate liberalization of Jewish immigration as the Holocaust began, entrenched racial segregation in the Jim Crow South, and the dropping of the atomic bomb on innocent civilian populations in Japan. Instead of addressing these mistakes forthrightly and opposing such policies consistently, liberal intellectuals set aside criticism of a fundamental nature and emphasized support for Roosevelt and war unity. Liberal periodicals, for example, concentrated on *conditions* in the internment camps for Japanese Americans, not the internment's violation of basic civil liberties. As the war ground to an end, liberals tended to set aside radical internationalism and endorse one or another form of big power diplomacy, whether out of growing illusions about democratic capitalism or the perceived defensive nature of Stalin's foreign policy, prefiguring the Cold War split to come.

It was, of course, the American Communist Party that was most guilty of such behavior on the left, excusing such crimes or calling for them to be set aside until the war was won. But Warren goes beyond observing the CP's wartime superpatriotism to offer an unusually sharp criticism of the 1930s Popular Front for contributing to the limitation of liberal vision by the 1940s:

> The efforts of left intellectuals in the early 1930s to forge a synthesis of radicalism and liberalism had given way to Popular Front — New Deal reformism after 1935. ...There was an outpouring of liberal books in the late 1930s that amounted to a defense of American democracy, pluralism, and piecemeal reform. The Communist Party's Popular Front line, which was patently created by the Comintern for diplomatic reasons, expressed a mood that permeated almost the entire liberal and left ranks; the danger of fascism had created a psychological mood that unconsciously set limits on social change. (167)

Evocation of "the people," born of the Popular Front but favored even by liberal critics of the Communist Party well into the 1940s, was no accident. It was, writes Warren, "vaguer, more inclusive, and more compatible with a variety of economic systems than terms like 'class' or even 'the masses.' " (167)

Warren's own sympathies are with the small Socialist Party under the lead-

ership of Norman Thomas. Although segments of the Socialist Party adopted a naive anti-war position and consorted with right-wing isolationists, and although some adopted pacifism and conscientious objection, Warren is most sympathetic to the majority within the Socialist Party, Thomas included, which called for "critical support" for the war after Pearl Harbor, endorsing military victory by the Allies but remaining resolutely in favor of social justice, civil liberties, civil rights, independent political action, and socialism. This current of socialist thought harbored no illusions about the New Deal's reformed capitalism and invoked a "third camp," neither capitalist nor Stalinist, which it hoped would emerge out of the revolutionary underground in fascist Europe. Liberals, Warren believes, would have been better off to have forged an alliance with this left rather than shunning Thomas as retribution for his non-interventionism prior to Pearl Harbor.

HERE WARREN'S BOOK IS INCOMPLETE, for while he touches upon debates internal to the Socialist Party he does so without taking in the whole of the radical left in the 1940s, without which the Socialist position cannot be fully comprehended. The various currents of revolutionary socialism, namely James P. Cannon's Socialist Workers Party, Max Shachtman's Workers Party, and independent socialist intellectuals in their orbits, go without mention. *Partisan Review,* which had a dramatic "Failure of Nerve" debate on the war and was a vehicle for a liberal-left intellectual convergence of the kind that interests Warren, is disregarded. While Dwight Macdonald's journal, *politics,* receives brief allusion, it is never explored. For the most part these circles on the radical left continued to press for social justice, supporting causes like the wildcat strikes in the defense plants and "Double V" campaigns against racism at home, while taking a range of positions on the war itself. The SWP and WP did not obstruct military operations, advising their conscripted members to serve, but also did not shrink from criticizing the imperialist nature of much of the war. Macdonald, on the other hand, was evolving toward his anarcho-pacifist criticism of Auschwitz and Hiroshima as a bureaucratic-technocratic destruction of the possibility of distinguishing combatants from civilians, rendering all war barbaric and meaningless. These left circles call for study if only because Warren's own anti-capitalist alternative, Thomas, accommodated democratic capitalism in the Cold War, developing many of the very limitations Warren criticizes in mainstream liberalism. This later drift may well have emerged out of a "critical support" for the war that, like most such positions, tends in time to soften in criticism for the sake of building support. Books by Alan Wald, Gregory Sumner, and Peter Drucker supply some pieces of the puzzle, but the story of the independent left during the war years has yet to receive the full historical treatment it deserves.

Another question that might have received fuller elaboration by Warren is the extent to which his own prescription is realistic. Let us grant his view that liberals "would have been better served if they had dropped their strategy of building liberal influence within the Democratic Party and devoted their energies to building a democratic left movement detached from the Democratic Party." (xv) This, however, assumes liberals were constitutionally capable of doing so. It is at least as plausible to contend that even though socialism is necessary to fulfill liberalism's moral and political ideals, it is wishful to imagine that this makes liberals proto-socialists, half-radicals whose main disappointment is a

failure to follow through more consistently. On the contrary, liberalism has taken pride — and legitimated itself — in stopping short of socialization. Liberalism has by its very nature declined to adopt a socialist program. There is, therefore, little value in expressing disappointment that liberals have not built reliable alliances with socialists. The gnawing issue is why socialists have been unable to win over more liberals to a socialist perspective.

LEST THIS POINT BE MISUNDERSTOOD, let me underscore that Warren's sensitivity to the authentic personal idealism that underlay much liberal exertion in the 1940s is superior to the moralizing, gratuitous liberal-bashing of much New Left commentary on liberal failings, which saw only insincerity, timidity, hypocrisy, and betrayal in liberalism. His incisive moral and political criticism of liberal limitations, at the same time, is a powerful antidote to the nostalgia for liberalism still evident among historians. Nevertheless, Warren's approach may carry its own wishfulness, especially in the range of behavioral possibilities he imagines in liberals, whose reluctance to embrace socialist practice existed long before — and has persisted long after — the tactical moment of the Second World War.

A Scholarly History of the KGB

THE SWORD AND THE SHIELD: THE MITROKHIN ARCHIVE AND THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE KGB by Christopher Andrew and Visili Mitrokhin, New York, Basic Books, 1999, 700 pp. $12.50 pb.

Reviewed by Ernest Erber

THOSE PROSPECTIVE READERS OF THIS BOOK who have a critical interest in the Russian Revolution and its Stalinist aftermath should not be turned-off from reading it because of superficial negatives, such as the questionable listing of Visili Mitrokin as co-author, the unwarranted featuring of his "archive" as an important revelation, and blaring in a rare full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* that the book's publication "reveals for the first time the full extent of the KGB's worldwide network," with the promise that this "secret history " will "astonish you." And in keeping with its promotional leitmotif, it is presented in a garish dust-jacket.

But we hope to convince serious readers that this is a case of an essentially scholarly work being passed off on the reading public dressed in the garments of

ERNEST ERBER *lives in retirement in upstate New York. He was an active participant in parties and ideological groups of the anti-Stalinist Left from 1932 to 1948, and since then an occasional contributor of articles and reviews on this subject.*

a spy thriller, with the aim of increasing sales among those hoping to read about sensational adventures. For *The Sword and the Shield* is definitely an important contribution to the rapidly growing literature which, by chronicling the history of its secret police, sharpens an understanding of Soviet society, particularly the emergence and evolution of Stalinism as a civilization that was neither socialist nor capitalist; truly sui generis.

Even if it was the dramatic appearance of Mitrokhin's archive — copied from the KGB files and smuggled out of Russia — that triggered the publication of *The Sword and the Shield* at this time, almost the whole of it is essentially the product of Christopher Andrew, Cambridge University historian, who has long been recognized as a leading authority in the field of international espionage, generally, and of its Soviet version, specifically. Appropriately, Andrews is listed as the sole owner of the book's copyright.

Though not presented in that format, the book's 700 pages come close to encyclopedic coverage of its subject matter. Its contents testify to Andrew's vast factual knowledge of his specialized area as attested to by his impressive list of previous publications. Such new material as has been made available by Mitrokhin, adds little to Andrew's data base, beyond "filling in" some of the lacunae, which exist inevitably in any single research reservoir on such a vast subject area.

The reliability of Mitrokhin's new material, additionally, falls short of strict scholarly standards, due to his only means of its procurement, i.e the daring hand-copying at home at night of extracts from KGB archival material he worked on by day (copying machines evidently having either been too difficult to obtain for home use and/or too dangerous for a secret operative to possess, even in post-Soviet Russia.) The Mitrokhin story, consisting of a description of his background, achievements and his archive's "revelations," cover all of 22 pages in a 700 page book! Mitrokhin, personally, is mentioned again on only one other page in the rest of the book.

MITROKHIN'S "ARCHIVE" DOES, OF COURSE, REVEAL SOME PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN EPISODES of KGB activity, such as the clumsy attempts of its operatives in New York and Washington to serve Soviet interests by exploiting their knowledge of Harvey Oswald's background to mislead American authorities and influence American public opinion by surreptitiously naming its chosen "suspects" in plots to assassinate President Kennedy. Also, the KGB's efforts — some allegedly successful — to infiltrate the top circles of the leadership of the civil rights movement in the 1960's, including Martin Luther King's. (There are other contents of Mitrokhin's data that are used by Andrew as reference points, mainly in confirming in detail episodes previously known of only more generally; probably of great importance to specialists like Andrew in ways that are mostly too obscure and devious for him to explicate even within this scholarly volume.)

Other than the Mitrokhin material, Andrew's book, taken as a whole, shows only a minimal tendency to accommodate the publisher's desire to emphasize "now-it-can-be-told" revelations. Most of its contents consist, necessarily, of historical material on the operations of the KGB (much of it known to this reviewer for over 50 years, some going back to my journey to Republican Spain during its Civil War in the latter 1930s).

Though not "scholarly" in the connotation of being stodgy, Andrew's book is

conceptualized objectively, with its parts inter-connected historically in describing the secret police and its operations during successively changing periods of the history of of the Soviet Union, and its internal and external crises.

After allotting Chapter One to an account of the Mitrokhin story (in deference to Mitrokhin's "strategically" bestowed co-author's role and in maintaining the publisher's facade of the importance of the Mitrokhin "archive"), Andrew devotes Chapter Two to a description of the transition from "Lenin's Cheka to Stalin's OGPU"; Chapter Three to a description of the first GPU recruitments of citizens in other countries to serve as GPU agents, referred to as the "Illegals," (mainly during the 1920s and 1930s) and then to successive chapters on the Stalinist Great Terror; World War II; the Allies; the Cold War; U.S.A. as the "Main Adversary"; "Crushing the Prague Spring," "Eurocommunism"; "Marshall Tito"; "The Andropov Era and Beyond"; concluding with "From the One-Party State to the Yeltsin Presidency" (31 chapters in all). The devoted reader who manages to read them all will know more than she or he will ever need to know about the role of the Soviet secret police apparatus during some eight decades of its existence (and its survival into the first years of the Yeltsin regime), not to speak of learning an immense amount of corollary political history of Soviet and world affairs.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS OVERSIZED BOOK IS A SUPERB WORK OF SCHOLARSHIP, as one should probably expect a Cambridge product to be. The end notes, giving references and additional explanatory information, number over 3,000! The bibliography contains some 500 titles. Definitions of abbreviations and acronyms to facilitate quick reference for the large number of institutions and organizations (governmental, political, bureaucratic, etc.) referred to in the text in a score or more of languages, cover four pages.

In the course of his running historical account of the events and episodes that compose the body of the book, Andrew pauses from time to time to delve into the psychological, sociological and the (administratively) cultural aspects of the KGB's institutional existence. This includes such matters as recruitment, training, motivation, discipline, compensation, etc.

At this point, I bring to an end my description of the book's contents, including evaluation of its intrinsic quality and conveyance of a sense of its quantitative scale, all designed to tell readers of this review what to expect in reading it. There remains the obligation to make a critical assessment of the overall contribution that this work might make to enlarging the existing pool of information and knowledge from which we draw our understanding of the political world we live in, including likely future impacts upon it that we might expect from the various history-shaping forces dealt with by this book; specifically those that brought the Soviet secret police into existence, transformed it and sustained it over time, giving to it its unique configuration and role.

INHERENT TO SUCH A CRITIQUE SHOULD BE AN AWARENESS OF THE SINGULAR ROLE played by written history and by the historian's performance in creating it. Andrew gives ample evidence that he is aware that the KGB was (and is?) only one history-making force that relates to a myriad of others of greater or lesser importance. He does believe, however, that the importance of the KGB was — and perhaps is — greater than historians generally credit it and, certainly, than the

world at large understands. And, further, he believes that the power for mass coercion through fear, the development of which to the highest degree was a unique KGB achievement, remains a universal future possibility throughout the world. If this is true, and I believe that it is, the public's ignorance of this represents yet another — and an exceedingly dangerous — ideological land mine that can trip us up when we least expect it.

Those co-thinkers of my generation who were most discerning about this threat referred to it as "the Russian Question." The latter term has now become a metaphor for those momentous, unanswered questions left by the Russian Revolution, its degeneration into Stalinism, and the collapse of the first example of totalitarianism as a collectivist social system.

The full implications of this "Russian Question" are known presently to an all too precious few! And because its implications are so little known, the "Russian Question" will hang over into the 21st Century as a continuing presence. The need for far-reaching social change to spread more justly the fruits of scientific discovery and technology-driven productivity presses to the head of political agendas in the greater part of the world today.

Present-day capitalism presents a choice between those nations that are experiencing the accumulation of wealth on one extreme and the freezing of low wages and poverty, on the other, and those nations seeking to recharge their stagnant economies by shrinking their safety nets, leaving the populations of all nations in fear of the one choice and the other. And subverting clarity of understanding on a massive scale, particularly in the United States, is the paralyzing fear that increasing the government's role in the planning and directing of social and economic reforms designed to bring about greater equity, is to move in the direction of the dreaded Russian example. Such proposed socio-economic change is met by the cry that "you know what that leads to! Look at what Russia went through! Do you want the KBG ordering you what to do and imprisoning or shooting you if you don't?" Thus is the "Russian Question" formulated today in public debate in the developed and/or developing parts of the five continents.

Andrew gives hints of understanding this, but he does not spell it out. Instead, he highlights as his main fear for the future "intelligence derived from interception and analysis of signals," (designated with the acronym SIGINT), which he sees largely in terms of continuing technological advances in detection and surveillance through which interception grows at the expense of privacy and international decrypting grows at the expense of national security communications. With the communications revolution roaring ahead at full throttle, who can doubt its far-reaching impact upon SIGINT?

IN HIS CONCLUDING CHAPTER, ANDREW GIVES EVIDENCE OF AN AWARENESS of the universal implications for evil of the history of the KGB, which he so thoroughly recounted in his preceding 30 chapters. He predicts, that "as a new century dawns the traditional academic disregard for intelligence is in serious, if not yet terminal, decline. A new generation of scholars has begun to emerge, less disoriented than most of their predecessors by the role of intelligence and its use (or abuse) by policymakers. A vast research agenda awaits them."

Andrew rejects, however, "the common assumption of a basic symmetry between the role of intelligence in East and West." Such symmetry was, of course, off-set in the KGB's favor by the great extent to which its work was facilitated by

the existence of mass Communist Parties in most countries of the world, vastly extending the KGB's effectiveness by furnishing it with millions of volunteer eyes, ears and voices. This, alone, made the KGB unique among the political police agencies of the world. But on the other hand, the secret police of other countries, including the CIA/FBI, have certainly drawn upon their knowledge (via counter-intelligence and defections) of the KGB to utilize it in organization and operations, both with regard to spying upon foreign governments and upon the internal objects of their investigations. They would be accused of dereliction in their "professionalism" if they had not.

The difference, of course, in the internal operations between the secret police of the various countries is in the existence of — and enforcement of — the civil liberties of their own populations. The extent to which civil liberties were violated by government agencies during the massive opposition in the U.S. to its government's role in the Viet Nam War kept the American Civil Liberties Union busy and is well remembered today by middle-aged and older Americans.

Andrew quotes a very apt observation by Alexander Herzen, made over a century-and-a-half ago, when Herzen wrote that what he feared for the 20th century was "Genghis Khan with a telegraph." A version of Herzen's quote for the 21st century would replace reference to the telegraph with reference to nuclear weapons.

But Andrew seems to straddle between the imagery of Genghis Khan with a telegraph (technology), on one hand, and George Orwell's imagery in *Nineteen Eighty Four* and *Animal Farm* (political police coercion), on the other, as to which threat is the more imminent. Both cast dark shadows ahead. It is hardly far-fetched to see the essence of what composes "The Russian Question" crystallize from the rationale of Andrew's concluding chapter.

But what effect can the publication of a ponderous book on the KGB have in possibly enlightening the public to an awareness of "The Russian Question," and, thereby, creating a more discerning understanding than what is now seen on political agendas as an impossible choice? Wrapping the message in more "popular" books that appeal to the "spy-story" portion of the reading public is hardly the way to go. The market is already flooded with such books.

This dilemma confronted me some 51 years ago when I set out to research and write a book tentatively titled "Stalin's Murder, Inc. — The Story of the GPU Abroad." My outline and partially written manuscript was not too different from Andrew's. I soon discovered that publishers pressed for less analysis — historical and political — and more — many more — sensational adventures with lurid headings.

In the light of my experience of half-a-century ago, I believe I can surmise the publishers' pressures upon Andrew in brokering the publication of his manuscript. If the price he paid was accepting Mitrokhin's billing as co-author and a garish book cover that features the Mitrokhin "archive" with the words "secret history" in the sub-title, any damage done to the book's status in the field of serious scholarship should be considered minimum. Because, in the end, it is not how much the book is advertised (even if less misleading than in this case) nor how many copies are sold, that will determine the acceptance of Andrew's thesis on the KGB in serious circles.

It is gratifying to note that there is considerable evidence currently that slow, but sure, progress is being made among intellectually sophisticated think-

ers in recasting their —and previous generations'—understanding of the gruesome perversion of the ideals of the Russian Revolution into what is now ever more widely being referred to as "Stalinism as a Civilization."*

* Stephen Kotkin, social historian and author of *Magnetic Mountain — Stalinism as a Civilization*," the grass-roots account of the building of Stalin's "city of steel" (Magnitogorsk) has given a significant spur to the recent noticeable increase in the use of the term "Stalinism" and "Stalinist" in intellectual and scholarly writing and discourse.

STOCKS FOR SOCIALISM

Did you know that you can make a contribution to *New Politics* in the form of a gift of stock? *New Politics* will receive the stock's full current market value; meanwhile, if you have held the stocks for at least a year, you will get that same amount as a tax deduction without being required to pay any capital gains tax on the stock's appreciation. So, for example, if you were to give stock worth $5,000 that had cost you $2,000, you would be able to take a deduction of $5,000, *and* you wouldn't have to pay tax on the $3,000. This principle applies to gifts smaller or larger than $5,000 — contributions of any size are welcome! If this economical way of supporting *New Politics* interests you, please call Joanne Landy at 212-666-4001.

Film Review

Coming Clean: Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut"

Kurt Jacobsen

THE ICY AESTHETICISM THAT STANLEY KUBRICK IS SO OFTEN ACCUSED OF is no bum rap, but it is beside the point. Talent, even in a legendary control freak, isn't always aware of everything it is up to. His imperious tracking shots, frigidly lit interiors, punctiliously precise compositions and hapless protagonists form a long and memorable procession of supremely cynical images. Yet Kubrick gave us many subversive moments worth cherishing: the deadpan dementia of *Doctor Strangelove*, the boot camp delirium of *Full Metal Jacket*, the raving madness of machine rationality in *2001*, the dapper punk in *Clockwork Orange* withstanding the best shot that haughty behavioral psychologists mustered, and those schizoid generals at murderous play in the Roman (*Spartacus*), French (*Paths of Glory*) and American (*Strangelove*) armies. All Kubrick need do was to hold his gaze steadily on a subject in order to peel away the sham and expose the sinews that tie corrupt folk into sordid systems. Alas, he didn't quite stay the course in *Eyes Wide Shut*, whose very title implies an underlying critical thrust.

Kubrick displayed the usual artist's weakness for windbag phrases like the "duality of man" (you know, the Jungian thing) to explain away such egregiously contrived events as Verdun, Vietnam and space travel. Still, a film-maker, of all people, would appreciate that while deeply flawed men and women make history, they do not do so in conditions of their own choosing. Although Kubrick's characters are pitted against ferocious forces without and within, it is only when these external and internal powers collude, as it were, behind their backs, that the poor saps go ballistic. General Jack Ripper in *Doctor Strangelove* is done in by the cold war and paranoia, Barry Lyndon by the class system and egotism, Humbert Humbert in *Lolita* by the law and his lust, and Jack Nicholson in *The Shining* by demonic influences and a doozy of a writer's block. Private Joker with his bullet-proof smirk survives only because he keeps a safe ironic distance from his emotions and from the grisly action, although singing the Mickey Mouse Club anthem in the smoking ruins of Hue is not what one would call a happy ending. No one gets off easy in a Kubrick film. So why does it appear that the silly overprivileged couple in *Eyes Wide Shut* do?

One good fin-de-siècle critique deserves another. In this commendably caustic spirit Kubrick, animated by Austrian Jewish roots, ambitiously decided —

KURT JACOBSEN *is a research associate in political science at the University of Chicago and reviews films for the* London Guardian.

with writer Frederic Raphael — to update Arthur Schnitzler's *Dream Story* for the millennium. Vienna, you see, at the end of the 19th century was the teetering capital of an arrogant empire rife with snobbery, materialism, hypocrisy, religious fundamentalism, ethnic animosities, a sexual plague, tabloid scandals and opulence nestled cheek by jowl with squalor. Hard too imagine, I know. We're so up front about our feelings nowadays. In Schnitzler's era everything, including emotion, was concealed not only from others but, so far as possible, from oneself too. Freud had his work cut out for him in this repressive cultural terrain but neither Freud nor Schnitzler believed that getting laid, while important, was a cure-all for what ails society. Schnitzler's novel dissects the marital angst of an upper middle class couple whose untethered yearnings for erotic adventure entangles them dangerously in the depravities of the truly rich and heinous. Critics — distracted by Tom and Nicole — widely believe that this flick is only about sex and marriage, but is Kubrick hiding a bolshie message in plain sight?

IN THE OPENING SHOT NICOLE KIDMAN SLIPS OUT OF A SLINKY GARMENT so gracefully that you'd think she was posing for Victor Skrebneski. Is this about sex, or what? Cut to Doctor Bill Harman (Tom Cruise) and toney wife (Kidman) striding up the bowling-alley-length hallway of their swanky Manhattan apartment with its walls crammed with paintings of bright flowers with napalm burst petals. The flat is old Viennese in its heavily draped and cluttered ambiance and all Cruise lacks is a top hat to complete the Victorian era picture as they prepare to gallop off to a Christmas ball. Even on a doctor's salary this guy has to own an HMO or two to pay upkeep on this "bonfire of the vanities" lifestyle. And we are indeed about to be pitched into the uppercrust world of Tom Wolfe's satiric 1980s novel but one largely devoid of Wolfe's baleful humor, or any kind at all. This is a pity because there are such rich comic pickings here that one prayed all the while for Kubrick to swerve into Doctor Strangelove mode and distill the definitive yuppie-bashing film.

Instead we cut to the ball where the handsome doctor, who can't seem to tell a hooker from a bored housewife, is swaying between two sylphs who suggestively are nudging him toward the nearest boudoir. His wife, meanwhile, dances with a preposterously suave Hungarian in a 1920s tuxedo who is straining to seduce her with some of the lamest lines and longest syllables heard on screen since Bela Lugosi croaked. You don't even have to close your eyes to imagine exactly the same risible dialogue occurring in a Muppet parody between Miss Piggy and Kermit the frog. Yet one still pauses to wonder — hey, these are seriously rich people — whether this dated dialogue should have been chucked in the rubbish bin or whether the air really is so thin at the top of the social ladder that these giddy overtures would pass for seductive chatter. "Where exactly are we going?" the good doctor nervously asks. Over the rainbow, answers his temptresses. Doesn't he want to go? Kubrick's cinematography already plunges his shallow characters inside a glistening rainbow of colors in a radiant world of highly polished surfaces giving off an impression of depth but illuminating nothing.

The lascivious journey is interrupted by a summons to pry filthy rich host and client Victor (Sydney Pollack) out of an embarrassingly tight spot. The doctor enters an ornately decorated bathroom the size of the average New York studio apartment where Victor is zipping up beside former beauty queen Mandy

who is fetchingly nude, comatose and overdosed. Cruise obligingly revives the fallen lady with blend of homilies ("You are a lucky girl") and gentle bedside manner. "That's one hell of a scare you gave us" blurts the relieved Victor who is nothing if not bluntly narcissistic in his haste to hustle this good-time girl out of there. These are rich people, they don't care about anyone else and they can cover up just about anything they want. I call that a succinct theme. Later, the doctor encounters an old acquaintance, Nick Nightengale, a med school dropout-turned-musician, in the kind of hale and hearty back-slapping reunion that passes for sincerity in some professional circles.

Home alone. Nicole, already tipsy, rolls a joint and commences one of those nutty, taunting dialogues that every young intoxicated couple in the post-modern world probably have at some time or other. Did he screw those two willing ladies at the ball? No? Well, then. Did he decline to screw them because he felt it was his marital duty not to or because he really, really, really didn't want to, which is the right answer but not one she would believe anyway. What's the difference between a physician examining a breast and a physician fondling one? She even dissolves in priceless paroxysms of laughter when her husband solemnly expresses trust in her ("If you men only knew...") and she relishes revealing her own fantasized tryst with a naval officer. This daffy damned-if-you-do damned-if-you don't interrogation raises smiles but no burning issues. Our beautiful couple is so vapid and the overt theme of lurking urges and infidelity is so unsuspenseful that the real quarry must lie elsewhere. So one hopes.

The good, if flustered, doctor is called to a deathbed in yet another plush locale where he diplomatically rebuffs a woman who declares her desperate love for him. But on the street he goes along quietly the moment a fur-hatted hooker crooks her finger and whisks him to her shabby flat (where the camera lingers on a book shelf featuring a copy of "Introducing Sociology," which just goes to show where that sort of study gets you). His wife serendiptiously interrupts on the cell phone before he gets things under way with this rather sweet young woman. Cruise leaves but stays primed for action. Passing a village jazz bar he meets Nick Nightengale again and, upon hearing tales of wicked orgies, cannot be deterred by man nor beast from crashing the party. Cruise dashes off in a frantic late night search for a costume and Kubrick provides a wry interlude in a shop with a dyspeptic Russian proprieter, his entrepreneurial daughter and several randy Japanese businesssmen.

THE DOCTOR SNEAKS INTO A COUNTRY ESTATE and what he finds is a tycoons' lair that combines Plato's Retreat, the Hellfire club and Hugh Hefner's pad into one cathedral of premium priced lust. Cruise beholds an X-rated Bohemian Grove for corporate movers, shakers and downsizers. In an incense-filled room big shots in medieval robes ogle a circle of g-stringed beauties performing choreographed rituals, including a wonderfully symbolic exchange of masked face kisses. The whole corny atmosphere, however, springs straight out of a frat rat's wet dream; at best, it's Dennis Rodman' dull-witted idea of being as bad as I wanna be. So is Kubrick merely showing us a febrile fantasy or giving us a stylized glimpse of what really lies behind the rainbow? Is this what elites get up to after G-7 meetings or ordering air strikes or cutting 20 thousand employees or inflicting austerity policies on third world populations? Not even a New York physician who typically tucks a grand in cash in his wallet can quite grasp that this super-

rich strata exists. A few hundred billionaires, after all, own more wealth than the rest of the planet put together and they all would fit comfortably inside this creepy Xanadu.

Vapidity, cupidity, vanity, hypocrisy and hauteur. Well, what else do you expect of petty people who can afford anything and whose drab imaginations are structured by their animal-house days? When Cruise is nabbed and the grand kleagle of this big-bucks clan ominously orders him to remove his clothes the next request one expects, before the feathered lady intercedes, is that he pick up an olive with his anus to complete this whole jolly initiation ceremony. Why this stunning woman, who turns out to be Mandy from the drug overdose scene, sacrifices herself to save the doctor, who is no Albert Schweitzer, is utterly baffling. Anyway, he's off the hook. But what's up?

A "maguffin" was Hitchcock's handy term for an incidental quarry that allures the audience and carries the story toward the director's real cinematic concerns. Can sexual infidelity be the "maguffin" in Kubrick's final film which leads us into the bowels, and the genitalia, of the upper class? The doctor, as well-heeled as he is, is bewildered by a sinister world of insouciant power that he never suspected. He quickly finds later that what rich people commonly do, apart from what they please, is to sic detectives and goons on anyone they perceive even remotely as a threat.

The doctor roams Manhattan, waving his New York state medical card, to get to the bottom of these weird events. A bedrock trust in the social system he inhabits and the wife he loves is shaken and crumbling. Mandy turns up dead and Nick vanishes under the most suspicious of circumstances — bordering on First World *desaparecidos*. As the doctor becomes increasingly aware and alarmed that he is being stalked, the film conjures hints of Third World death squads. Push rich people far enough, after all, and that's what you get. But good old glib Victor meets the doctor to coax him to cease and desist his indelicate inquiries into the disappearances — and the doctor, wanting his old life back, listens to "reason." Who wouldn't? Kubrick intersects a marital drama of exquisitely trivial proportions with an audacious depiction of shadowy forces skulking inside our institutional order. In the end the doctor is too naive, too scared, and too accommodating to see what some of his wealthy clients really are — and perhaps too envious.

The couple ultimately come clean with one another about their puzzling adventures and outlandish fantasies but they deliberately dismiss any wider concern: "It's only a dream." But Kubrick dropped in plenty of indications that he did not intend the orgy sequences to be taken only as a dream or the film to be interpreted only as a domestic drama. He was undeniably a cynical fellow but perhaps only in the sense that he believed that it is only when, like Alex in *Clockwork Orange*, we reluctantly have our eyes pinned wide open that we really witness what goes on beneath our noses. Sorry he's gone.

Louis Rigaudias 1911-1999

MY LONGTIME FRIEND, LOUIS RIGAUDIAS (RIGAL, MILNER) died last spring in a Paris hospital at the age of 88. I had known him since 1946 after he had immigrated from Cuba to join his American wife and small daughter. He had spent three years in Cuba, arriving in 1942 after fleeing France where he had been a leading Trotskyist, in danger of capture by the Gestapo and the agents of Vichy, and possibly in even greater danger from the Stalinists who, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June1941, strongly supported the war, to which the Trotskyists remained vigorously opposed.

Born in Istanbul to an impoverished family of French Catholics, he was educated in Catholic institutions but broke with the faith as an adolescent when he studied philosophy in Paris and was exposed to the left-wing politics of fellow students. He joined the Socialist Party viewing himself as a radical reformer in the tradition of Jean Jaurès.

Repelled by the Communist Party, its cynical manipulation of, and contempt for, the working class, its narrow-minded dogmatism and its subservience to the Great Russian bureaucracy, he found in the impassioned writings of Leon Trotsky a guide to interpreting events, particularly the rise of fascism in Germany. He experienced the ascendancy of Hitler as a personal trauma. The failure of both the Social Democratic and Communist parties to resist fascism moved Louis to become a revolutionary socialist. Under the influence of Yvan Craipeau, an older Trotskyist with whom he collaborated until 1942, Louis joined and quickly became a leader of the Leninist Youth Organization, urging working-class unity in the face of the fascist peril.

Notwithstanding the difficulties he had earning his livelihood as a teacher, Louis remained a tireless militant. A fresh challenge arose when the Munich agreement was concluded in September 1938, which virtually gave Hitler a free hand in disposing over Czech territory. Viewed by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain as "peace in our time," Louis argued that Munich signified war within a few months under highly unfavorable political circumstances for the French Left. He urged preparations for clandestine work but it is difficult to know to what extent they were made. They were, however, largely thwarted. Leading members of his group were incarcerated in concentration camps where some were murdered; or, like Louis, forced to flee; or, like Pietro Tresso (Blasco), a prominent Italian anti-Stalinist, killed (most likely by the Stalinists).

Louis, I believe, never agreed with Trotsky on the question of the nature of the Soviet Union. Trotsky maintained that the Soviet Union was a "degenerated workers state," and had to be "defended" against attacks by capitalist countries. Louis looked upon the Russian revolution

as having indeed "degenerated," and the Soviet Union as having become nationalistic and anti-democratic. He argued that it was a state capitalist system and that its military advance into East Europe, and the destruction of the labor movements there, meant the imposition of state capitalism. He viewed that development as essentially the end of Trotskyism.

But Louis' own vision of a revolutionary socialist development after World War II also dimmed. Years later, he wrote that he was demoralized, by the turn of events following the war. Working-class movements had either lost their vitality, as in Germany, or were suppressed, as in the lands occupied by the Soviet Union. They were subverted either by the Stalinists or by agencies of American foreign policy, such as the AFL. He thought that the setback suffered by the European working-class movement would last decades, although his younger associates in the U.S. were more hopeful, and argued the Third Camp idea and ideal.

Louis' political activity in the U.S. was necessarily confined to discussions with a relatively small circle of comrades, of whom I was one. Yet, he thrived intellectually, and was able to pursue historical and theoretical studies. He was basically a solitary thinker attempting to understand the historical conditions in which we exist, and the possibility for a humane future. He identified humanity with culture, and possibly conceived of culture in the old 18th century German sense where *Bildung* was inseparable from *Menschlichkeit*. This was implicit in his occasional emphases on the roots of Marxist thought being in the 18th century Enlightenment tradition.

Michel Servet who was burned at the stake in Geneva by Calvin is reported to have said, "Je brulerai mais ceci n'est rien d'autre qu'un fait. Nous continuerons à discuter dans l'éternité." Louis' death is also a "fact" but the discussion will continue in his spirit.

HORST BRAND

NEW POLITICS

A Journal of Socialist Thought

Index of Volume VII

The first figure in each listing represents the issue number, the second represents the page number. (R) is a review, (C) correspondence.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX BY SUBJECT

Argentina

Argentina: Social Unrest and Repression, Hernan Camarero/PabloPozzi/ Alejandro Schneider, 25, 16.

Chile

Journeys into Death, Belonging, and Hope, (R), Michael Forman, 27, 166.

Cuba

The Resurrection of Che Guevera, Samuel Farber, 25, 108.

Eastern Europe

Discussion: Kosovo/a: Self -Determination or Interventionism, Manuela Dobos, Stephen R. Shalom, Joanne Landy, 28, 16-29.

Kosovo — Between NATO and Milosevic, Barry Finger, 27, 23.

Reflections on NATO and Kosovo, Stephen R. Shalom, 27, 5.

Self-Determination and Diplomacy, Joanne Landy, 27, 27.

Self-Determination Without Strings, Julius Jacobson, 27, 33.

Stephen R. Shalom Replies to responses re: "Reflections on NATO and Kosovo," 27, 36.

England

England: "New Labor" Faces New Left Challenge, John Palmer, 25, 33.

Feminism

Negotiating Feminism, (R), Jessie Klein, 27, 188.

France

France (1789-94): The Mother of Revolutions, Thomas Harrison, 25, 46.

Germany

Germany: The War Against Aliens, Hanna Behrend; 25, 25.

Right-wing Extremism in Germany, Martin Oppenheimer, 26, 70.

In Memoriam

Tribute to Louis Rigaudias, 1911-1999, Horst Brand, 28, 188.

Intellectual History

Bourne Yet Again: Errors of Geneology, Christopher Phelps, 25, 117.

The Centrality of International Socialism, (R), John Ehrenberg, 26, 170.

The Dialectic Re-Examined, (R), Paul Buhle, 25, 185.

A Flawed History of the Popular Front, Frank Warren, 26, 112.

History & Relevance of the Russian Question, (R), Barry Finger, 26, 180.

The Legend of Hiroshima, (R), Jennifer Scarlott, 25, 157.

A Scholarly History of the KGB, (R), Ernest Erber, 28, 178.

Sidney Hook: Marxist Pioneer, (R), Peter Drucker, 25, 137.

Socialism or Barbarism, (R), Dominique Frager, 26, 185.

The Third Camp as History and a Living Legacy, Alan Johnson, 27, 135.

Walter Benjamin: Intellectual, Critic, Visionary, Graham Bartram, 25, 126.

Israel/Palestine

Israel: The Uphill Struggle for Peace, Adam Keller, 26, 57.

Jewish Fundamentalism and the Roots of Israeli Apartheid, David Finkel, 28, 30.

Labor and Workingclass History

Chinese Immigrant Workers and the Contemporary Labor Movement, Herbert Hill, 28, 149.

The "Chinese Question" and American Labor Historians, Stanford M. Lyman, 28, 113.

History From the Bottom Up, (R), Jonathan Birnbaum, 25, 166.

Is Bureaucracy "Best" for Unions? Kim Moody, 26, 126.

Rebelling Against Global Capitalism, (R), Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, 25, 146.

Symposium: U. S. Labor from Gompers to Sweeney, Stanley Aronowitz, Jane Slaughter, Peter Rachleff, William B. Gould IV, Michael Goldfield, Staughton Lynd, Kim Moody, Michael Hirsch, Paul Buhle, 28, 66-112.

Mexico

Chiapas: Foreshadowing a Massacre, (FR), Norm Diamond, 27, 125.

An Interview with Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, Kerry Appel, 27, 115.

Mexico: Malaise and Social Conflict, Phillip Smith, 26, 77.

Political Economy

Anthropology and Political Economy, (R),

Leslie Gill, 27, 170.
An Atlas for Our Times, (R), Margeret Willig Crane, 26, 164.
An Exchange: Socialism and the Market, Roy Morrison, David McNally, 28, 53-65.
The Impasse of Market Socialism, David McNally, 27, 101.
The Threat of Globalization, Edward S. Herman, 26, 40.
Toward a Strategy for Women's Economic Equality, Chris Tilly and Randy Albeida, 27, 83.
Wall Street's Lies and False Prophets, (R), 25, 170.

Radicalism

Commitment to Freedom, (R), Dave Roediger 26, 173.
The Ethic of Accompaniment, (R), Gregory D. Sumner, 25, 151.
Howe Little They Understand, (R), Jason Schulman, 27, 185.
An Innovative History of the Left, (R), Louis Proyect, 25, 180.
Remembering an Expansive Decade, (R), Gregory Sumner, 27, 173.
A Tale of Two Movements, (R), Paul Joseph, 25, 161.
Whose Millennium? An Essay Review, David Finkel, 27, 94.

Science

Ethics and Politics, (R), Kent Worcester, 26, 176.
Voluntary Consent?, (R), Mark Dow, 26, 167.

Third World

East Timor and the United States: An Interview with Allan Nairn, 28, 39.
Women and the Third World: Exploring the Dangers of Difference, Meera Nanda, 26, 101.

U.S. Politics

Are The Greens Ready for Success?, Howie Hawkins, 27, 40.
Clinton's Enemies, Marvin Mandell, 26, 5.
Clinton: Two Mysteries, Marvin Mandell, 25, 5.
The Continuity of U. S. Imperialism, Stephen R. Shalom, 26, 33.
Falling Through the Safety Net, Betty Reid Mandell, 26, 10.
The Labor Party: A New Political Structure, Sean Sweeney, 27, 53.
The Law's Relation to History, (R), Larry Beeferman, 25, 175.
Liberalism's Quandaries: World War II, (R), Christopher Phelps, 28, 174.
The Need for a Political Alternative to Clintonism, Thomas Harrison, 27, 63.
Moving Backwards with Clinton, (R), Joanne Landy, 27, 182.
An Old Time Liberal, (R), Michael Wreszin, 27, 176.
The Presidential Primaries, Marvin Mandell, 28, 5.
Rethinking the Personal as Political, Lynn Chancer, 25, 8.
Revising History of Cold War Liberals, Julius Jacobson, 28, 166.
Subverting the Democratic Process, (R), John Willoughby, 25, 182.

U.S. Race and Class

Black Resistance in the Age of Jim Crow, Barry Goldberg, 27, 71.
Building on the Strengths of the Socialist Feminist Tradition, Sue Ferguson, 26, 89.
Class & Race in Public Higher Education, Nancy Romer, 26, 47.
Lichtenstein's Fictions Revisited: Race and the New Labor History, Herbert Hill, 26, 148.
Meany, Reuther and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Herbert Hill, 25, 82.
Misusing Class-Based Affirmative Action, Stephen Steinberg, 26, 28.
Mumia Time or Sweeney Time, Dave Roediger, 28, 11.
Paul Robeson: A Flawed Martyr, Barry Finger, 25, 132.
Reevaluating DuBois's Thought, (R), Dean Robinson, 25, 154.
The Strange Carreer of Randall Kennedy, Derrick Bell, 25, 55.
Up From Slavery: The Myth of Black Progress, Stephen Steinberg, 25, 69.
The Vendetta Against Open Enrollment, Michael Hirsch, 25, 13.
Walter Reuther in Black and White: A Rejoinder to Herbert Hill, Nelson Lichtenstein, 26, 133.
Where Did Paul Robeson Stand, Barry Finger, 27, 129.
A Working-Class Legend, (R), Steve Early, 25, 141.

Vietnam

Vietnam: Miners and the Market, Gerard Greenfield, 25, 38.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX BY AUTHOR

Albeida, Randy and Chris Tilly

Toward a Strategy for Women's Economic Equality, 27, 83.

Appel, Kerry

An Interview with Subcomandante insurgente Marcos, 27, 115.

Aronowitz, Stanley

Changing the Guard at the Top, Not the Key to Labor's Revival, 28, 66.

Bartram, Graham

Walter Benjamin: Intellectual, Critic,Visionary, 25, 126.

Beeferman, Larry

The Law's Relation to History, (R), 25, 175.
Behrend, Hanna
Germany: The War Against the Aliens, 25, 25,
Bell, Derrick
The Strange Career of Randall Kennedy, 25, 55.
Brand, Horst
Tribute to Louis Rigaudias, 1911-1999, 28, 188.
Birnbaum, Jonathan
History From the Bottom Up, (R), 25, 166.
Brecher, Jeremy and Tim Costello
Rebelling Against Global Capitalism, (R), 25, 146.
Buhle, Paul
The Dialectic Re-Examined, (R), 25, 185.
Paul Buhle Responds, 28, 102
Camarero, Hernan/Pablo Pozzi/ Alejandro Schneider
Argentina: Social Unrest and Repression, 25, 16.
Chancer, Lynn
Rethinking the Personal as Political, 25, 8.
Costello, Tim and Jeremy Brecher
Rebelling Against Global Capitalism, (R), 25, 146.
Crane, Margaret Willig
An Atlas for Our Time, (R), 26, 164.
Diamond, Norm
Chiapas: Foreshadowing a Massacre (FR), 27, 125.
Dobos, Manuel
A Left Interventionist View, 28, 16.
Dow, Mark
Voluntary Consent?, (R), 26, 167.
Drucker, Peter
Sidney Hook: Marxist Pioneer, (R), 25, 137.
Early, Steve
A Working-Class Legend, (R), 25, 141.
Eherenberg, John
The Centrality of International Socialism, (R), 26, 170.
Erber, Ernest
A Scholarly History of the KGB, (R), 28, 178.
Farber, Samuel
The Resurrection of Che Guevera, 25, 108.
Ferguson, Sue
Building on the Strengths of the Socialist Feminist Tradition, 26, 89.
Finger, Barry
History & Relevance of the Russian Question, (R), 26, 180.
Kosovo — Between NATO and Milosevic, 27, 23.
Paul Robeson: A Flawed Martyr, 25, 132.
Where Did Paul Robeson Stand?, 27, 129.
Finkel, David
Jewish Fundamentalism and the Roots of Israeli Apartheid, 28, 30.
Whose Millennium? An Essay Review, 27, 94.
Forman, Michael
Journeys into Death, Belonging, and Hope, (R), 27, 166.
Frager, Dominique
Socialism or Barbarism, (R), 26, 185.
Gill, Lesley
Anthropology and Political Economy, (R), 27, 170.
Goldberg, Barry
Black Resistance in the Age of Jim Crow, 27, 71.
Goldfield, Michael
Union Democracy and Labor Democracy, 28, 87.
Gould IV, William B.
A Powerful Indictment Lacking Balance, 28, 83.
Greenfield, Gerard
Vietnam: Miners and the Market, 25, 38.
Harrison, Thomas
France (1789-94): The Mother of Revolution, 25, 46.
The Need for a Political Alternative to Clintionism, 27, 63.
Hawkins, Howie
Are the Greens Ready for Success?, 27, 40.
Herman, Edward S.
The Threat of Globalization, 26, 40.
Hill, Herbert
Chinese Immigrant Workers and the Contemporary Labor Movement, 28, 149.
Lichtenstein's Fictions Revisited: Race and the New Labor History, 26, 148.
Meany, Reuther, and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 25, 82.
Hirsch, Michael
They Won and We Lost — Why?, 28, 99.
The Vendetta Against Open Enrollment, 25, 13.
Jacobsen, Kurt
Camping Out: Roberto Begnini's "Life is Beautiful", FR, 27, 194.
Saving Private Ryan, FR, 26, 188.
Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut," (FR), 28, 184.
Jacobson, Julius
Revising History of Cold War Liberals, 28, 166.
Self-Determination Without Strings, 27, 33.
Johnson, Alan
The Third Camp as History and a Living Legacy, 27, 135.

Joseph, Paul
A Tale of Two Movements, (R), 25, 161.
Keller, Adam
Israel: The Uphill Struggle for Peace, 26, 57.
Klein, Jessie
Negotiating Feminism, (R), 27, 188.
Landy, Joanne
Moving Backwards with Clinton, (R), 27, 182.
Self-Determination and Diplomacy, 27, 27.
Self-Determination, Not Intervention, 28, 25.
Lichtenstein, Nelson
Walter Reuther in Black and White: A Rejoinder to Herbert Hill, 26, 133.
Lyman, Stanford M.
The "Chinese Question" and American Labor Historians, 28, 113.
Lynd, Staughton
Waiting for Sweeney, 28, 92.
McNally, David
The Impasse of Market Socialism, 27, 101.
Socialism and the Market, 28, 60.
Mandell, Betty Reid
Falling Through the Safety Net, 26, 10.
Mandell, Marvin
Clinton's Enemies, 26, 5.
Clinton: Two Mysteries, 25, 5.
The Presidential Primaries, 28, 5.
Moody, Kim
Business Unionism Still Rules, 28, 96.
Is Bureaucracy "Best" for Unions?, 26, 126.
Morrison, Roy
Socialism and the Market, 28, 53.
Nanda, Meera
Women and the Third World: Exploring the Dangers of Difference, 26, 101.
Oppenheimer, Martin
Right-wing Extremism in Germany, 26, 70.
Palmer, John
England: "New Labor" Faces New Left Challenge, 25, 33.
Phelps, Christopher
Bourne Yet Again: Errors of Geneology, 25, 117.
Liberalism's Quandaries, (R), 28, 174.
Pozzi, Pablo/Carmarero, Hernan / Schneider, Alejandro
Argentina: Social Unrest and Repression, 25, 16.
Proyect, Louis
An Innovative History of the Left, (R), 25, 180.
Racheleff, Peter
Rupture or Renewal, 28, 77.
Robinson, Dean
Reevaluating DuBois's Thought, (R), 25, 154.
Roediger, Dave
Commitment to Freedom, (R), 26, 173.
Mumia Time or Sweeney Time, 28, 11.
Romer, Nancy
Class & Race in Public Higher Education, 26, 47.
Rude, Christopher
Wall Street's Lies and False Promises, (R), 25 170.
Scarlott, Jennifer
The Legend of Hiroshima, (R), 25, 157.
Schneider, Alejandro/ Pozzi, Pablo/ Camarero, Hernan
Argentina: Social Unrest and Repression, 25, 16.
Schulman, Jason
Howe Little They Understand, (R), 27, 185.
Shalom, Stephen R.
The Continuity of U. S. Imperialism, 26, 33.
Kosovo, Justice and Humanitarianism, 28, 21.
Reflections on NATO and Kosovo, 27, 5.
Replies to Responses re: "Reflections on NATO and Kosovo," 27, 36.
Slaughter, Jane
Endorsing the Lean Machine, 28, 71.
Smith, Phillip
Mexico: Malaise and Social Conflict, 26, 77.
Steinberg, Stephen
Misusing Class-Based Affirmative Action, 26, 28.
Up From Slavery: The Myth of Black Progress, 25, 69.
Sumner, Gregory D.
The Ethic of Accompaniment, (R), 25, 151.
Remembering an Expansive Decade, (R), 27, 173.
Sweeney, Sean
The Labor Party: A New Political Structure, 27, 53.
Tilly, Chris and Randy Albeida
Toward a Strategy for Women's Equality, 27, 83.
Warren, Frank
A Flawed History of the Popular Front, 26, 112.
Willoughby, John
Subverting the Democratic Process, (R), 25, 182.
Worcester, Kent
Ethics and Politics, (R), 26, 176.
Wreszin, Michael
An Old Time Liberal, (R), 27, 176.

BOOKS REVIEWED

Alexander, Edward, *Irving Howe*, Jason

Schulman, 27, 185.
Anderson, Kevin, *Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism*, Paul Buhle, 25, 185.
Andrew, Christopher and Visili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, Ernest Erber, 28, 178.
Bird, Kai and Lawrence Lifschultz, eds., *Hiroshima's Shadows*, Jennifer Scarlott, 25, 157.
Buhle, Paul and Edmund B. Sullivan, *Images of American Radicalism*, Louis Proyect, 25, 180.
Chancer, Lynn S., *Reconcilable Differences*, Jessie Klein, 27, 188.
Chase, Anthony, *Law and History*, Larry Beeferman, 25, 175.
Chester, Eric, *Covert Network*, John Willoughby, 25, 182.
Dickstein, Morris, *Gates of Eden*, Gregory Sumner, 27, 173.
di Leonardo, Micaela, *Exotics at Home*, Leslie Gill, 27, 170.
Dorfman, Ariel, *Heading South, Looking North*, Michael Forman, 27, 166.
Forman, Michael, *Nationalism and the International Labor Movement*, John Ehrenberg, 26, 170.
Garfinkle, Adam, *Telltale Hearts*, Paul Joseph, 25, 161.
Gottraux, Phillipe, *Un Engagement Politique Et Intellectuel Dans La France De L'Apres-Guerre*, Dominique Frager, 26, 185.
Henwood, Doug, *Wall Street*, Christopher Rude, 25, 170.
Hornblum, Allen M., *Acres of Skin*, Mark Dow, 26, 167.
Jumonveil, Neil, *Henry Steele Commager*, Michael Wreszin, 27, 176,
Lemisch, Jesse, *Jack Tar vs. John Bull*, Jonathan Birnbaum, 25, 166.
Lukas, J. Anthony, *Big Trouble*, Steve Early, 25, 141.
Lynd, Staughton, *Living Inside Our Hope*, Gregory D. Sumner, 25, 151.
Matgamna, Sean, (ed.), *The Fate of the Russian Revolution*, 26, 180.
Meeropol, Michael, *Surrender*, Joanne Landy, 27, 183.
Moody, Kim, *Workers in a Lean World*, Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, 25, 146.
Phelps, Christopher, *Young Sidney Hook: Marxist and Pragmatist*, Peter Drucker, 25, 137.
Reed, Adolph, Jr., *W.E.B. DuBois and American Political Thought*, Dean Robinson, 25, 154.
Rosemont, Penelope, *Surrealist Women*, Dave Roediger, 26, 173.
Sassen, Saskia, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, Margaret Willig Crane, 26, 164.
Singer, Daniel, *Whose Millennium? Theirs or Ours?*, David Finkel, 27, 94.
Singer, Peter, *Ethics into Action*, Kent Worcester, 26, 176.
Warren, Frank, *Noble Abstractions*, Christopher Phelps, 28, 174.
Wittner, Lawrence, *Resisting the Bomb*, Paul Joseph, 25, 161.

FILM REVIEW

Camping Out: Roberto Benigni's "Life is Beautiful," Kurt Jacobsen, 27, 192.
Chiapas: Foreshadowing a Massacre, Norm Diamond, 27, 125.
Saving Private Ryan, Kurt Jacobsen, 26, 188.
Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut," Kurt Jacobsen, 28, 184.

CORRESPONDENCE

Al Shanker; Another View, Israel Kugler, 25, 190; Paul Buhle responds, 190.
Albert Shanker: No Paens, John E. Chiaradia, 26, 192.
The Nature of World War II, Joe Gladstone, 25, 191; Julius Jacobson comments, 25, 192.