



All out for Nov. 12 in D.C. Defend abortion rights!



Tina Beacock/Socialist Action

Thousands on both coasts to rally for choice

By JONI JACOBS

"America wanted this march and America was coming," said Sherie O'Dell, Vice President of Action for the National Organization for Women (NOW), in an interview with *Socialist Action*.

O'Dell was describing the response to the April 9, 1989, March for Women's Equality, Women's Lives in Washington, D.C., the largest feminist march in the history of the United States. More than 630,000 women, men, and children took to the streets demanding the right to choose safe, legal, accessible abortion.

On Nov. 12, NOW is asking pro-choice supporters to come to Washington once again. In an immediate response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*—which severely infringed on the right to abortion—NOW President Molly Yard called for 1 million people to protest in the streets in November.

The National NOW convention in July enthusiastically supported this call to action.

The resolution for a mass, nationwide action on Nov. 12 passed overwhelmingly.

Chapter after chapter reported an unparalleled number of calls by people who wanted to get active in the campaign to defend reproductive rights. Membership in NOW quickly shot up to its highest level ever, surpassing the height of 220,000 during the ERA campaign.

Will Nov. 12 exceed April 9? The potential is there. Unfortunately, NOW has backed off somewhat from its call for a million pro-

Ms. Magazine vs. NOW

See article page 5.

choice supporters in Washington on Nov. 12. NOW spokespersons refuse to give estimates of the expected crowd.

Under pressure from Planned Parenthood, the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) and others, the national action is now billed as an "Eastern Seaboard" action.

National focus diluted

"The expectation of the call was for everyone who was at April 9 to come back and bring 10 people with them," NOW staff member Suzie Avril told *Socialist Action*.

"But it's too early to tell. I'm reluctant to
(continued on page 5)

Bush's 'drug war' targets the poor

By BRIAN SCHWARTZ

Like the administrations that preceded him, both Democratic and Republican, Bush has announced the launching of another "war on drugs." The heart of Bush's "war" calls for spending an additional \$5.3 billion to expand police forces in this country, build more prisons, hire more prosecutors, and arrest more victims of the multi-billion dollar drug business.

Bush's new war received immediate and enthusiastic bipartisan support—almost as enthusiastic as the bipartisan support for a war on flag burning. The Democrats' only criticism was a cry for even more money to be spent on cops and prisons.

Yet there is no "war on drugs" in this country. There is a war on the Black community and on other minority populations—like the Native American, Puerto Rican, and Chicano communities. There is a war on poor people, the labor unions, and the right of women to have safe, legal abortions.

New war has several purposes

Bush's new war has several major purposes which have little to do with suppressing the

lucrative drug business. First of all, the war is designed to cover up the fact that the government has no workable plan to provide the jobs, housing, schools, hospitals, and drug-treatment clinics that people in our inner cities desperately need.

To provide funding for these social services, the government would be forced to tax the big corporations and to end the fat military budget. But since both the Republican and the Democratic parties are controlled lock, stock, and barrel by big business, they can propose neither of these things.

Thus, they must provide a scapegoat. They must attempt to shift the blame for poverty, crime, and drugs away from government policy and onto the victims themselves.

From the point of view of the capitalist class, it is more "cost-effective" to spend money on cops and prisons rather than on a massive program to rebuild the cities of America. As a byproduct, they can create an atmosphere of intimidation in which people will accept a stepped-up war on the African-American community and a war on everybody's civil liberties.

In addition, they hope to increase the U.S.
(continued on page 13)

There is one 'drug war' we can win

There are two "wars" concerning drugs going on today in the United States. One is the phony drug war of President Bush and his Democratic and Republican cronies in Congress. This war will prove just about as destructive as the U.S. war against Vietnam and as ineffective as Lyndon Johnson's "war" on poverty. Both of those wars left millions of innocent victims in their wake.

Johnson's war on poverty was designed to stop the rebellion of Blacks who were fighting for their civil rights so that U.S. capitalism could be free to carry out its war against the people of Vietnam. U.S. capitalists didn't think they could win a war some 3000 miles away and a war in its own cities against Black people at the same time.

Bush's war on drugs is designed to whack down the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It is not designed to stop the profits from drugs—the only way to stop pushers from hooking the hopelessly impoverished.

In fact, the U.S. government was indicted in public for being part of the international drug-pushing cartel. This was revealed during the Iran-Contra hearings.

Puppet governments throughout Latin America are being supplied with billions of dollars in American armaments in the name of fighting drug war-lords. Most of this military equipment will end up being used against workers and peasants who are fighting for justice and economic freedom from giant agribusinesses. Most of these outfits are owned by U.S. corporations.

Aimed against the poor

In the United States, the Senate has just agreed to a budget of \$9.4 billion dollars to fight the so-called war on drugs. Part of this \$9.4 billion will be gotten by cutting some of the social-service programs needed by the poor. The money will be used to increase the number of prisons, to pay for the use of the National Guard wherever called for, more federal prosecutors, more federal courts, and more U.S. marshals.

Damned little will be given to drug rehabilitation programs for the hundreds of thousands who are unable to get into them because they are too crowded. The government is also talking about the need to be allowed assassination squads, if called on, to stop drugs. In other words, this anti-drug war is aimed at the poor and the oppressed—just as was the Vietnam War.

Not one expert, even within the government, has even the slightest hope of stopping this scourge by the methods presently adopted by Congress and the president.

However, there is one "drug war" we could win. That is the fight for AZT and other drugs needed to fight



Fightback

By
Sylvia Weinstein

the scourge of AIDS. We could take that \$9.4 billion being proposed for more cops and prisons in a losing anti-drug war, put it into the fight against AIDS, and actually win.

"AZT Should Be Free" is the slogan being used to pressure the government to do something about the high cost of AZT, the only drug

that has proven effective against this always-fatal disease.

AZT, or azidothymidine, is manufactured by the Burroughs Wellcome company. The cost per patient for AZT ranges from \$3600 to \$6000 per year. When you consider that other medications and treatments are required along with AZT,

the cost becomes an overwhelming burden on those who are infected with ARC or AIDS.

When threatened with a boycott, the Burroughs Wellcome profiteers reduced the cost of its drug by 20 percent—a piddling reduction in the over-priced drug. Burroughs claims that since it was clever enough to develop AZT, it should be allowed to pig-out on profits.

Mr. T.E. Haigler Jr., president of Burroughs Wellcome Co., claimed in a letter to *The New York Times* on Sept. 16 that AZT was essentially discovered and developed at Burroughs without any substantive role being played by the government.

Several doctors answered T.E. Haigler on Sept. 28 in *The New York Times*. They reported: The first synthesis of AZT was done by Dr. Jerome Horowitz at the Michigan Cancer Foundation in 1964—

using government grants. The first demonstration of an effect against animal retroviruses was done by Wolfram Ostertag at the Max Planck Institute in 1974—using government funds.

The National Cancer Institute, working with staff at Duke University, developed all of the major tests with AZT on human patients. In fact, Burroughs refused to work with either live AIDS virus or with AIDS patients!

The doctors continued: "We believe that the development of this drug in a record two years, start to finish, would have been impossible without substantive commitment of government scientists and government technology."

As of March 1989, over 18,152 people in the state of California had ARC or AIDS. In the United States, as of July 31, 1989, over 99,839 people were diagnosed as having ARC or AIDS.

Up until the present time, there have been nearly 1800 cases of children under 12 with AIDS who were reported to the Federal Center for Disease Control. About 800 of those children have died. The others are waiting for AZT, but Burroughs will not produce it in children's doses even though it has been proven effective for them.

Those who are infected with AIDS or ARC do not have the time or the money to wait until profit-bloated drug company owners transform themselves into human beings. Bush should take those National Guardsmen he is using to fight the drug war and march them to the Burroughs Wellcome Company to take the plant over. Then it should be nationalized in the interest of those who need help the most, those who are least able to wait and have the most to lose—their lives.

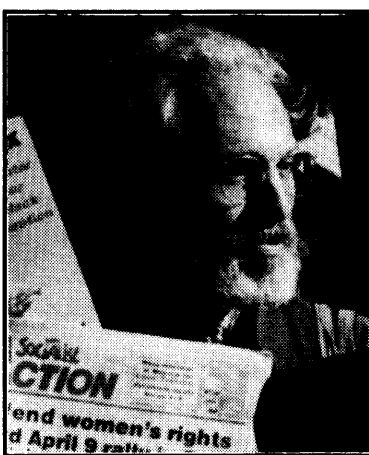


Bush plays Johnny Appleseed for the cameras

For a couple of days last month, George Bush played Johnny Appleseed. In a tour of several Western states, the president planted some seedlings. Smiles and handshakes were dutifully recorded for the evening news. "Plant a tree, you'll feel better," was the message.

More than his predecessors in the White House, Bush has actually acknowledged that air and water pollution, soil erosion, and diminishing wildlife are severe problems in this country. But planting a few symbolic seedlings hardly means that the federal government intends to protect our woods and streams.

Cutting of the forests is at an alltime high. Vast woodlands, nominally owned by the people of the United States, have been signed over to the big lumber corpora-



Behind the Lines

By
Michael Schreiber

els of cutting will eventually rob whole regions of their tree cover. People who work in the lumber industry will have to look elsewhere for jobs. On the other hand, sound forestry practices, such as selective cutting, will preserve jobs.

"Every forest-products multinational company in the Northwest (Weyerhaeuser, Boise Cascade, Potlatch, etc.) is logging at a rate that exceeds sustained yield," writes B.J. Williams in the January 1989 issue of *Pacific Northwest* magazine. For example, Williams notes, the Plum Creek corporation "is logging off its mature timber at a rate that will liquidate those holdings in 10 to 12 years."

Plum Creek manages the forests owned by the Burlington Northern (BN) corporation, which received its land free from the government when the railroads were built. Now, after holding the land for a century, the BN magnates want to take advantage of current high prices—even if they no longer have any trees to cut after 10 years!

Politicians from the statehouse up to the White House have bent over backward to ensure that the corporations continue to rake in their superprofits. The government has given away public lands or sold the timber rights at give-away prices. Logging roads are built into the forests—all at the expense of the taxpayers. Local and state police are used to keep protesters at bay.

This land is being raped by profit-hungry capitalists while George Bush preens for the cameras and plants a seedling. Much, much more must be done. The forests, fields, and waterways—which are our birthright—must be taken out of the hands of the capitalists and managed for the public welfare. The earth's survival is at stake.

tions. As the supply of privately owned timberland declines, federal officials are pushing to clearcut our old-growth habitats. Public "wilderness" areas are being demolished faster than they can be regenerated.

forces in slick advertising campaigns to publicize their "reforesting" programs. But George told me that seedlings are often planted four times or more in the clearcut areas before they begin to take root.

"An old-growth forest is a complete system," he explained. Leaf canopies provide shade for young trees. Roots keep the soil in place. Fallen branches can take 200 or 300 years to decompose, giving nourishment to the soil. Small animals and seedling roots find life in the moisture that the logs retain.

Robber barons

While I was traveling through the state of Washington, the timber companies were in the midst of a huge propaganda campaign to justify their destruction of the old-growth forests. Lumber workers were given a paid holiday in order to participate in rallies where company spokespeople denounced the efforts of environmentalists to save the stands of ancient trees.

But the corporation heads—who are shameless union-busters every one—have played a cruel joke on their employees. Their current lev-

Over the border

Last month, I took a trip by bus and ferry from San Francisco through the Northwest into British Columbia. Overcutting of the forests is rampant on both sides of the border, I found. From the highways, I could see vast sun-baked patches on what were once green mountainsides.

In Vancouver, B.C., I spoke with Paul George, of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee. He pointed out that modern machinery allows the timber companies to clearcut steep slopes that were previously unreachable or too expensive. But this has caused forest soils to erode at a startling rate. Replanting the mountainsides becomes next to impossible.

"Cutting down a forest is not like harvesting corn," George said. Government authorities and the timber companies have joined

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10,000 Minn. workers rally against Boise Cascade's union-busting war

By JACK REVERS

ST. PAUL, Minn.—On Sept. 16, more than 10,000 union supporters rallied here on the steps of the Minnesota state capitol building to protest the union-busting activities of Boise Cascade Inc. and the Alabama-based BE&K construction company.

In recent months, Boise began construction work on a \$535 million expansion of its paper and pulp mill in International Falls, Minn. One of the largest private construction projects in Minnesota history, it is being carried out with an 80 percent non-union labor force.

Faced with an openly anti-union atmosphere, increasing harassment, unsafe working conditions, and the aggressive recruitment of ever more non-union workers, union members walked off the job on strike.

The Boise construction project is seen by everyone throughout Minnesota—labor spokespersons, business figures, the news media and the general public—as a watershed challenge to the state's strong union traditions dating back to the famous 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strike.

From the outset, Boise had a clear plan and strategy for challenging and defeating the construction unions. They awarded the multi-million-dollar construction contract to the notorious union-busting BE&K construction firm. BE&K has built its reputation by organizing the importation of scab labor, especially from Alabama and Texas, into traditionally union areas.

Boise and BE&K have a well-developed partnership in which BE&K has organized scab labor at other Boise plants in Rumford, Maine; Jackson, Ala.; DeRidder, La.; and St. Helens, Ore.

BE&K construction openly markets itself as a union-busting service and boasts in its promotional material: "BE&K has extensive experience in introducing merit construction and maintenance in the areas that traditionally performed construction on a union basis."

Who started the violence?

Along with BE&K, Boise also acquired the services of the Vance Corporation, a security firm which specializes in strike-breaking. Vance Security agents have strikers outnumbered at least three to one, and their occupation of International Falls has many residents terrified.

Vance has not only terrorized union workers on strike but it has roamed the city terrorizing strikers' families and homes. Vance guards are pulling over cars as if they were cops, rousting bystanders they think are loitering (even if they are on public property), and following cars they think might contain union sympathizers.

In a Sept. 12 *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* interview, Building and Trades Union chief Bill Peterson states: "BE&K scabs beat a union picket at an apartment away from the papermill last week. Picketers have been taunted by construction buses full of scabs on their way to the jobsite."

Peterson also described an incident where a driver delivering materials to the mill deliberately veered toward pickets, smashing their chairs, and causing them to run to the plant gates for cover. The scab-driver was fined and given a suspended jail sentence.

Violence against union members has taken less direct forms also. In another interview, an International Falls union worker described how his rent was suddenly raised from \$365 to \$650 per month. Unable to afford the exorbitant hike, he was forced to vacate his apartment—which was immediately rented to six scabs. Isn't that a form of violence, when a corporation takes away workers' jobs and kicks them out of their homes?

Labor leaders hold back support

While labor officials throughout the state recognize the crucial importance of this strike, they have given it very little concrete support.

The strike against Boise's scab operation began in July, when 150 union members walked off the site. Instead of mobilizing organized labor throughout the state to shut down the site, the Iron Range Building Trades Council and the Minnesota AFL-CIO decided not to sanction the strike—forcing it into a



Thirty-three union sympathizers were arrested on Saturday, Sept. 9, during a protest against the use of scab labor at the mill.

"wildcat" status.

The Building and Trades Council, by calling their membership's strike a wildcat strike, put the workers at the mercy of the company, the cops, and the courts. Today, fewer than 25 building trades workers are still actively striking against Boise Cascade.

Ron Del Pup, an unemployed ironworker who has been helping walk the picketline, said in a Sept. 15 *St. Paul Pioneer Press* interview that the remaining workers are a loosely organized group with no formal leaders or direction from the Building Trades Council. "Nobody's telling us what to do," Del Pup said. "Nobody's the boss."

This seemingly schizophrenic policy followed by the labor officials is reflected in statements by Brad Skarich, president of the Iron Range Building Council. While refusing to sanction the strike, Skarich says that the 25 strikers are fighting for a cause that can't be abandoned. Other companies, he points out, will begin using non-union contractors if the building trades disband their effort.

Big business charges "terrorism"

It was this atmosphere of anger and frustration, with virtually no effective leadership provided by the official labor movement, that led to a Sept. 9 attack on the scab housing compound set up by Boise.

About 150 strike supporters, many from out of state, broke down the chain-link fence surrounding Boise's hated scab housing facility and destroyed a number of the trailer-like units. Thirty of the demonstrators were arrested and had full cash bails as high as \$50,000 set.

Business leaders, politicians, and the news media immediately launched a propaganda campaign characterizing the incident as a "labor riot" and accusing union members of "terrorism."

The strategy of the Building Trades Council and the state AFL-CIO has been to concentrate all their "efforts" on begging Democratic Gov. Rudy Perpich and the Democratic-controlled state legislature to intervene on labor's side.

They've launched a lobbying campaign to urge state lawmakers to revoke a \$16 million tax giveaway they had granted to Boise as a bribe to encourage its expansion in Minnesota. They've also asked the politicians to modify state apprenticeship regulations, to make it more difficult for Boise to use non-union labor.

This strategy of reliance on Democratic politicians is destined to fail. In 1986, Gov. Perpich called in 800 National Guard troops to smash the nationally prominent Hormel P-9 strike in Austin, Minn. That act helped

convince Boise Cascade and others that they could successfully go the non-union route in Minnesota.

The state AFL-CIO leadership, in which the building trades play a very prominent role, not only made no attempt to mobilize a massive opposition to Perpich's use of the guard against Hormel union members, but even refrained from criticizing Perpich for his union-busting action.

The union leadership went so far as to adopt the role of Perpich's "lawyer," defending him from widespread criticism by rank-and-file union members throughout the state. This certainly played a role in convincing Boise and others that Minnesota was ripe pickings for the expansion of non-union operations.

The policy of relying on Democratic Party politicians continued as one of the major themes at the Sept. 16 support rally at the capitol. Scores of printed placards proclaimed "Teamsters For Perpich."

The only thing this policy has achieved is a commitment by Perpich to financially reimburse all Northern Minnesota Police Departments who sent forces to protect the scabs in International Falls. Perpich also promised to act faster next time if the National Guard is needed to quell further "union violence."

The Judas goat

During my days in the meatpacking industry, we had an animal called the Judas goat. Cattle in holding pens would be bellowing, stamping, and pawing at the ground—sensing that something terrible was

awaiting them beyond the chute. It was particularly difficult to move them from the holding pens to the kill floor.

We'd send a tame goat in to mix with the cattle. After a while, the cattle would get used to the goat and even accept the goat as one of them. At the appropriate time, someone would lead the tame goat up onto the kill floor and the cattle would follow.

That's the role that Perpich and other so-called "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party play. These politicians mix with us, convince us that they are one of us—then at the appropriate moment deliver us to the slaughter.

Only the massive mobilization of organized labor and its allies in action aimed at stopping production will be successful in defeating the union-busting drive of companies like Boise Cascade and BE&K Construction. That's how our labor unions were originally built—not by relying on favors from politicians.

The moral right to strike to defend basic living standards for ourselves and our families is greater than any law. The capitalist class turns all struggles on their head. The workers who fought at Boise Cascade are heroes and not terrorists. They fought for what was theirs—the right to work at union wages and the right to defend their union.

Organized labor and their allies should come to their support and start a defense fund on their behalf. The workers should tell the boss class: "Let our people go!"

Meanwhile, contributions and statements of support to the Boise Cascade strikers should be sent to the "Strike Fund Legal Fee," P.O. Box 86, Ranier, Minn. 56668.

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Domestic partners law under attack in S.F.

Right-wing forces in San Francisco have banded together to try and convince this city's voters to vote against Proposition S.

The Board of Supervisors' passage of a local domestic partners ordinance last June sowed great trepidation amidst these self-proclaimed moral leaders. They succeeded in having the issue placed on the ballot and hope to defeat this bill which they see as condoning "legally reprehensible sexual relationships" and "unnatural coupling."

The original efforts to stop the domestic partnership bill were spearheaded by local leaders of the anti-women Operation Rescue and Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum.

Recently, in some unspecified shakeup among the ranks of the bigots, two of the most conservative clergymen withdrew from the campaign. A group called San Franciscans for Common Sense, which is now running the anti-Prop. S efforts, has attempted to put some distance between themselves and statements like those quoted above, which will appear in the voter's handbook as the arguments against Prop. S.

According to the Sept. 9 *San Francisco Independent*, the Common Sense coalition feels this type of statement is inflammatory and bad for their credibility. They prefer offering phony arguments against the bill, including claims that passing the bill will entail large expenditures, higher taxes, and lead to litigations against the city.

Yet other supposedly more moderate religious leaders continue to rant and rave against the very idea of even partially legitimizing any relationship outside of traditional marriages.

In describing the Roman Catholic Archdio-

cese position, the Rev. Robert McElroy said: "We don't believe the legitimate civil rights of the gay community extend to undermining the institution of marriage and the family. This ordinance gives marriage the same status as the most temporary of human relationships. It discriminates against married couples. When fully implemented, it will give domestic partners all the legal benefits of marriage and none of the responsibilities."

Limitations of Prop. S

Unfortunately, contrary to the Rev. McElroy's opinion, passage of Prop. S will not give full rights to lesbian and gay couples—whom the Reverend apparently views as engaged in only temporary relationships. Nor will passage of the domestic partnership bill give full rights to the many heterosexual couples who don't choose to marry.

All the domestic partnership law would do is allow San Francisco adults who live together in committed relationships and agree to be responsible for each other's basic living expenses (such as food and housing) to register as domestic partners. Couples registering could do so by paying a nominal fee and filing with the county clerk or signing a statement in front of a notary.

Provisions for dissolution of partnerships are included. Specific effects of the ordinance's

passage would allow domestic partners to visit each other in San Francisco hospitals, and city employees would be granted funeral leave if their domestic partner dies.

Domestic partnership as defined in the legislation will not confer the same rights as legal marriage. Domestic partners would still have to make out wills to entitle each other to any inheritances. Powers of attorney would still be needed to avoid having one partner being excluded from any role in decision-making if the other partner became incapacitated.

The stadium "tradeoff"

The current bill, with all of its limitations, is the culmination of years of effort by lesbian and gay activists. Despite the widely held vision of San Francisco as a mecca where lesbian and gay rights are a given, this is the 16th version of a domestic partnership law.

Meanwhile, city officials and other Democratic Party politicians want supporters of domestic partnership to jump through a few more hoops to win even the modest gains that passage of the ordinance will bring.

San Franciscans who go to the polls on Nov. 7 will also be faced with voting for or against a plan to erect a new baseball stadium. Mayor Art Agnos' office has sought to

link these two disparate issues, pressuring supporters of Prop. S to endorse the stadium deal (which will appear on the ballot as Proposition P) as a tradeoff for political support for Prop. S.

The same politicians who can't find a way to expend city funds on health coverage for domestic partners, let alone for the poor and homeless who reside here, are expending major energy to garner support for the new stadium. The lion's share of the profits from the proposed stadium will find its way into the pockets of already wealthy investors, developers, and Bob Lurie, the multibillionaire owner of the San Francisco Giants baseball team.

Despite the limitations of Prop. S, activists correctly view the bill as a step forward. It will lay the basis for expanding the rights of domestic partners. These rights need to be expanded until all non-traditional family groups have the same rights as married couples.

"Yes on S" Campaign Manager Dick Pabich told *Socialist Action* that a wide spectrum of groups has come out in support of Prop. S. Volunteers are being organized to do phone-banking, streetcorner tabling, and other outreach work to get people out to the polls on Nov. 7. *Socialist Action* urges San Franciscans to vote "Yes on S."

OR leader Randall Terry acquitted in L.A. trial

By BRAD JUDD

LOS ANGELES—In last month's trial of Operation Rescue (OR) leader Randall Terry, anti-abortion demagoguery was used effectively to sway a Municipal Court jury. In reaching a not-guilty verdict, the jurors either misunderstood or ignored the law and the judge's instructions.

On Sept. 13, Terry and four other anti-abortion leaders were acquitted of charges of misdemeanor conspiracy, trespassing, and other counts for their part in a clinic blockade on March 25.

Los Angeles Municipal Judge Richard A. Paez made only half-hearted attempts to keep the court sessions from becoming a one-sided diatribe in favor of the goals of Operation Rescue. At the same time, the prosecution failed to counter OR by presenting the pro-choice case. Operation Rescue's definitions and its conception of the events also went unchallenged by the district attorney.

The use of OR double-talk frequently forced the judge to threaten the defendants with contempt. OR described their acts that blocked women from having access to health clinics as "rescues." The clinics were referred to as "killing centers," "abortuaries," "abortion mills," and "abortion chambers." Family planning became the "death industry."

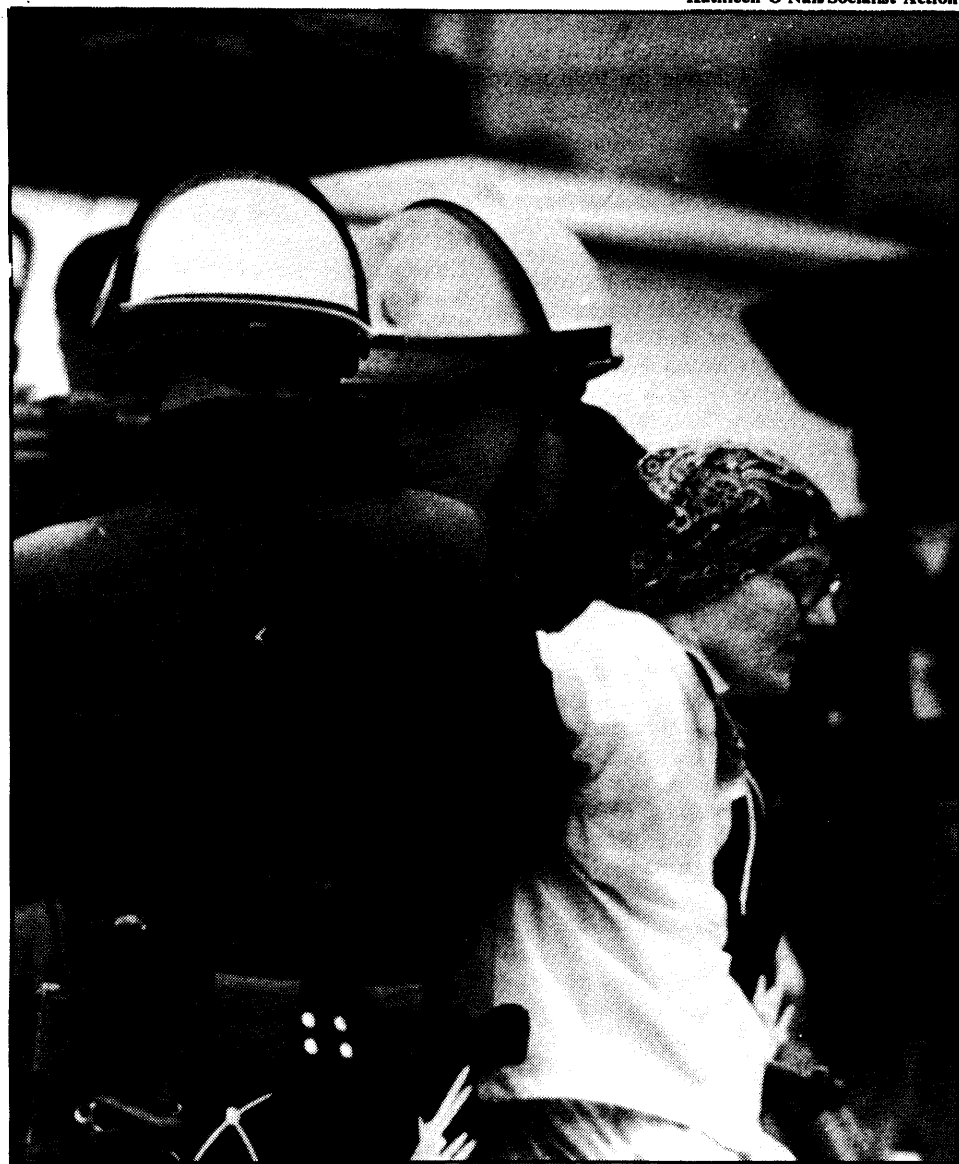
Pro-choice activists were labeled "murderers," fetuses were called "children," and the judiciary was "the lapdog of the death industry." Resisting arrest became "defending ourselves against police brutality."

One main defense argument that gained credit with the jury was that OR's opponents in key government posts put political pressure on the police to violently arrest and abuse anti-abortion blockaders. This was based on the flimsy contention that Los Angeles city-council member Michael Woo had urged that the law be "vigorously enforced."

OR maintained that "vigorously" meant the use of excessive force. In reality, many LAPD officers are openly anti-abortion.

Courtroom theatrics

Terry broke into theatrical sobs numerous times on the witness stand. Once, when describing the funeral services held for a fetus that he had nicknamed "Baby Choice," Terry's voice cracked and he sobbed convulsively. After the judge ordered a half-hour recess, Terry remained hunched on the witness stand,



OR supporter being arrested during attempt to shut down women's health clinic in L.A. Terry tries to cloak his anti-women campaign in a "progressive" cloth.

his back to the courtroom. His shoulders were heaving and he continually wiped his eyes with a handkerchief.

The prosecution's main contention was that the anti-abortion blockaders might have been acting with good intentions, but that such motives were no defense for breaking the law. This fell right into Operation Rescue's hands. OR maintained that it was upholding a "higher order" of justice than the law.

This argument was maintained even after

the judge had ruled that "there is no way it can be shown that abortions were stopped that day." The judge said, in effect, that OR could not use the defense of necessity since it hadn't prevented "the greater harm of abortions" from taking place.

A five-week avalanche of anti-abortion hyperbole swept the DA's case away. The judge failed to rule a mistrial even after he admitted the "circus-like atmosphere" of the trial.

In similar municipal cases in San Diego

and Fresno, Calif., where Terry was absent from the OR defense team, the anti-abortionists were convicted of misdemeanors. In Fresno, it took the jury less than 30 minutes to deliberate.

Unfortunately, the Los Angeles trial made a larger splash in the media. It had a negative effect on a related federal case in Los Angeles in which Judge A. Wallace Tashima backtracked on a civil rights law he had acknowledged three weeks earlier. Tashima now excluded the law, which federal courts in Oregon, Pennsylvania, and New York (just last month) have used to protect women's rights.

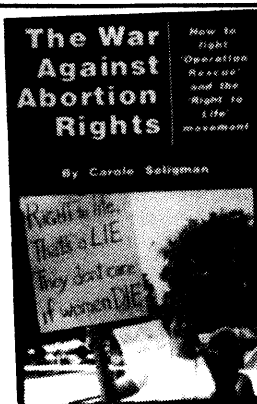
The defeat suffered in both Los Angeles courts has given a green light to OR's terroristic methods. It raises the possibility that the police will be even slower and less likely to enforce the laws protecting women's access to clinics.

Supporters of women's rights must counter these developments by mobilizing large defense efforts at the clinics to ensure that OR can't get away with this setback to our rights.

In his closing trial arguments, Operation Rescue leader Randall Terry claimed he was following in the footsteps of "Susan B. Anthony, Rosa Parks, and Martin Luther King." He reminded the jury of the time "when Blacks were relegated to the backs of buses and women had no right to vote."

But Terry's pretensions of being a civil rights fighter were given a blow on Sept. 13 when African America Women for Reproductive Rights, a coalition of major Black women's organizations, reinforced its support for abortion rights.

At the same time, many civil rights activists have signed a letter that states: "Perhaps it is more accurate to compare OR demonstrations to the segregationists who fought desperately to block Black Americans from access to their rights."—B.J.



The War on Abortion Rights: How to Fight 'Operation Rescue' and the 'Right to Life' Movement
By Carole Seligman
Price: \$1.00

Mail order to: 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Why Ms. Magazine has 'differences' with NOW

Ms. Magazine subscriptions are sent to all members of the National Organization for Women (NOW). As a NOW member, I was surprised that the October issue contains several attacks on NOW. In particular, it attacks NOW's big fall initiative, the Nov. 12 pro-choice mobilization in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Magazine was an enthusiastic supporter of the 600,000-strong NOW March on Washington on April 9—as was the rest of the pro-choice movement. *Ms.*, Planned Parenthood, National Abortion Rights Action League, and all the national pro-choice organizations all had contingents and speakers at the event.

But *Ms.* seems to have reconsidered its earlier support. An article by Peggy Simpson reports that NOW agreed "to sign onto a mobilization focused in the states," with NOW "carry[ing] the load for the Nov. 12 rally in Washington, D.C."

Simpson's article is titled "Reconcilable Differences." Apparently, the author considers the differences between NOW and the other pro-choice groups to be capable of reconciliation *only* if NOW buckles under the pressure to adopt a state-by-state strategy and retreats on the central importance of the national action focus.

This view is reinforced in the same *Ms.* edition in an interview of Planned Parenthood President Faye Wattleton by *Ms.* executive editor Marcia Ann Gillespie. The interviewer comments, "NOW has called for another rally in Washington this year, which seems a waste of our energies now that the battle has shifted to the states."

A debate on two fronts

Since the Supreme Court's *Webster* decision in July, which undermined a woman's right to choose abortion by allowing individual states to regulate and thus limit women's access to abortion, a debate has emerged in the movement over how to respond to this assault on women's rights.

The debate among the pro-choice organizations occurs on two fronts: One, is whether the fight for abortion rights should be organized on a national basis or whether it should, as *Ms.* says, "be defended at the state legislature level."

The second front of the debate is over NOW's call for a commission to study the possibility of establishing a political party committed to women's rights outside of the Democratic and Republican two-party framework that dominates U.S. political life today.

The two debates are closely linked, as Simpson makes clear in her article. She quickly dismisses "the tactical value of a third party effort," while she highlights plans to target "anti-choice legislators" in selected state elections.

The same forces who want to keep the women's movement inextricably tied to the capitalist political parties are cool to the best example of independent political action to-



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Ms. Magazine believes it was a mistake for NOW president Molly Yard to call for a mass demonstration on Nov. 12.

day—the Nov. 12 mobilization in Washington, D.C.

Pro-choice movement gains power

The reformist leaderships of most of the national pro-choice organizations have already conceded the national battleground for abortion rights to the anti-choice forces. They want to retreat to a state-by-state fight in each individual legislature.

This stance ignores the enormous power expressed in large national mobilizations, power that is capable of influencing the governmental agencies that are now arrayed against women's rights. The power of the April 9 march is still bearing fruit, with NOW's membership currently up to its historic high (reached during the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment) and *still growing*.

We cannot allow the anti-choice forces to shape the strategy and tactics for our pro-choice campaign by spreading the entire fight in 50 directions. Yes, we must direct some of our energy toward the state legislatures, but *not* at the expense of building a truly national movement.

During the 1950s and '60s, the pro-segregationists sought to uphold states' rights to limit the rights of Black people to full and equal participation in all areas of life (housing, schools, public facilities of all kinds). The civil rights movement organized a

national campaign to end Jim Crow segregation laws, which included sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and much more.

People from all over the country were mobilized to go to the South, to march in Selma, Ala., to send cars to Montgomery, Ala. (during the bus boycott), and to march on Washington, D.C.

The civil rights movement was able to change the arena of the battle from the individual Southern states to the country as a whole. Indeed, they were able to bring the United States before the jury of world public opinion and use that as a powerful tool in the struggle. The lessons of the civil rights movement are relevant to the abortion rights battle today.

Electoral politics

The main strategy employed by the pro-choice organizations at the state level is to support so-called pro-choice candidates and defeat those who are against choice. They ignore the inescapable fact that the Equal Rights Amendment went down to defeat using this very same state-by-state electoral strategy. After they were elected to office, the Democrats and Republicans backtracked on their campaign pledges to support the ERA.

The women's rights movement is hampered in its struggle by the absence of a mass working-class party—which could represent the interests of women in the electoral arena.

But until such a party is formed, it is essential to maintain complete independence.

Concretely, this means mobilizing all supporters of women's rights in marches, mobilizations, and other forms of independent political action on the national and local levels.

Traditionally, NOW has been a "mainstream" organization, seeking women's rights within the framework of the present political system. But many feminists recognize that this system (the capitalist system) is *based* on inequality and exploitation. It is not capable of providing full equality and dignity to women.

Thousands of feminists who have joined NOW have developed this insight; during its last national conference, in July, they helped to push the organization into a more militant stance.

In her *Ms.* column, Simpson notes that NOW President Molly Yard attributes NOW's militancy to a response to the grassroots. She quotes a statement by Yard that the attacking organizations do not meet with their memberships or seek their members' opinions.

NOW must not succumb to the tremendous pressure to become nothing more than an electoral and lobbying group tied to the coat-tails of the Democratic Party. NOW members should continue to push the organization to fight militantly for abortion rights at the national level. All out for Nov. 12!

...Nov. 12

(continued from page 1)

make comparisons [to April 9]. It's a different situation with the coalition."

The coalition Avril speaks of is the newly formed National Pro-Choice Coalition. It consists of 50 organizations—including NOW, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, and Zero Population Growth. As part of its endorsement of Nov. 12, the coalition reached an agreement which diluted the national focus of the event.

The agreement calls for "a rally in Washington, D.C., and state-by-state organization efforts to demonstrate that millions of people have the political will, resources, and num-

bers to effectuate the legislative and political changes necessary to maintain and restore the constitutional right of a woman to make her own decision without interference from court or government as to whether or how many children to have."

These state actions include "canvassing phone banks, [voter] registration, local lobbying of national and state legislators, petitions," all of which funnel the anger generated by the Supreme Court's decision away from independent action and into the hands of Democratic and Republican politicians.

"Major organizing going on"

O'Dell defends the two-pronged approach, insisting that NOW activists are focusing on Washington. "That's where they want to be," she said. "The ones who won't come [because of local actions] couldn't come to Washington anyway."

"There's been major, major organizing going on," she added. More than 200 campuses are organizing; 15 buses are already coming from Harvard, with more likely to be filled. A "freedom train" will leave Los Angeles and make stops in three cities before pulling into Washington for the rally at the Lincoln Memorial.

"An awful lot of people know about it," she said. "It's going to be fine." Indeed, from all indications, activists are ignoring the agreement and mobilizing for Nov. 12 in Washington. In many areas, there is even more organizing for Nov. 12 than for April 9. "Constitutional rights cannot become a

states' rights issue," said O'Dell. "We can't turn over to the states this power. It's a national issue, it affects every woman in this country. It's imperative to have a national focus."

Nov. 12 will also have an international flavor. Simultaneous actions are planned for France, England, West Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Mexico, and Greece. Many of these countries will also send delegations to the Washington march.

Other regional actions

Momentum is building for the West Coast pro-choice march and rally that will take place on Oct. 15 in San Francisco. Weekly working parties continue to attract new activists. Buses and special trains from Santa Cruz, Calif., and San Jose were filled up weeks ahead of the action.

In Chicago, the Des Plaines chapter of NOW is sponsoring a pro-choice rally on Oct. 15 in Park Ridge, a Chicago suburb that has been the victim of several rightwing anti-abortion attacks. Chicago area NOW chapters are also planning to send more buses to Washington for the Nov. 12 march than they sent to the April 9 action.

In Los Angeles, a building rally for the Nov. 12 protest is planned for Oct. 22 at the West Los Angeles Federal Building. It was called by L.A. NOW.

Likewise, a March for Choice Ohio will take place in Columbus on Oct. 29. The *Cleveland NOW News* urged participation

for both the Oct. 29 and Nov. 12 actions, explaining that "unless we focus on a national solution to the abortion issue, we will have 50 abortion laws and complete chaos."

As we go to press, endorsements of these actions are pouring in—especially from the labor movement. The UMW, UAW, ILGWU, SEIU, AFT, IAM, NEA have endorsed either Oct. 15 in San Francisco, Nov. 12, or both. Unions are realizing that abortion rights are just as much in the interests of working people as is the right to a job at a living wage.

There is no question that massive, politically independent action is needed now more than ever. The Supreme Court will hear three more anti-abortion cases in its next term, all of which could further restrict access to abortion. Anti-choice forces are gearing up to pass restrictive legislation in many states. And Operation Rescue continues its campaign of fear and terror at family-planning clinics nationwide.

Socialist Action supports the call for mass actions. All out for Nov. 12!

Corrections

The September 1989 issue contains various mistakes. The Toronto pro-choice demonstration (p. 3, "Canadian women") had 800 participants, not 8000. In the article (p. 5) on the U. of Cincinnati workers, Shirley Rosser, Cincinnati NOW president, should have been identified as the first African-American woman union pipefitter in the Cincinnati area. Finally, one photo on page 7 (Chicago) was erroneously credited to Joe Ryan. It was taken by Tina Beacock.

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IMPACT VISUALS

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Dinkins campaign offers no solutions for Blacks and workers

By CHRIS BIELER

NEW YORK—On Sept. 12, Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins defeated incumbent Edward Koch in the Democratic Party primary for mayor. Given the dominance of the Democratic Party in New York City politics, it is likely that Dinkins will go on to defeat Republican nominee Rudolph Giuliani to become New York's first Black mayor.

Dinkins's campaign was heavily backed by New York City's organized labor movement. This included unions that backed Jesse Jackson's presidential bid last year—Local 1199 of the Hospital Workers, AFSCME D.C. 37, and UAW District 65. But it also included unions that hadn't backed Jackson—the United Federation of Teachers and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Many Black voters undoubtedly saw their vote as a vote against 12 racist years of the Koch administration. Dinkins carried 95 percent of the Black vote—down slightly from Jesse Jackson's 98 percent in the New York state presidential primary in 1988.

But a Dinkins victory will not make any fundamental difference in the lives of Black people in New York City—any more than the election of Black mayors in Los Angeles, Gary, Philadelphia, Chicago, or Washington, D.C., did.

So much attention has been paid to the "choice" given to New York City voters that one might think it is the mayor who rules New York City. But this is not the case. It is the banks and corporations, headquartered on Wall Street, which call the shots.

At a press conference this summer, Dinkins proposed a modest decrease in the city's oppressive sales tax. Outraged editorials in the big business newspapers reminded him, in case he had "forgotten," that such an action was illegal. It violated an agreement with the Municipal Assistance Corporation, a virtual junta of bankers who have had veto power over city financial decisions since New York's budgetary crisis of 1975.

Dinkins immediately retracted his position.

No answer to housing crisis

One of the most deeply felt issues affecting New Yorkers is the crisis of affordable housing. That there are presently 100,000 homeless people sleeping in the streets, subways, and shelters every night has by now been prominently covered in the media. Less well known is the fact that the "hidden homeless"—those doubled and tripled up in public projects and private apartments—number 300,000.

One-third of all New Yorkers pay *more than one-half* of their income on rent. This is the lawful result of housing for profit, spurred on by over \$2 billion in tax abatements under the Koch administration for realtors and developers of luxury condominiums.

Dinkins doesn't oppose housing for profit—or tax abatements for developers. He wants to "heal the wounds" by "balancing" tax incentives for luxury housing with those for low-income housing.

In 1986, Koch inaugurated his much-trumpeted 10-year, \$5.1 billion program to construct or renovate 250,000 units of housing, 63 percent of which he claimed would be des-

ignated for "low-income" families (defined as families with incomes under \$19,000 a year).

Dinkins, in an interview with *The New York Times* (Aug. 31, 1989) pronounced himself "basically satisfied" with the Koch plan. But a recent study by Bonnie Brower of the Housing Justice Coalition revealed that only 23 percent, or 57,500 units, would be designated for low-income families.

It is estimated that the city loses 13,000 low-income units a year just from skyrocketing rent prices alone. Add to this the units lost each year through condo conversion, arson, abandonment, and demolition and you have some idea of the magnitude of the hoax being perpetrated on New Yorkers when the candidates promise this as a solution to the housing crisis.

"Tough on drugs?"

But the biggest growth industry in New York City is not luxury condominiums—it is the drug industry. The Manhattan district attorney's office estimates that income from drug sales amounted to \$80 billion last year alone. (The annual budget of New York City is \$26 billion.) The drug business employs an estimated 300,000 people.

"I'm going to be the toughest mayor you ever saw with regard to drugs and crime," Dinkins said in his victory speech on Sept. 12. Although Dinkins raised the excellent demand for "drug treatment on demand" during the campaign, he also called for boot camps for first-time drug offenders, doubling the police on the beat, and mandatory drug testing for parolees.

No candidate talked in any serious way

about the question of jobs. Drugs and crime are, of course, deeply felt issues for working people. But without linking them at every step to the issues of racism, education, and unemployment, "the war on drugs" becomes the latest cover for a campaign of police terror against Blacks and Latinos.

Koch made a campaign point about the fact that unemployment is at its lowest in New York City in 20 years—under 6 percent. It is a mark of this so-called "prosperity," however, that the unemployment rate for Blacks in the ghetto is 49.6 percent.

It is not as if there is no productive work to be done. It is estimated that it will take \$2.5 billion to repair the city's 2000 neglected and collapsing bridges alone. The bridges, tunnels, water system, subways, and highways are in desperate need of repair. And then there is the need for decent low-cost housing.

Workers need their own party

Anyone who attended the recent 400,000-strong Labor Day parade could not fail to be impressed by the power of labor, even if it was used to back Dinkins.

A labor party, based on the trade unions, would reject the framework of the debate dictated by the Democrats. It would be "tough" with "special interests" all right—the *real* special interests, the banks and corporations, who have bled this city dry.

For a real war on drugs! For a mass program of public works to rebuild the city's rotting infrastructure at union wages! Make the Helmsleys, the Trumps, the real-estate magnates, and the drug money-laundering banks pay!

For a real housing program! For municipalization and federal funding for all vacant buildings and apartments warehoused by private developers! These should be administered by tenants' committees, coalitions of the homeless, and the unions. For labor action against police and racist vigilante terror!

10,000 march through Bensonhurst, protest racist murder of Black youth



Outside the church where services for Yusuf Hawkins were held. The Black community wants all participants in the attack arrested and prosecuted. Three have been indicted for second-degree murder and six others on lesser charges.

By CHRIS BIELER

NEW YORK—In the largest local civil rights demonstration in 17 years, 10,000 people marched on Aug. 31 in a "Day of Outrage" against the lynching of Yusuf Hawkins by a gang of white youths. Hawkins, 16, died of gunshot wounds in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn on Aug. 23.

Hawkins and three friends were attacked by about 30 whites, who reportedly mistook Hawkins for another Black man who had been dating a neighborhood woman. The mob chased them with baseball bats, golf clubs, and boards. "What the hell," one attacker reportedly yelled as he pulled out a gun, "let's kill the nigger!"

The New York area has seen a sharp rise in racist vigilante and police violence against minorities in recent years. Hawkins joins Derick Tyrus, Michael Griffith, and Willie

Turks—to name but a few of the most well-known victims.

Chanting, "No justice—no peace!" and "Whose streets? Our streets!" the demonstrators, 90 percent Black, marched through downtown Brooklyn. Black youths proudly carrying Malcolm X posters and wearing "Fight the Power" T-shirts were prominent.

The action was called by the December 12th Coalition, a coalition of over 25 African-American organizations, established at the time of the Howard Beach protests. Reproductive rights, gay rights, tenants, and Central American solidarity organizations also participated.

The mobilization was the largest in a series of protests that had been held since the death of Hawkins. "This is not South Africa," said the Rev. Timothy Mitchell at a demonstration attended by 300 on Aug. 27. "We're not going to get passes to go to Howard Beach or

Bensonhurst."

That the lynching of Hawkins did not happen in a vacuum was testified to by Bensonhurst residents who lined the streets screaming, "Niggers, go home!" In a scene reminiscent of Montgomery, Ala., in the early '60s, demonstrators were pelted with watermelons and spit on.

Of the reported 30 who participated in the attack on Hawkins, three have been indicted so far on charges of second degree murder. Six others have been indicted on lesser charges.

Impact on mayoral campaign

Some 2000 people attended the funeral of Yusuf Hawkins in East New York on Sept. 1. Speeches inside Glover Memorial Baptist Church connected the murder of Hawkins to a nationwide pattern of racist and economic violence against minorities. Meanwhile, people outside were treated to the spectacle of

Mayor Koch scampering down a fire escape to flee angry mourners.

Koch, instead of taking the occasion to urge Bensonhurst residents to condemn the racist murder, charged that marches by anti-racist protesters were "inflaming passions." In a deliberate appeal to a white backlash vote in Bensonhurst, Koch denied that the killing was racist—since it was a case of mistaken identity.

Koch's attack on the anti-racist demonstrators stirred up some enthusiasm by Blacks for the Dinkins campaign. Dinkins, who did not march in Bensonhurst and was nowhere to be seen during the Howard Beach protests, defended the recent demonstrations at a press conference.

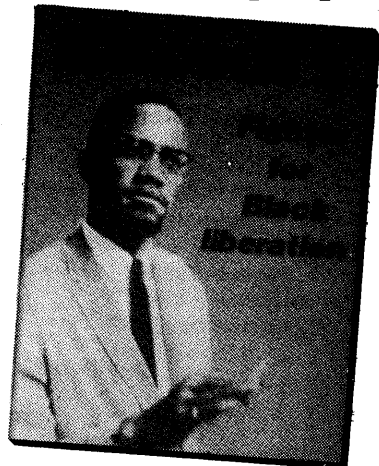
But Dinkins, in his efforts to show the banks and corporations he is tough with "special interests" (read minorities and unions), has already called for a doubling of the police force. He has proclaimed a "war against urban terrorism."

Needed now are the biggest possible mobilizations to show that racism will not be tolerated. All working people have a stake in this fight.

At the same time, the anti-racist movement must be absolutely clear about the role of Black Democrats like David Dinkins. Today, Dinkins may lean on the anti-racist demonstrators to win the election. Tomorrow, he will turn on them under the pressure of his real base, the banks and corporations.

Black people need candidates for whom anti-racist demonstrations and picket lines of striking hospital workers are a *political base*, not just another whistle stop.

Socialist Action pamphlet



By Kwame M.A. Somburu et al.
Send \$2 (includes postage) to 3435 Army St.
Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

BY SHIRLEY PASHOLK

This summer, the National Research Council released a report stating that real progress for U.S. Blacks ended in the late 1960s. These investigators concluded that with nearly a third of the nation's Blacks locked in poverty, their conditions may actually be worsening.

As if to underscore the findings of this report, Republicans and Democrats have pushed forward with an attack on working people that hits the poor hardest. President George Bush vetoed a proposal to raise the minimum wage.

The Democratic Party-controlled Congress and state and city governments continue to slash funds for education, healthcare, and other social services. The Supreme Court issued several decisions gutting affirmative-action programs that had given some women and oppressed minorities the chance to be hired into better-paying jobs previously reserved for white men.

These governmental attacks have given the green light to violent racists. On Aug. 21, a letter bomb exploded in the Atlanta regional NAACP headquarters, injuring 15 people. On Aug. 23, a gang of racist thugs in Brooklyn murdered a 16-year-old Black youth, Yusef Hawkins.

"The price of freedom"

The NAACP responded to the Supreme court rulings by calling a march on Washington for Sat., Aug. 26, around the theme, "No Retreat on Civil Rights."

A flier distributed at the demonstration explained: "We march because the Supreme Court in four 5-to-4 decisions has reversed civil rights gains.... We march because we have learned well from history that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance and, unless we move on our own to protect what we have won at such great cost, we can look to no other quarter for help."

"We march to make it clear to all our fellow citizens that our nation has not eradicated racial discrimination. And until there is an end to the unfairness of racism, we shall, in the words of Dubois, 'never cease to protest.'"

"We march because we know that the battle is not over, that our warfare is not accomplished. We march to hold fast to the dream. We march to keep hope alive. We march because the struggle continues."

Aug. 26 was chosen because that weekend marked the 26th anniversary of the huge 1963 civil rights demonstration in which Martin Luther King gave his famous "I have a dream" speech. The protest was called as a silent march to commemorate the July 28, 1917, anti-lynching march in New York City.

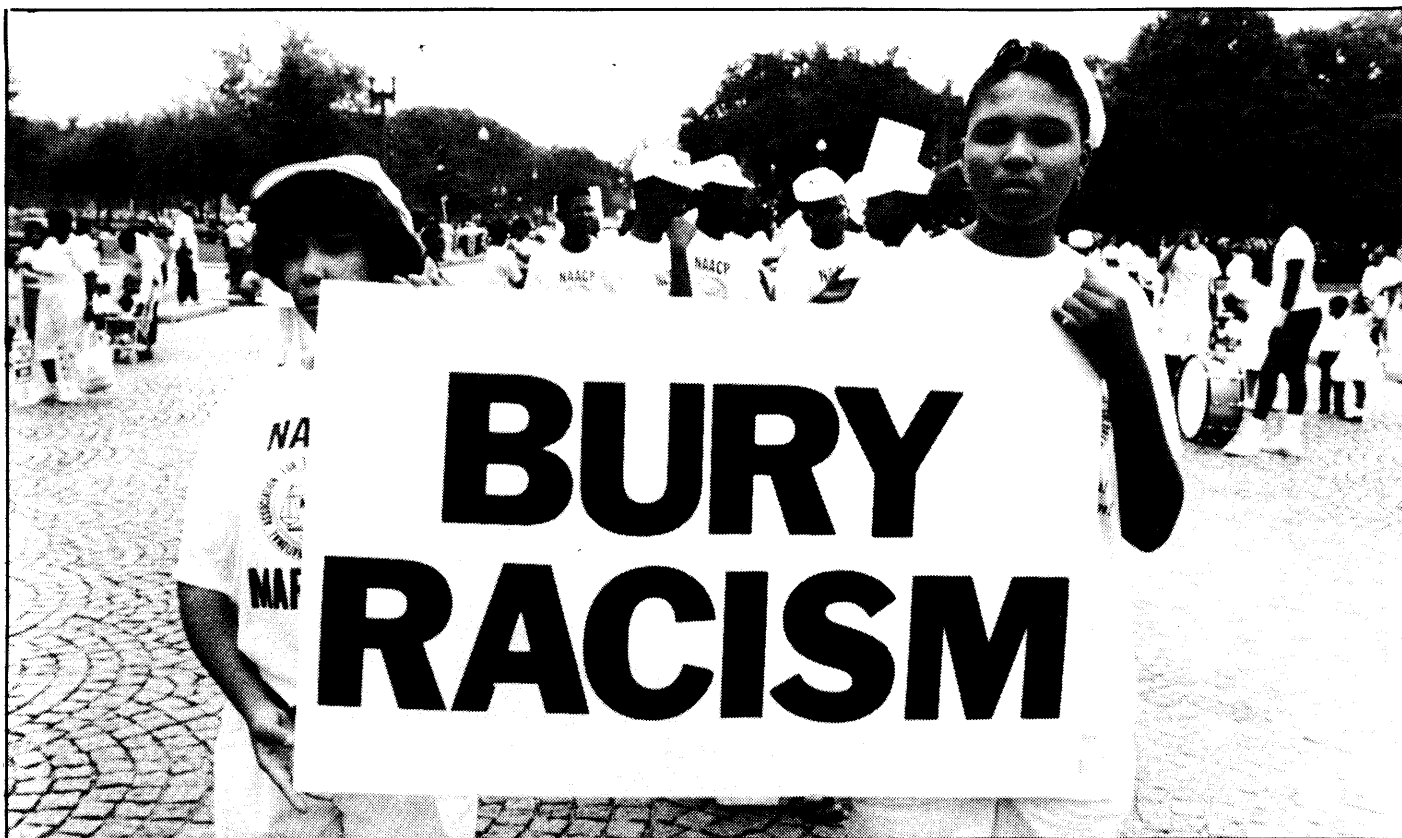
Originally, the march was projected as a symbolic one, with 1000 participants. This concept only changed when organizers became deluged with requests to participate.

Poorly publicized

While the NAACP deserves credit for taking the initiative to call a national action in defense of affirmative action, it failed to recognize the potential.

At a press conference a few days before the march, NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks expressed this contradictory phenomenon, saying: "We are not looking to

NAACP demo showed potential for fightback despite poor organizing



Rick Reinhard/Impact Visuals

Although demonstration organizers poorly publicized the event, 35,000 participated in the civil rights march.

bring vast numbers of people to Washington. It's time for all of us to stand up and say we are determined that there will be no further retreat on civil rights."

As a long-time Cleveland civil rights activist put it, "This is the most poorly publicized demonstration I've ever seen on such an important topic."

Yet, despite the poor organization and lack of publicity, 35,000 demonstrators participated. The crowd clearly reflected both the weaknesses and the potential. For example, only one bus came from Cleveland—which had sent 35 buses to the 1983 march. Even worse, only nine people on the bus came from Cleveland. Six were from Mansfield, Ohio, and 22 were from the small town of Ravenna.

Unfortunately, the Cleveland NAACP was not atypical. Many large city branches failed to turn people out. However, wherever efforts were made, as in Ravenna, people came.

A number of labor organizations, including the AFL-CIO, endorsed the march, and several trade unions sent token delegations. Two unions, the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the United Steelworkers of America, had sizable contingents—sending buses from different areas. A group of striking Pittston coal miners—dressed in camouflage

fatigues—stood out in the crowd.

Although the National Organization for Women endorsed, and a few NOW banners were visible in the march, no serious effort was made to include the women's movement in this protest. Similarly, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American organizations were not involved. This was despite the fact that the Supreme Court rulings against affirmative action programs directly affect women and all oppressed minorities.

Although participants were urged to return to Washington for the housing march on Oct. 7, the Nov. 12 pro-choice march wasn't even mentioned.

"It's about time!"

A UAW member from Detroit summed up the mood of the participants when he said: "It's about time we got out in the streets again. Everything we gained in the '60s came from demonstrations. We've been quiet too long. It's about time we started moving forward and marching again."

But the message from the speakers' platform was the exact opposite. Instead of calling for more demonstrations, speaker after speaker called for work within the Democratic Party.

Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry

welcomed the crowd by urging them to petition their representatives in Congress. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland promised that not only would he march with the demonstrators, but he would also lobby with them.

Irene Natividad of the National Women's Political Caucus admonished the protesters that "there is no shortcut to choosing congressmen and senators who will protect our rights." The final speaker, Jesse Jackson, urged participants to "go back to the streets, back to the halls of the legislatures, and back to the voting booths."

Jackson concluded his remarks by explaining, "All we're saying is do the right thing." Yet both the Democrats and Republicans have given ample evidence over the years that for them the right thing is protecting capitalist profits—not defending the rights of working people, women, and minorities.

History shows that all the victories that have been won resulted from independent mobilizations in the streets, not voting for supposed "friends."

The Aug. 26 demonstration, despite its poor leadership, points to the possibility of building a movement that can ensure that the slogan of this march, "No Retreat on Civil Rights," becomes a reality.

Black socialist will speak at UN session



Socialist Action member Kwame M.A. Somburu, a long-time activist and participant in the Black liberation struggle, has been invited to address the 44th General Assembly of the United Nations in mid-October.

Somburu, a founding member of Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity and the 1968 vice presidential candidate of the Socialist

Workers Party, was invited to address the United Nations by its Committee on Decolonization. The focus of his remarks will be the status of Namibia and the French colony of New Caledonia. His 20-minute talk, which will be reprinted in a future issue of *Socialist Action*, will also deal with the capitalist origins of colonialism and the worldwide struggle against it.

Somburu is co-author of the Socialist Action pamphlets "Malcolm X: Fighter for Black Liberation" and "Is the 'Rainbow' a Real Alternative?"

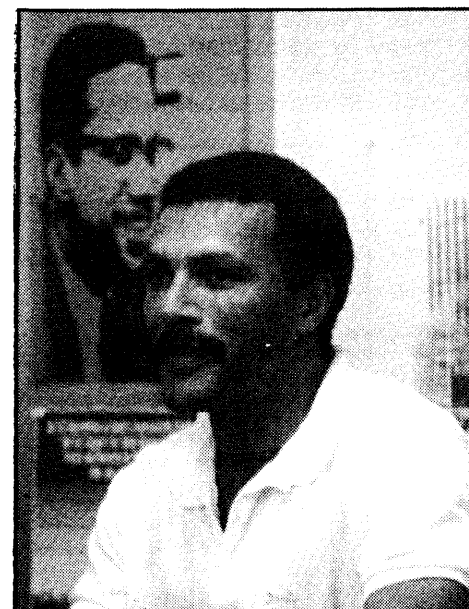
Somburu's United Nations appearance will be followed by a Socialist Action national speaking tour. *Socialist Action* readers are asked to contribute to this effort. Please make checks payable to: Socialist Action/Somburu Fund, 3435 Army Street, Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

S.F. forum discusses legacy of Black Panthers

SAN FRANCISCO—On Sept. 22, over 120 people attended a Socialist Action forum here entitled "The Political Legacy of the Black Panther Party."

Featured speakers included Johnny Spain, a former Black Panther and one of the original San Quentin Six who was jailed for 21 years; JoNina Abron, former editor of the *Black Panther* newspaper and current managing editor of *Black Scholar*; Reginald Major, professor at S.F. State University and author of "A Panther is a Black Cat;" and Kwame M.A. Somburu, founding member of Malcolm X's Organization for Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and a staff writer for *Socialist Action* newspaper.

The backdrop to the forum was the recent murder of Black Panther Party founder Huey P. Newton in Oakland, Calif. The forum was covered on the front page of the S.F. State University newspaper, *Golden Gate*—J.R.



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Johnny Spain speaking at forum

Nuclear weapons plants: A case of deadly deception

By JEFFREY GOLDMAN

Beginning in December of last year, the American mass media reported a series of stunning events, centering on the 17 nuclear-weapons factories located in the United States. Despite the fact that neighborhood groups and environmental organizations have been complaining for many years, these reports were the first revelations of a deadly deceit.

The American public has been bombarded by media and government propaganda since the early days of the development of the atomic bomb at Los Alamos, N.M. Nuclear energy was introduced as a source of "unlimited amounts of almost cost-free energy."

The media has largely ignored the link between nuclear energy and the production of nuclear bombs. Coverups of accidents and near catastrophes have happened too many times.

Nuclear-weapons factories handle plutonium—the most deadly substance known. Just 6/10 of one-millionth of a gram is lethal. Once in our systems, it concentrates in the bones, thus restricting the production of red blood cells. It can take up to 20 years for effects to be detected. Roughly 41 pounds of this material evenly distributed around the planet could kill all human life.

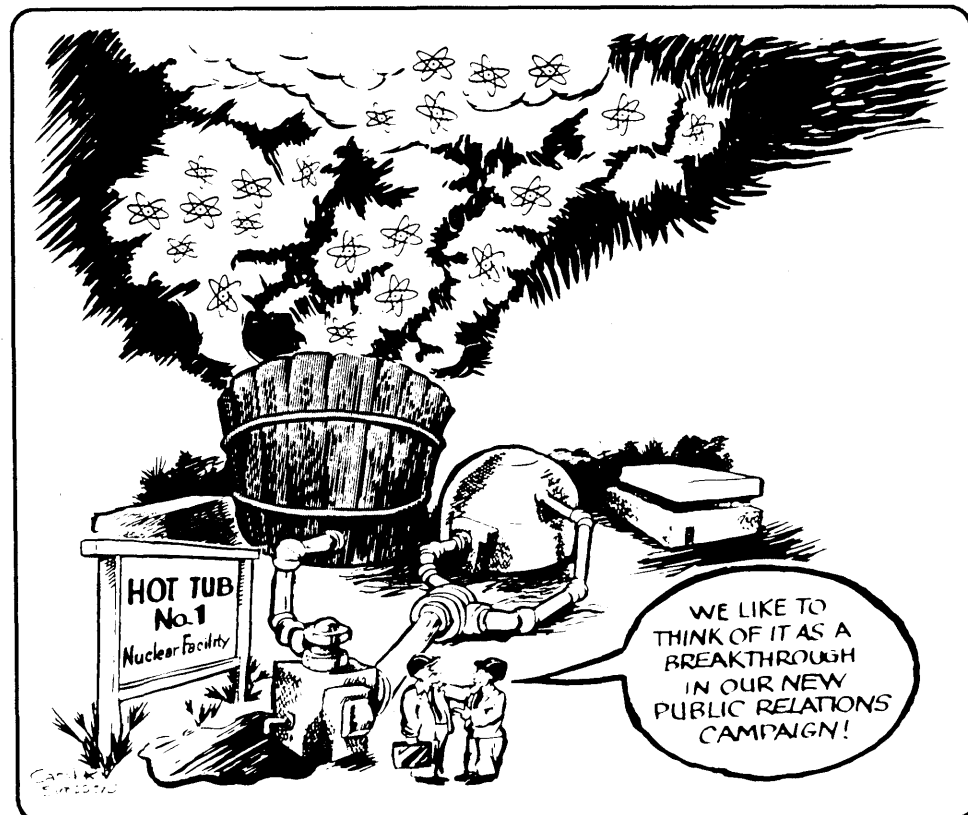
Contaminated water supplies

A report released in early December by the Department of Energy (DOE) listed 155 instances of contamination at 16 weapons plants and laboratories.

Though it neglects to mention some major accidents, the report does shed light on the inner workings of these facilities and on the widespread contamination they've caused. Chemicals mentioned in the report are plutonium, cesium, strontium, PCB, chromium, arsenic, mercury, and a variety of solvents. All of these compounds are known to cause cancer and other chronic diseases.

In Piketon, Ohio, 30 to 40 pounds of chromium was released in water vapor. It traveled many miles before it settled in water, crops, and soil. Amarillo, Texas, gets its water from an aquifer contaminated by thousands of gallons of solvents.

Eastern Idaho receives its water from an



aquifer that was also contaminated by billions of gallons of radioactive waste water. Farmers are already complaining of widespread death and deformities in livestock and animals.

The Savannah River Plant in South Carolina, employing 15,000 workers, produces tritium and plutonium. It appears some luck has been on the side of the plant, as a major disaster has so far been averted. But ongoing problems include inadequate warning signs in contaminated areas, weak radiation monitoring of workers, and poor training of the on-site health inspectors.

"National sacrifice zones"

Several accidents occurred last year that were caused by human error. All this brought attention to an inadequate cooling system and the fact that no containment wall existed like those found in commercial reactors. DOE officials are overlooking these problems in the name of "national security"—a line which has been echoed many times before.

In January, Senator John Glenn (R-Ohio) wrote an editorial titled "The Mini-Hiroshima Near Cincinnati." Glenn pointed out that the nuclear-production center in Fernald, Ohio—run by the DOE—stores 390,000 cubic feet of radioactive waste that emits deadly radon gas. Once again, large amounts of uranium and other hazardous chemicals have found their way into the public's drinking water.

Several officials have called the Fernald, Ohio, area one of many "national sacrifice zones." The question is, what is being sacrificed? This is double speak for the creation of a deliberate public health disaster. In May 1989, experts accused the government of "fabrications" and "inherently deceptive data" concerning the release of uranium dust.

One of the original sites involved with the first bomb and many bombs since is the Hanford Reservation in the state of Washington. A study by the Center for Disease Control claims that in the 1940s and '50s, 30,000 children in the region were exposed to more

radioactive iodine than residents near the site of the Chernobyl accident.

The most spectacular incident so far was when 70 FBI agents raided the nuclear plant at Rocky Flats, Colo. The plant is used to process plutonium; it has handled over 260,000 pounds of the deadly material. At the time of the raid, agents also descended on the DOE office in New Mexico which oversees operations in Colorado.

This type of raid was unprecedented and was done for fear that documents would be destroyed. Agents found faked federal documents attempting to conceal the illegal discharge of toxic materials.

Rocky Flats is managed by Rockwell International and has been fined many times before. Since they are a government contractor, tax dollars pay their fines. Rockwell's slogan is "where science gets down to business."

Accidents are not new at Rocky Flats. In 1954, a plutonium fire broke out which sent a cloud over Denver. Two weeks later, when the stacks were monitored, they had 16,000 times the permissible amount of radioactivity allowed at the time. Since then, several workers have died of brain cancer. Workers at the site continue to have five times the rate of cancer than in the rest of Colorado.

Today, most people remain in the dark as to the depth of the problems regarding nuclear sites. Major media—but for a few exceptions—has paid little attention to this subject. Articles constantly quote DOE officials, who leave inaccurate impressions with readers.

The newspaper, television, and radio-station owners and corporate boards are major stock holders in nuclear companies. It is only natural they will serve their own business interests in "reporting" the news.

It is estimated that it will take \$100 billion to clean up these sites. Usually, these estimates are well below the actual costs. But there is a strong chance that these sites cannot be cleaned. Contamination has now entered huge amounts of water, large areas of land, and the food chain.

Patrick Dugan, the director of bioprocessing at one of these sites, states, "Nothing like this can be made to go away—only handled better." This opinion is echoed by many in the government. Even 100 miles downstream from the Savannah Plant, large concentrations have been found. Yet the DOE takes a wait-and-see attitude. Do they have 10,000 years to allow it to be neutralized?

When one speaks of a national tragedy, it hardly conveys the suffering at hand. Monopolies of wealth and power are the only "winners." Such a system has to be replaced.

Lillian Willis, a partisan of the working class

By ASHER HARER

On Sept. 5, in Berkeley, Calif., Lillian Willis died of lung cancer. She was 77 years old. Her parents, Russian-Jewish radicals (family name, Bender), came to America shortly after the 1905 Russian Revolution. Lillian was born in 1912 in Revere, Mass.

Much of Lillian's youth was spent in New York City and Chicago, where in the 1930s she participated in the first major strike of restaurant workers, rebelling against the gangster "labor fakers" who controlled the union. The strike, led by the late Sidney Lens, was won and set off a series of battles that established the present International Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union.

From then on, Lillian was continually active in trade-union and radical politics.

She held membership not only in the union she helped to organize, but also in San Francisco in the Newspaper Guild.

Lillian and her husband, Allen Willis, came to San Francisco in 1946. Allen joined the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1947. Lillian did not become a member but pitched in—like the veteran she was.

Allen left the SWP in 1951, but he and Lillian were there—playing key roles in the major political struggles of the 1950s and 1960s: the struggle for racial equality, the defense of the Cuban Revolution (Fair Play for Cuba Committee), and the anti-Vietnam War movement. She was a fine speaker and organizer and a generous and warm friend. She will be sorely missed.

A memorial meeting is planned for Oct. 21, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., at Savo Island Community Center, 2017 Stuart Street, Berkeley. For information and messages, Allen Willis may be reached at (415) 841-3610.

Ken Shilman: Fighter for socialist future

Ken Shilman, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party for many years, died Sept. 7 of cancer at the age of 47. The following statement was sent by Socialist Action co-National Secretary Jeff Mackler to a memorial meeting for Shilman held on Oct. 1 in Oakland.

Dear comrades,

I first met Ken in 1962 in New York City. He had been a party member for a short time but had energetically devoted himself to mastering the fundamentals of the revolutionary socialist positions of the Socialist Workers Party. Ken had a wonderful ability to explain these ideas to newcomers in clear and concise terms. He was more interested in the essence of the idea than in high-sounding

presentations.

Ken's courageous participation in the Southern civil rights movement was similar to so many of the best youthful fighters of his time. But when the struggle ebbed, Ken found another way to fight for his ideals. He signed on for life with the socialist movement.

Ken demonstrated the capacity to act on his growing understanding that the most enduring gains for the working-class movement could be won through active and dedicated participation in the revolutionary party.

I remember Ken most for his gentle way and patience with all of us young hotshots who believed that our first year in the party was sufficient training for all time. Like so many of the talented comrades of his generation, Ken joined the party because he was inspired with the mighty vision of the socialist future. He could not have spent his life in a better cause.

Comradely,
Jeff Mackler

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(signed)
Kathy Sands
Business Manager

SPECIAL: ELECTIONS IN NICARAGUA

Former Sandinista leader to run for president: Moisés Hassan calls for workers, peasants to preserve and extend gains of revolution

By ALAN BENJAMIN

On Aug. 22, 1989, Moisés Hassan, a former leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), announced his bid for the presidency of Nicaragua on the ticket of the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR). His vice presidential running mate in the Feb. 25, 1990, national election is Francisco Samper, a leader of the MUR.

The announcement of the Hassan candidacy means that a third major contender has entered the presidential race, challenging both Daniel Ortega, the presidential candidate of the FSLN, and Violeta Chamorro, the candidate of the right-wing National Opposition Union (UNO).

Hassan stated he decided to run for president because "the great majority of the Nicaraguan people are dissatisfied with the FSLN and the UNO." The major goal of his election campaign, Hassan stated, "is to create a new revolutionary alternative in Nicaragua." [See accompanying interview with Moisés Hassan.]

The political platform of the MUR calls for the defense, the deepening, and the extension of the Nicaraguan Revolution to the rest of Central America. [See excerpts of the MUR's platform on next page.]

A prominent revolutionary leader

Hassan's decision to challenge the Sandinistas and the UNO on the basis of a revolutionary platform is of extreme significance. Hassan is a highly respected leader of the Nicaraguan Revolution. He joined the FSLN in the early 1970s and became the main leader of the Movement for People's Unity (MPU), the coalition of mass organizations that played a central role in organizing the insurrection against Somoza.

After Somoza's downfall in July 1979, Hassan represented the MPU on the five-person Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction. In 1981, Hassan stepped down from the government. He later held many other governmental posts, including vice minister of the Interior, minister of Construction, and mayor of Managua.

In April 1988, Hassan resigned from the FSLN, citing "irreconcilable political differences" with the Sandinista leadership. Shortly after his resignation, Hassan gave an interview to U.S. journalist Michael Massing in which he described his differences with the Sandinista leadership.

"What bothers Hassan is not so much the FSLN's ideology as its internal structure and style of operation," Massing wrote. "Nine years after taking power, the Sandinista Front continues to bear the stamp of its guerrilla origins. Distinctly military in cast, the party places a heavy stress on duty and discipline. Policy is set by a small group at the top, then is passed down the line to be carried out. Members are expected to perform their assigned task without complaint."

But "ideology" did play a role in Hassan's break with the FSLN, as Massing admits further on. "During an interview at his home in Managua," Massing writes, "Hassan ... spoke critically of the Terceristas, the FSLN faction led by the Ortega brothers that is generally associated with a more moderate brand of Sandinismo. The Terceristas' continuing effort to mollify the bourgeoisie, Hassan told me, 'has caused the revolutionary quality of the Front to suffer tremendously.'" (*Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1988)

Hassan had broken with the leadership of the FSLN, but not with the revolution. Because the FSLN allows no internal tendencies or factions—in fact, all discussion of political differences is banned inside the FSLN—Hassan had no choice but to resign from the Front.

After his resignation from the FSLN, Hassan became greatly demoralized. In January 1989, a Nicaraguan journalist asked him to



'After Somoza's downfall in July 1979, Hassan represented the MPU on the five-person Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction.'

assess the political situation in Nicaragua. Hassan answered, "The country is obviously going through a deep economic and social crisis. But I see no perspective to help the country resolve this crisis. I have no solutions." (*La Prensa*, Jan. 12, 1989)

Nine months after this interview, however, Hassan was offering revolutionary solutions to the major problems facing the Nicaraguan people. What had occurred in the interim to change Hassan's political perspective? Why this political evolution?

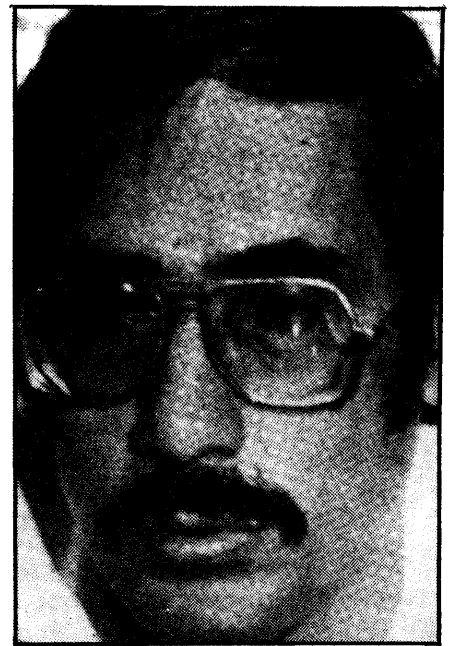
The formation of the MUR

On May 17, 1989, a new political party was legally registered in Nicaragua: the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR). The party was formed by former members of various revolutionary parties in Nicaragua, including the Revolutionary Marxist League (LMR), the FSLN, the Movement for Popu-

lar Action-Marxist Leninist (MAP-ML), the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), and the Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCdN). A current within the MUR's leadership and membership supports the historic program of the Trotskyist movement.

The formation of the MUR responded to the need to create a new revolutionary party in Nicaragua that could overcome the sectarianism of the non-Sandinista Nicaraguan left while offering a clear socialist alternative to the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

At its First National Conference in July 1989, the MUR approved a resolution on the 1990 national elections. The resolution authorized the newly elected National Executive Committee of the MUR to contact the FSLN and other left parties that were not members of the UNO coalition with the proposal to run a joint slate of worker and peasant candidates to defeat the UNO coalition, the internal



Moisés Hassan

front of the contras. The MUR leaders enclosed their political platform with this proposal to initiate a discussion on the type of program they felt was needed to defend and deepen the revolution.

"We did not want to present our platform as an ultimatum to the other revolutionary parties," MUR leader Rodrigo Ibarra told *Socialist Action*. "We were simply spelling out the main planks we thought should be put forward in the presidential, legislative, and municipal elections. We were open to discussion and negotiations to reach a principled agreement."

On July 25, the leadership of the MUR drafted a letter to the FSLN with their joint electoral proposal. [See reprint in this supplement.] They also contacted the PRT, the MAP-ML, and various independent personalities such as Moisés Hassan. Both Stalinist parties, the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN) and the Nicaraguan Communist Party (PCdN), were excluded from this proposal, as they were members of the 14-party reactionary UNO coalition.

The MUR's fusion with Hassan

One month passed and the MUR had received either no response or a negative response from the three political parties it had approached.

The PRT rejected the MUR's proposal, deciding instead to run PRT member Bonifacio Miranda for president. The MAP-ML and the FSLN did not respond to the specific electoral proposal, although the FSLN did agree to meet with the PRT, MAP-ML, and MUR to discuss their participation in the February 1990 elections. [See the Joint Statement of the FSLN and the three parties of the left.]

Moisés Hassan, on the other hand, not only agreed with the general line of the MUR's program and its united-front method in pursuing worker and peasant candidates; after prolonged discussion with the leadership of the MUR, he also agreed to become the presidential candidate of the MUR.

"Hassan's decision to run for president represents a big step forward not only for the MUR but for the Nicaraguan workers and peasants," Rodrigo Ibarra told *Socialist Action*. "Having someone of Hassan's political stature head up our ticket will permit the party to become a major force in Nicaraguan politics. It will also mean that the revolutionary-socialist alternative will have a mass appeal and mass audience in Nicaragua."

Dividing the revolutionary vote?

Not long after he announced his presidential bid, Hassan came under heavy attack from the pro-Sandinista press. He was accused of "dividing the revolutionary vote" and "playing

(continued on page 12)

Program of the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR)

The following excerpts of the political platform of the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR) are reprinted from the June 1989 issue of *Unidad Revolucionaria*, the monthly newspaper of the MUR. The translation is by Socialist Action.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR) was formed by ex-members of various left parties in Nicaragua to offer a revolutionary alternative to the working class and all progressive sectors of society. It raises the banner of the independence of the working class and its organizations in the struggle for their economic, social, and political demands.

The MUR seeks to forge the unity of all workers and revolutionists who support the revolution, be they organized into a political party or not, with the goal of defending the interests of the workers and their allies and establishing a socialist society.

The MUR advocates the deepening of the democratic conquests of the revolution. The working class and its allies should control the factories and farms of Nicaragua. They should make all the fundamental decisions on economic, social, and political matters facing the nation through their own institutions.

The MUR is anti-imperialist. It condemns the penetration of imperialist capital throughout the world. This represents only a new form of colonialism and domination of all the oppressed peoples. It is imperialism which is responsible for the misery, exploitation, racism, and all other blights that scourge the working class and all the oppressed. The MUR solidarizes with all the people of the world who are struggling to free themselves from the imperialist yoke.

The MUR advocates the defense and deepening of the gains made by the workers and peasants beginning with the triumph of July 19, 1979 [the day Somoza fell]. It defends and supports the trade unions and cooperatives, the land distribution, the national-



William Frank Gentile

'The MUR believes that soldiers must have the right to be members of the revolutionary party of their choice ... and democratically elect their own officers.'

ization of sectors of the economy, etc. But at the same time the MUR calls for the deepening of the revolution in all areas of society. Hence, the MUR actively supports all struggles waged by workers and peasants in defense of their interests.

The MUR is a political party that fights to establish a socialist society—that is, a society where all forms of exploitation will be

eradicated, where the workers are masters of the means of production, where all forms of sex and race discrimination are done away with, where the well-being of the majority is the priority of society, and not the profits of the few.

Socialism opens the road to the full cooperation among all the peoples of the world. Hence, the MUR solidarizes with the world-

wide struggles waged against imperialist and capitalist exploitation.

POLITICAL PROGRAM OF THE MUR

1. Defense of the conquests of the revolution against the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and imperialism:

With the triumph of the revolution, Nicaraguans have made great gains; among them the nationalization of an important portion of the economy. The MUR stands squarely for defending and maintaining the nationalized means of production. The MUR not only defends these conquests, but also calls for deepening them. The MUR calls for workers' control over the means of production.

2. Defense of the unions, agricultural cooperatives, and mass organizations:

The MUR considers that the existence of these organizations (about 1000 unions, 3000 agricultural cooperatives, etc.) represents a revolutionary conquest for the Nicaraguan people. The bourgeoisie and imperialism focus their hatred against the worker, peasant, and other mass organizations. They see them precisely as the backbone and pillars of the revolution.

These organizations, however, are hindered in their revolutionary efforts by the bureaucratic control that the Sandinista leadership exerts over them.

3. We oppose all agreements signed in Esquipulas or Sapoá that undermine national sovereignty and the gains of the revolution:

The accords of Esquipulas II and Sapoá [the Arias Peace Plan] are aimed at providing unfettered freedom to the counterrevolutionaries and the pro-imperialists in Nicaragua. The MUR is opposed to all those accords that undermine national sovereignty and the popular gains of the revolution.

We therefore oppose the amnesty accepted by the FSLN of notable Somocista leaders guilty of crimes against the people. The same accords set out to guarantee property and political rights to those obtaining amnesty. The MUR rejects the return of confiscated properties to these Somocista, counterrevolutionary leaders, such as the FSLN has been carrying out. Not one inch of land for them! The



Mel Rosenthal/Impact Visuals

Moisés Hassan speaks:

'...the revolution will only be strengthened by our campaign'

The following phone interview with Moisés Hassan was conducted by Socialist Action editor Alan Benjamin on Sept. 17, 1989.

Socialist Action: Why did you decide to become the presidential candidate of the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR) in the February 1990 elections?

Moisés Hassan: Our goal is to provide a political alternative for the great majority of the people of Nicaragua who are dissatisfied with the choices they are being offered in these elections. The Nicaraguan majority has become frustrated and disenchanted with the Sandinista government. For the most part, they will not vote for the Sandinistas.

At the same time, however, they have little sympathy for the right-wing alternative offered by Violeta Chamorro and the UNO (National Opposition Union). The UNO coalition only wants to turn the clock back to

the days of Somoza and to destroy all the gains that have been fought for and won over the past 10 years. The Nicaraguan people have suffered great hardships to defend the considerable gains of the revolution. They will not easily fall prey to the demagoguery of these reactionary forces.

S.A.: What are your specific programmatic differences with the FSLN?

Hassan: There are many basic differences. Some are of an ideological character; others involve the practice of the Sandinistas. On the first level, we do not believe in the strict control by the ruling party over all the activities carried out in society. We are opposed to the attempts by the FSLN to stifle freedom of association, primarily the freedom to form independent trade unions. It has reached the point where the government has resorted to coercion and even violence to force unions to affiliate to the CST [Sandinista Workers Federation] or to prevent their disaffiliation from the CST.

This is true as well of the neighborhood organizations. The CDSs [Sandinista Defense Committees] are controlled by the FSLN and are used for strictly partisan purposes.

Another difference with the FSLN has to do with the application of the agrarian reform program. We believe that if the peasants want individual titles to the land, they should receive them. But this has not been FSLN policy. The FSLN has created large, mostly inefficient state farms that often need subsi-

dies. It has also promoted cooperatives, where all the members are owners of the land but nobody really owns the land. This has affected the productivity of these cooperatives.

S.A.: But hasn't the FSLN made a shift in recent years toward granting more land titles to the peasants?

Hassan: There has been somewhat of a shift, but it is still limited. The distribution of the land is insufficient; it is also quite selective. During the first years of the revolution, the Sandinistas' main concern was to establish large state farms in the lands expropriated from Somoza. It was only later, mainly as a result of the contra war, that the government decided to distribute land to the peasants in the border zones—though they still promoted the cooperatives. Through this policy, they hoped to sap any potential support for the contras among the peasants in the border regions.

We in the MUR are also very critical of the day-to-day administration of government by the Sandinistas. While the Sandinistas reject all charges of corruption, in practice their fight against corruption has been extremely weak—I would say almost symbolic. The reason for this, in my opinion, is the prevalence of political opportunism, of political favoritism, in the top levels of government.

S.A.: Are there any internal mechanisms within the FSLN and the governmental apparatus to control this abuse of power and to make the leadership accountable to the rank

and file?

Hassan: The functioning of the party and of the state is totally top-down. The highest body of the FSLN is its nine-man National Directorate. There is no other body that can counter or challenge the power of the National Directorate. It is accountable to no one.

The National Directorate selects all the members of the Sandinista Assembly, the party body that is supposed to be the highest decision-making body in the FSLN. The Assembly is not elected by the party ranks. The regional leadership bodies of the FSLN are also designated from above by the Directorate. Even the candidates to all government posts are designated by the Directorate—although in some cases, usually those involving lower posts, the Directorate will take into account some of the suggestions of the middle-level cadre of the party.

This same top-down functioning also characterizes the ATC [Rural Workers Association], the CST [Sandinista Workers Federation], and the other mass organizations linked to the FSLN. All the leaders are imposed from above, even though in some cases, particularly in the CDSs [Sandinista Defense Committees], a farce is promoted to try to convince people that the National Executive Committee is elected by the rank and file. But these elections are just a formality. The leadership of the Sandinista Front will always choose the final candidates.

peasants must preserve and extend their right to the land and the workers to control the factories.

4. For the arming of all working people:

The MUR struggles for the generalized arming of the people. It therefore declares its support for the reorganization of the militias in such a way that they take on a worker, peasant, and neighborhood character. Likewise, it supports the arming of peasant cooperatives.

On the other hand, the MUR supports the application of the Patriotic Military Service and denounces all counterrevolutionaries and pro-imperialists who speak out against it. The goal of these critics is to weaken the military defense of the revolution.

The MUR states that it was the heroic mobilization of thousands of youth that permitted the success of the defense of the revolution.

Nonetheless, the MUR cannot avoid pointing out that the bureaucratic methods that the Sandinista government has used in the application of the Patriotic Military Service—including privileges granted to the children of high-ranking state officials—has provoked indignation and anger among the population.

5. Defense of the standard of living of the workers:

For an increase in wages to keep up with the increase in the cost of living. An escalator clause for all workers and their allies should be put into effect to prevent the growing demoralization among the working class and to prevent the workers, the backbone of the revolution, from suffering the burden of the inflationary plague.

6. The government should guarantee basic consumer goods to all working people:

The Sandinista government has dismantled the system of food cooperatives and outlets of basic consumer goods. It has lifted all price supports for consumer goods. These policies should be reversed. The nation's wealth should be distributed equitably. Worker and peasant control over the distribution of goods and services should be established.

7. For the respect of the collective bargaining agreements and the social gains of the workers:

The MUR opposes the interference of the Ministry of Labor (MITRAB) in the negotiations between the workers and the employers, private or public. Worker and peasant organizations should conduct their negotiations as they see fit, without being shunted aside and replaced by the state and/or management. The MUR supports the independence and autonomy of these mass working class and peasant organizations.

8. Against unemployment. The government should guarantee permanent employment to all workers:

The MUR opposes the policy of unemployment that the Sandinista government is applying on a national level, thereby worsening the misery of the working class families. Dignified and decent employment should be guaranteed for all who seek work. The MUR also opposes the Sandinista policy of *compactación* [compacting], which has already been responsible for the loss of tens of thousands of jobs in the public sector.

9. For the deepening of the agrarian reform, for access to land for middle and poor peasants, and for credit from the state to all these sectors:

With Esquipulas II, the process of agrarian reform has been frozen, and is in the process of being reversed. The Sandinista government has paralyzed the granting of lands to peasants, while thousands of poor peasant families still don't have access to the land.

The MUR fights to deepen the agrarian reform. The peasants should be given the land. They should be allowed to cultivate it in whatever way they democratically decide. State credits and other forms of support must be extended, moreover, to small producers and cattle ranchers.

10. No to the incentives in dollars and córdobas to the capitalists!

The capitalist agro-exporters, in contrast to wage earners and small producers in the city and the countryside, receive a preferential treatment of economic incentives on the part of the government in the form of dollars and córdobas. In 1987, this capitalist sector received 300 billion córdobas from the state through the mechanism of preferential and multiple exchange rates. This only contributed to the country's hyperinflation as this public money was not invested productively

by the agro-export capitalists.

National revenue should be redistributed toward the workers and their peasant allies. No more incentives to the capitalists!

11. Do not recognize the foreign debt contracted with the imperialist banks:

The slogan of "Cancellation of the imperialist debt" is just and reasonable. The workers and all the oppressed must not have to make sacrifices to pay back the large financial monopolies whose loans were not contracted by the people and did not benefit them. All money going toward interests and the repayment of the debt should be redirected to benefit the workers and their allies.

12. For the freedom and democratic rights of the workers:

The MUR calls for the complete independence of the unions and mass organizations from the bourgeoisie and the state. Such independence is indispensable for the workers to carry out effective struggles against the private bosses and the state administration.

The MUR also supports the right to strike, the traditional instrument of struggle of the workers' movement. The MUR calls for the abolition of the old labor code, which was written during the Somoza regime and which continues to be applied by the capitalists and the state administration.

A new labor code should be enacted following discussions and approval by an assembly or national congress of the various unions and mass organizations, thereby ensuring that the interests of the workers will prevail.

13. For an autonomy program that responds to the just aspirations of the ethnic and indigenous communities:

The MUR supports and fights for a true autonomy program of the indigenous communities, who claim the right of access and use of indigenous land, the democratic right to elect their own leaders, and the recovery and respect of their values and cultural traditions.

14. For the economic, social, political and cultural rights of women:

Women are doubly exploited in the capitalist system by exploitation in the factories and farms, and by the oppression in the home.

They are victims of the traditional *machismo* from men and from society at large, which imposes on them the job of reproducing the salaried workforce.

The MUR supports the right of women not to be discriminated against in their workplaces. It supports their participation in all the activities of society. At the same time, the MUR supports a woman's right to have an abortion. It should be the woman who decides whether or not to have children.

15. For the democratic rights of soldiers:

The MUR believes that soldiers must have the right to be members of the revolutionary party of their choice, have access to the different periodicals of the workers' movement, and have the right to democratically elect their officers.

16. For the coordination of revolutionary organizations in Central America:

The people of Central America have a common history and nationality. Their division into small states was conducted to satisfy imperialist interests. The interests and revolutionary struggles of all Central American peoples have a regional character.

In view of these characteristics, the MUR calls for the unity and coordination of the revolutionary and anti-imperialist organizations in Central America in order to confront together the imperialist aggression in the region.

17. For a Popular and Democratic National Assembly of union delegates, agricultural cooperatives, artists, soldiers, and shanty-town dwellers to direct the destiny of the nation:

The MUR calls for the unity of the people through their own rank-and-file organizations in a Popular and Democratic National Assembly that relies on the participation of union delegates, cooperatives, soldiers, inhabitants of the barrios, as well as all social sectors and political parties that support the workers' movement and socialism, in order to establish assemblies on a national, regional, state, and municipal level, with the purpose of guiding and leading the destiny of the nation.

Letter of MUR to FSLN

Managua, Aug. 25, 1989

National Directorate
Sandinista National Liberation Front

Dear compañeros,

At the first national conference of the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR), we voted to contact all political forces in Nicaragua interested in the defense of the conquests of the revolution. The National Executive Committee of the MUR is therefore addressing you to propose the following:

1. Given your role as government leaders who are responsible for the gains attained during the 10 years of revolution in Nicaragua, we believe it is vital to set up a meeting with the purpose of discussing the tactics needed to preserve the conquests of the revolution.

2. The Movement for Revolutionary Unity believes that imperialism and its local allies, organized today in the National Opposition Union (UNO), are organizing themselves in the political arena to confront the government which you lead. Their purpose is to destroy the gains obtained during the past 10 years of revolution.

3. The program of the UNO is the program of U.S. imperialism. It is a program that seeks to destroy the revolutionary process in Nicaragua and all of Central America.

4. Since our formation as a legal party, we

(continued on page 12)

(continued on page 12)



Sandinista Defense Committee (CDS) office in Managua. Hassan argues that CDSs have become empty shells.

S.A.: In an issue of *Barricada Internacional* not too long ago, Commander Omar Cabezas, who had just been selected to head up the CDSs, acknowledged the vertical structures which he said obstructed the proper functioning of the CDSs. He pledged to reinvigorate the CDSs and make them fully open, independent, autonomous, and democratic.

Hassan: Well, if this is what Omar said it

was simply a recognition of what everyone in Nicaragua is aware of—that is, the CDSs are non-functional. But whatever his intentions, nothing has been done to change the functioning of the CDSs. They are empty shells. The people do not participate in these committees. They do not see them as their own.

The CDSs have become committees of

FSLN party activists in the neighborhoods, with little or no support among the population. If the CDSs are to once again become truly mass neighborhood organizations, it will be necessary for the FSLN to break with its sectarian and bureaucratic methods of functioning. Unfortunately, I don't see this

... candidate calls for preserving gains

(continued from page 9)

into the hands of the right-wing UNO coalition."

MUR leader Rodrigo Ibarra responded to the pro-Sandinista critics:

"There's no basis to the charges against the MUR and Hassan. We contacted the FSLN leadership in late July to propose a joint election campaign on the basis of a program to defend the revolution. We got no answer from the FSLN leadership. Instead what we saw was the FSLN commanders continuing to make concessions to the contras and their internal allies prior to the Tela [Honduras] summit of the five Central American presidents."

"The FSLN leadership is rapidly moving in a rightward direction. Its International Monetary Fund-style austerity measures and layoffs, its increased concessions to the agro-export capitalists, and its decision to reverse the agrarian reform program, to mention only some of its dead-end policies, only undermine support for the revolution."

[In June, the FSLN government, responding to the pressure of the right-wing opposition, issued a decree disarming the militias, thereby making it illegal for Nicaragua's workers and peasants—except for those in the war zones—to possess weapons.—A.B.]

"After a lengthy discussion in the MUR," Ibarra continued, "we decided we could not give critical support to the FSLN in these elections, as most of us had done—correctly, I believe—in the 1984 elections. We had to put forward a clear revolutionary alternative, hoping that the FSLN leadership—or at least a significant portion of the FSLN cadre—would support our platform."

"As it turned out, many prominent Sandin-

ista unionists and mass leaders have told us privately that they agree with our platform. Now that Moisés [Hassan] has decided to run for president, we are hoping that some of these people will endorse our ticket. At any rate, since the announcement of our presidential ticket, we have already recruited dozens of ex-Sandinista members. These are people who had left the Front—usually largely demoralized. Our campaign has re-energized them. It's an exciting process to observe."

In his interview with *Socialist Action*, Moisés Hassan also answers the critics of his election bid, stating that the large bulk of the votes for the MUR will come from the hundreds of thousands of voters he believes would simply abstain in the 1990 elections if presented with only the Ortega vs. Chamorro option. [See accompanying interview with Moisés Hassan.]

A ticket worthy of support

The Hassan-Samper ticket deserves the support of the workers and peasants of Nicaragua, as well as of all the international supporters of the Nicaraguan Revolution. (The MUR is also fielding 80 candidates for the legislative and municipal elections.)

More and more foreign supporters of the Nicaraguan Revolution are commenting on the growing disenchantment—and even hostility—among the Nicaraguan masses to the policies of the FSLN leadership.

One such example is an article marking the tenth anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution by longtime Nicaragua solidarity activist and journalist Marc Cooper. Cooper's article, "Soaring Prices, Plunging Hopes," appeared in the July 25, 1989, issue of *The Village Voice*.

requires the deepening of the revolution, continuing the process of destroying the forces of the bourgeoisie in the countryside and the cities and appealing to the national and international mobilization of all those willing to actively defend the revolution and its conquests.

6. We append to this letter, for your consideration and future discussion, a programmatic proposal [the MUR's political platform, excerpts of which are reprinted in this issue—A.B.] that could be the basis of a broad coalition of revolutionary forces. For our part, we intend to discuss this programmatic proposal with other revolutionary parties not involved in the National Opposition Union (UNO).

Awaiting your response,
Fraternally,
Francisco Samper Blanco,

For the Nat'l Executive Committee
of the Movement for Revolutionary
Unity

In his article, Cooper points out how the Sandinistas are employing "fairly traditional capitalist techniques" of cutbacks in state spending and massive layoffs to respond to the mounting economic crisis. He takes note of the gigantic government handouts (65 percent of the national budget in 1989) offered to the Nicaraguan capitalists as "production incentives." He then goes on to describe how this money is being squandered (most of it is illegally funneled to private accounts in Miami) given the unwillingness of the capitalists to invest productively so long as the FSLN government is not overthrown.

The response to these measures among the population, Cooper notes, ranges from "cool resignation to bitterness to a sense of betrayal." Cooper quotes many ordinary Nicaraguan citizens to make his point. For example, a professional state employee tells Cooper:

"At the beginning of the revolution, the FSLN said it had formed a tactical alliance with the private sector. Now it's gone and married it.... That's a mistake.... The Sandinistas don't yet understand that no matter what they do or say, the private sector doesn't want to work with them, it wants to get rid of them."

"The FSLN wants to have people pull together to improve the economy? Fine. But you don't do that by letting the private sector

piss all over you. You do it by kicking the rich in the ass. People risk no longer knowing what they are fighting for, or no longer caring about the revolution, but instead just struggling to eat. The enemy of the revolution now is apathy."

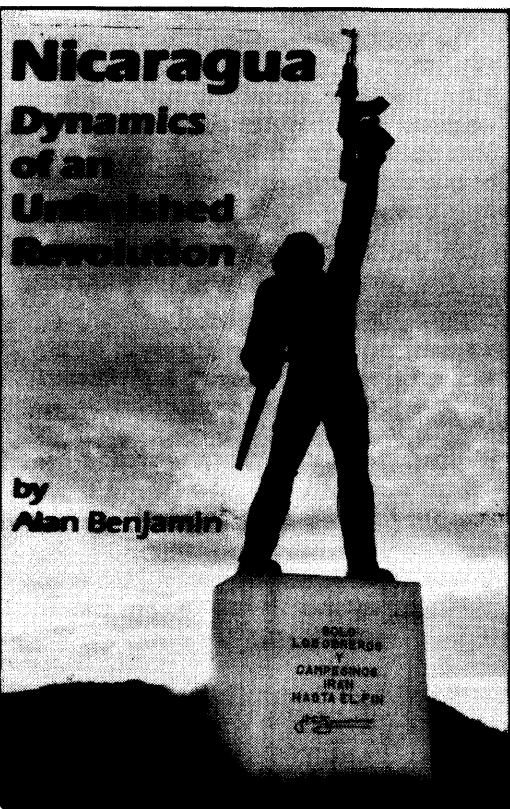
Cooper also quotes an ex-Sandinista member, Danilo, who was publicly expelled from the FSLN for criticizing its lack of internal party democracy. Danilo states: "It hurts me to say it, but I no longer think this is the revolution we fought for. I think the FSLN is headed toward something like Mexico.... That's what's sad for me."

In other similar stories, solidarity activists returning from Nicaragua have been compelled to report the simple truth about the current situation in Nicaragua; that is, the policies of the FSLN leadership are threatening the revolution.

But for the Danilos and the hundreds of thousands of revolutionary-minded workers, peasants, and youth there is now an alternative in the upcoming elections which expresses their desire to preserve and improve the revolution they have fought so ardently to defend over the past decade.

Anyone interested in receiving the newspaper of the MUR or finding out more about the MUR's election campaign can contact them at: Apartado MJ 15, Managua 6, Nicaragua. ■

Essential reading!



A penetrating analysis of 10 years of the Nicaraguan Revolution.

Written by Socialist Action editor Alan Benjamin (in collaboration with leaders of the MUR), with an introduction by Rod Holt and Jeff Mackler. (176 pp.)

To order, send \$8.95 (includes postage) to 3435 Army St. # 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

... MUR letter

(continued from page 11)

have called for the unity of all revolutionary forces with the purpose of forming a united front against the local forces of imperialism and for the defense of the conquests of the revolution. We hereby appeal to you to forge the unity of all revolutionists to confront the counterrevolutionary forces.

5. For our part, we believe that the most effective way to defend the conquests of the revolution requires putting an end to the concessions being made to the local and regional representatives of imperialism. The only result of the policy of *concertación* [FSLN's policy of greater concessions to the Nicaraguan capitalists] and *compactación* [mass layoffs of government workers] is to undermine support for the revolution among the workers and their allies in the cities and the countryside.

For us, the defense of the revolution

FSLN agreement with left parties

The president of the Republic of Nicaragua, Commander of the Revolution Daniel Ortega Saavedra, and the representatives of the legally constituted political parties—the Movement for Popular Action-Marxist Leninist (MAP-ML), the Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR), and the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT)—meeting on Aug. 3-4 at the Olaf Palme Convention Center in the city of Managua with the goal of discussing the exercise of the democratic rights and guarantees of the people, as well as the conditions for the equal participation of all political parties in the electoral process, agree to:

1. Demand of the government of Honduras that it unconditionally dismantle and demobilize the counterrevolutionary forces that attack Nicaragua from their camps within Honduran territory.
2. Demand of the U.S. government that it respect the sovereignty of Nicaragua and prohibit all activity by the CIA in the upcoming electoral process.

3. Taking into account the diverse concerns of the political parties signing this agreement, the President of Nicaragua pledges to continue the dialogue with these parties with the goal of obtaining better conditions for the democratic exercise of the working class and equal opportunity of these parties in the electoral process.

Managua, August 4, 1989

/signed

Daniel Ortega Saavedra,
President of the Republic of Nicaragua

Legal Representatives of the Political Parties:

Bayardo Arce Castaño, Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN)

Francisco Samper Blanco, Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR)

Isidro Tellez, Movement for Popular Action-Marxist Leninist (MAP-ML)

Bonifacio Miranda, Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT)

... Moisés Hassan

(continued from page 11)

happening, Omar's good intentions notwithstanding.

S.A.: What is your assessment of the National Opposition Union (UNO)? Is there a possibility they could win the elections?

Hassan: The UNO represents the interests of the U.S. government. One of the major achievements of the Nicaraguan Revolution was the recovery of our national sovereignty—even though this sovereignty has been tampered with in the past few years by the Central American presidents, who have imposed decisions detrimental to Nicaragua.

We are sure that if the UNO were to come to power our sovereignty would be totally thrown out the window; the U.S. Embassy would once again become the place where all the major decisions concerning Nicaragua are made.

The UNO's program talks about reversing the confiscations of land and property seized during the revolution—even lands taken from Somoza and his cronies. This would mean leaving the door open to bringing back the Somozistas. The UNO wants to denationalize foreign trade. This would only favor a greater flight of capital from the country. And the list of reactionary measures goes on.

I should point out, however, that as bad as the UNO's program is on paper, it is not their full program. They have had to hide and downplay their most reactionary positions to gain a hearing from the Nicaraguan people. They are masters of demagoguery.

As to whether they have a chance of winning, all I can do is give you my personal opinion. Personally, I don't think they will win. I don't think the UNO will be able to

capitalize on the widespread discontent among the population. They are too closely identified with the U.S. State Department. And if anyone had any doubts about whose interests the UNO represents, those doubts should have been dispelled by President George Bush's recent proposal to have the National Endowment for Democracy finance the UNO's election campaign.

S.A.: Will the FSLN criticize you for "playing into the hands of the UNO" by taking votes away from the FSLN?

Hassan: This will undoubtedly be one of the FSLN leadership's arguments in their attacks on our campaign. It is quite likely we will take some votes away from the FSLN. But the great bulk of our votes will come from that undecided majority of the population, most of whom would simply abstain from voting if presented with only the Sandinista or UNO candidates.

If anything, we will take many more votes away from the UNO. You have to realize that there is a layer of the population that is war-weary and fed up with Sandinista rule. These people may just vote for anyone, even the UNO, just to get rid of the Sandinistas. We can win some of these people back to the cause of the revolution.

S.A.: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Hassan: Through this election campaign we are trying to offer an alternative that will preserve the gains of the revolution. We think the revolution will only be strengthened by our campaign. Even though our organization [the MUR] is very young, we are very optimistic.

I'd also like to conclude by sending revolutionary greetings to the readers of *Socialist Action*. ■

By JEFF MACKLER

OAKLAND, Calif.—Speaking to a Sept. 20 rally on the steps of Safeway Corp.'s world headquarters, United Farm Workers of America (UFW) President Cesar Chavez gave the multi-billion-dollar agribusiness conglomerate two days to remove all pesticide-ridden grapes from their stores or face a nationwide boycott.

Three hundred Bay Area trade unionists, religious leaders, and farmworker supporters joined Chavez and some 50 UFW members to present their demands. Chavez explained that 300,000 farmworkers are poisoned each year by the cancer-causing pesticides sprayed on the grape crop. Children of farmworkers have serious birth defects due to the toxic chemicals.

California growers have been engaged in a decades-long war to keep the UFW from representing the farmworkers. Agribusiness in California, "the world's seventh richest nation," is dominated by giant conglomerates such as Safeway. In addition to its thousands of supermarkets, Safeway owns and/or controls key sectors of the food production industry—from the trucking lines and slaughter houses to the land itself.

Organizing efforts by the UFW are regularly met with the opposition of local police and goon squads hired by the growers—as well as their pro-capitalist allies in the state legislature and courts.

The UFW membership, overwhelmingly composed of Latino and Mexican immigrants, carries with it the proud traditions of never-ending struggle for elementary trade-union and human rights.

The Safeway boycott to protest the deadly pesticides (as well as low wages and harassment by the growers) is, nevertheless, a continuing indication of the union's weakened position in relation to the growers. This, in turn, is a product of the indifference of California's trade-union bureaucracy, which stands by idly as the UFW faces seemingly all-powerful obstacles.

In order to trade blows on an equal footing

Farmworkers call boycott of Safeway to protest cancer-causing pesticides



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

and register gains for California's most exploited workers, the UFW must eventually take on the growers at the site of production itself. The UFW decision to resort to a boycott is another reminder that the effectiveness of the union picket line in the fields has been reduced to little more than token value.

The full and active support of an aroused labor movement is vital to a resurgence of the

UFW. The unions centrally involved in the industry, representing the Teamster truck-drivers and warehouse workers and members of the United Food and Commercial Workers—not to mention the trade-union movement as a whole—must forge the same kind of alliance to advance their members' class interests as the corporate giants have done to defend their own interests.

In the face of a united labor movement, the growers will be reminded again that labor's picket lines are not to be taken lightly.

In the meantime, the farmworkers—despite the limitations imposed on them by forces outside their immediate control—will continue to inspire all those whose hearts reach out when the most oppressed stand up for their rights.

... Drugs

(continued from page 1)

military presence in Latin America. Bush recently signed a secret national security directive permitting U.S. advisors in the "drug war" to move outside their base camps in Latin America to better "secure" the areas.

The United States is sending 100 soldiers and \$100 million in military aid to Colombia. The Bush administration wants to aid Colombia (and Bolivia, Peru, and other countries) in waging war, not against the drug cartels, but against their own restive populations. It's no accident that the "war on drugs" campaign coincides with the imposition of IMF austerity drives against the working classes of these countries.

Government aid to drug smuggling

Bush's phony war is also designed to provide a smokescreen to hide the U.S. government's own complicity in the international drug trade. The U.S. government has been deeply involved—directly and indirectly—in drug-smuggling rings and with drug dealers ever since the years of the "liberal" Kennedy administration.

The on-going lawsuit of the Christic Institute has been particularly valuable in exposing and documenting the details of this involvement. The Christic Institute notes that as long ago as 1966, in Laos, the CIA provided air support and military assistance to the kingpin of the massive illegal opium trade, Van Pao. This was done on the basis that Van Pao was an anti-communist.

In 1974, the CIA organized the infamous operation Phoenix, a program designed to cripple the infrastructure of Vietnam. This included the assassination of some 60,000 village mayors, treasurers, school teachers, and other administrators. The program again was financed by using Van Pao opium money. The opium accounts were administered by a U.S. Navy official in Saigon out of the U.S. Office of Naval Operations.

Throughout the Vietnam War years, the CIA-controlled airline, Air America, was routinely used to transport drugs in and out of Southeast Asia. Beginning in 1979, the same procedure was employed once again in Costa Rica and Honduras. U.S. government officials used drug shipments to finance the contras in the war against Nicaragua.

According to the Christic Institute, over one-sixth of the pages of Oliver North's



Bill Gentile

U.S. Army helicopters in Bogotá, Colombia.

notebooks contain references to drugs. One entry indicates, for example, that a plane used to carry weapons for the contras out of New Orleans "is probably being used for drug runs into U.S."

A key component of U.S. contra aid was the construction of a secret contra base and airstrip on a cattle ranch on Costa Rica's Nicaraguan border. Heading this program was John Hull, a CIA operative and businessman, whose private ranch became the staging area for contra operations.

Hull also operated a program to ship large quantities of cocaine from Colombia to his ranch, using the airstrip built with U.S. funds. The same planes used to deliver arms for the contras were then used to fly the drugs out. It's interesting to note that Hull's cocaine shipments came from the very same Medellín drug cartel that is one of the main focuses of the present phony "war on drugs."

As a legacy of previous "wars on drugs," there's a law on the books in this country that no foreign government can receive U.S. military or economic aid if it is complicit with illegal drug activities. Under this law, the president is responsible for certifying that these governments are not so involved.

During its first months in office, the Bush administration, through the State Department, submitted its report to Congress on international drug trafficking as required by this law.

The report whitewashed scores of governments notorious for their drug trade involvement. It once again recommended against imposing any sanctions on the major cocaine-producing nations for fear of "destabilizing" them.

It's not surprising that the report, according to one newspaper account, "was printed in a small quantity and will not be made available to the public." Both Bush and the Democrats are particularly concerned that the American public not become aware of the notorious drug activities of the Mujahadeen "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan, who weekly receive millions in U.S. military aid.

Who are the criminals?

Malcolm X had a way of cutting through all the hypocrisy and going right to the nub of a question. In a 1964 speech in Harlem, Malcolm said, "When a person is a drug addict, he's not the criminal; he's the victim of the criminal. The criminal is the man downtown who brings this drug into the country."

"Blacks can't bring drugs into the country," he continued, "You don't have any boats. You don't have any airplanes. You don't have diplomatic immunity. It's not you who are responsible for bringing the drugs. You are just a tool that is used by the man downtown."

Malcolm continued, "The man that controls

the drug traffic sits in city hall or he sits in the state house. Big shots who are respected, who function in high circles—those are the ones who control these things. And you and I will never strike at the root of it until we strike at the man downtown."

The drug trade, as Malcolm explained, is part of big business. Legal or illegal, the police are there to protect big business and not to wage war against it.

Emergency Program

Officials from the Bush administration concede that their goal of a "victory over drugs" cannot be achieved in this generation. A senior White House official told *The New York Times* last month that the government expects only to "make some gradual headway" in bringing the country's drug problem "under some degree of control."

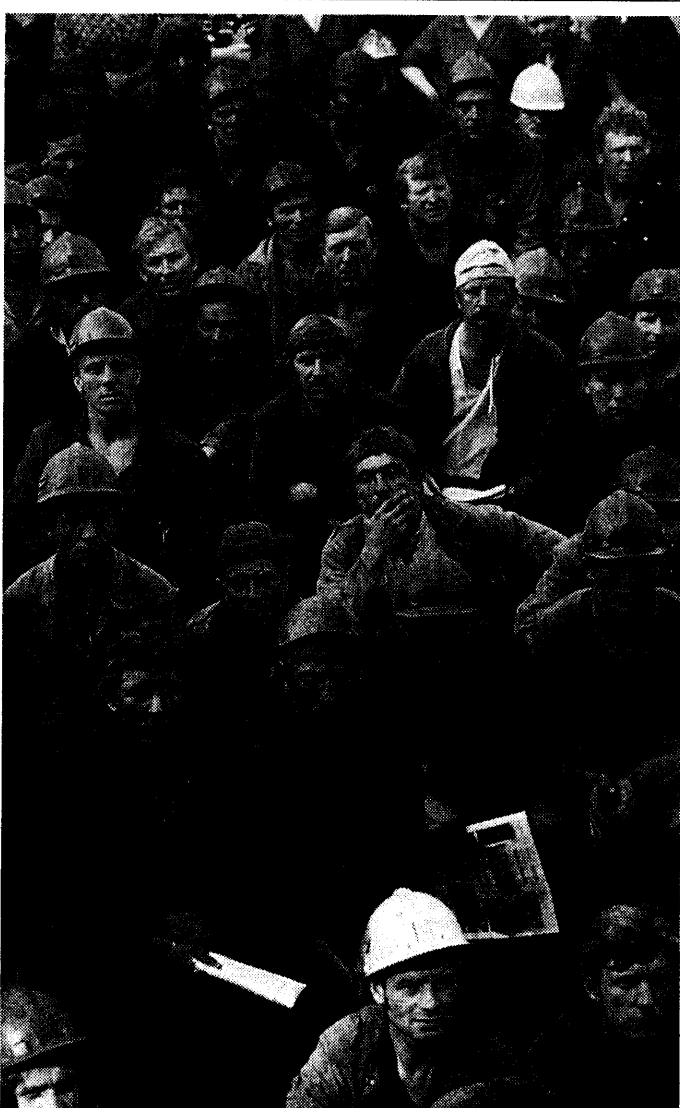
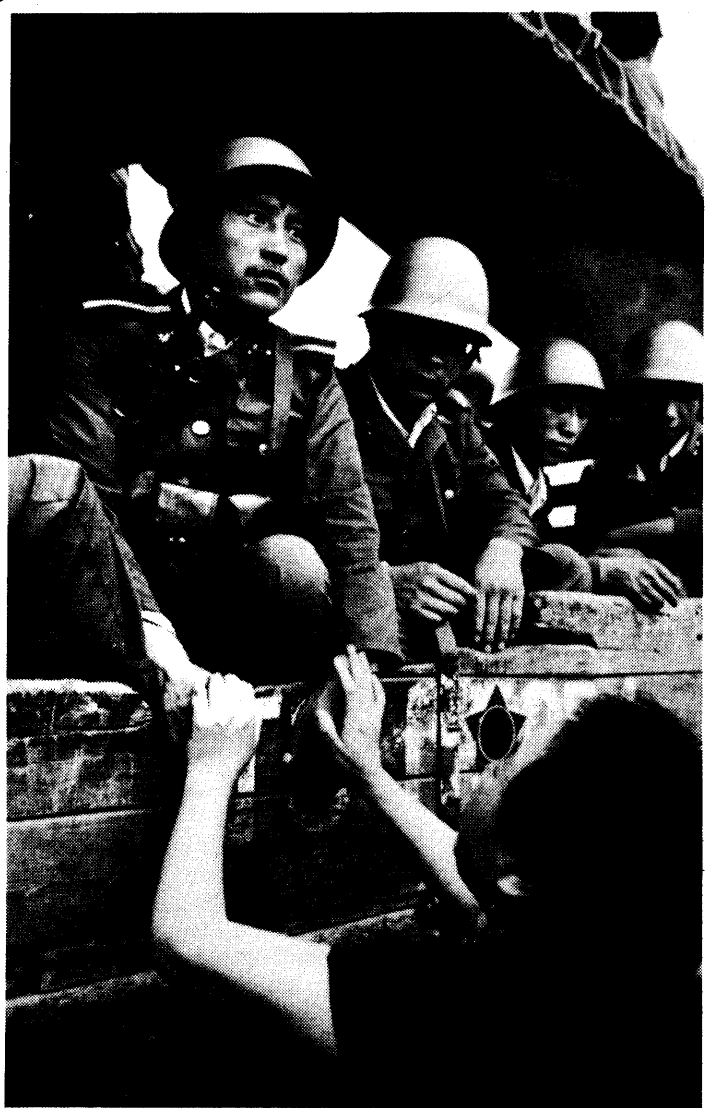
But—Bush to the contrary—an effective "war on drugs" can be mounted and won. It requires an emergency program to rebuild our inner cities. Rather than spend money on death machines like the Stealth Bomber, the government should provide new and rehabilitated housing, schools, clinics, parks and recreation facilities—and other services that people need.

Unemployment must end. Everyone can be put to work immediately—at union-scale wages—to provide for the needs of our society.

Drug addicts must be included in this emergency program. Government-funded drug treatment centers should provide free education up to the university level, job-training and placement services, and 24-hour childcare facilities. Free medical, nutritional, and dental care should be included as part of the treatment.

The money is there for such an emergency program. We must demand that the government tax the rich, end the military budget, and wage a real war to save the lives of millions of Americans. If the Republicans and the Democrats won't do it, then working people should elect candidates from our own party—a labor party. Ultimately, a workers' government is necessary to provide for our elementary human needs.—the editors

Prospects for political revolution in China, Eastern Europe, and USSR



In China, pro-democracy supporters beseech soldiers; in the Soviet Union, coal miners demand economic democracy.

By NAT WEINSTEIN

(The following are major excerpts from a talk given by Nat Weinstein, co-National Secretary of Socialist Action, at the Socialist Action Educational Conference in Kent State, Ohio, on Aug. 4, 1989. The full talk is reprinted in the recent Walnut Publishing Co. book on the Soviet Union titled, "Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead.")

To this day, the world imperialist system remains unable to stabilize itself at its colonial extremities. Starting in 1917, it lost Russia. Since then, Eastern Europe, North Korea, China, Cuba, and Vietnam have also freed themselves from imperialist domination.

These overturns, of course, are but the beginning; world capitalism continues to face serious crises in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. And as the overall crisis deepens, it must ultimately disrupt the equilibrium in the imperialist centers themselves.

The increasing incapability of imperialism's dependent states to maintain payments on usurious loans threatens to upset the U.S. and world banking systems. The U.S. national treasury, which is a major guarantor of last resort, teeters on the brink of bankruptcy—into which it will tumble if no way out can be found. And the hyper-inflation sweeping through one dependent country after the other is both a symptom of the developing crisis and a harbinger of things to come in the world's imperialist centers—including in the United States, the heartland of world capitalism.

There is an intimate connection between all three spheres of the coming world revolution—in the imperialist centers, in the workers' states, and in the semi-colonial countries. The delicate balance in the world economic, financial, and political structure is increasingly more difficult for capitalist rulers to maintain. Should the balance slip out of control in one of the key areas, it will tend to destabilize the entire structure—ultimately opening up a new revolutionary period on a global scale.

The objective historic tendency taking place before our eyes is not easily perceived. In the short time we have on earth, most of us do not become aware of the connection between slow changes taking place beneath the surface of society. When these accumulating quantitative changes break out into the open, they are most often separated by years; they

therefore tend to be perceived as isolated events.

Even when profound confrontations dramatically erupt, such as has occurred in China, there is a tendency to see them apart from their integral place in the stream of history.

But the underlying revolutionary process, which has led to the liberation of nearly a fourth of the earth's population since 1917, is a continuous and uninterrupted process.

Mileposts in political revolution

The first sign of the political revolution we are seeing unfold in the bureaucratized workers' states surfaced in 1953—soon after Stalin's death. There was a general strike in East Germany which shook the Stalinist bureaucracy there to its knees.

At the time, I heard U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles comment in the course of a television news interview on the enormous power of striking East German workers. He couldn't restrain himself from gloating over how the Communist regime was paralyzed by workers who had stopped buses and trains in their tracks, and shut factories down tight.

The East German strike was followed a year later by mass strikes in Vorkuta in the Soviet Union (which in July 1989 was one of the areas experiencing a rebellion of coal miners).

In 1956, Nikita Khrushchev, the head of world Stalinism at that time, responded to these earthshaking warnings of coming events with his unprecedented 20th Congress speech denouncing Stalin as the murderer of almost the entire leadership of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The Militant, the newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party, correctly headlined this event in two words: "Trotskyism Vindicated!" Khrushchev's admissions, however, were not judged to be evidence of self-reform, but of a deep crisis developing in the bureaucratized workers' states.

Rebellion in Hungary

Life was quick to confirm this analysis. Later that year, Hungarian workers rose up in rebellion, took control of their factories and streets, and formed workers' councils—genuine soviets—as their democratic instrument of proletarian political power. The Stalinist regime there was sent reeling.

The Hungarian army could not be relied upon to put down the uprising, and the

paralyzed bureaucracy didn't dare to send them from their barracks against the people. Meanwhile, the hated police were driven from the streets by vengeful masses of revolutionary workers.

The Hungarian workers' uprising could only be put down by Soviet tanks, and Khrushchev, without hesitation, ordered them to do so.

In the next 23 years, we saw repeated uprisings in Czechoslovakia and Poland—and now in China and the Soviet Union itself. Up to now only the Soviet army could suppress and intimidate the elemental workers' movement against bureaucratic oppression in Eastern Europe. But the counterrevolutionary repressive role of the Soviet armed force was possible only to the extent that Soviet troops remained unaffected by the processes of revolutionary change.

That period is now near its end. We are now witnessing a mass mobilization in the Soviet Union itself. And while still in its earliest stages, it is already approaching, and in some respects surpassing, the upsurges in Poland and China.

It is already clear to Gorbachev that Soviet workers-in-uniform cannot be relied upon to continue to put down strikes and revolutionary mobilizations anywhere. Each use of force—such as when troops, tanks, and a deadly version of "tear gas" were used to crush a peaceful nationalist demonstration in Tbilisi, Georgia, in April 1989, leaving men, women, and children wounded and dead—brings closer the time when Soviet troops will rebel and go over to the people.

The 1980s—Poland and China

In one sense, the Polish workers went further than any of the others in these bureaucratized workers' states so far. In 1980-81, they had organized a massive occupation of the nation's workplaces, which enabled them to hold the Stalinist regime at bay for a prolonged period.

Still they were unable to resolve the question of power, or to even think in terms of taking physical control over the state. This was because of the presence of Soviet and other Stalinist-controlled armed forces on their borders. They correctly judged, at the time, that these foreign troops were relatively impervious to appeals for solidarity.

Chinese students and workers went further than Poles in at least that respect. They mobilized in the hundreds of thousands to

employ the tactic of revolutionary fraternization with the People's Liberation Army. They instinctively knew that their army could be neutralized and won over, and that there was no foreign army close enough to intervene—much less, capable of putting down the mass mobilizations without evoking greater outrage and opposition from the awakening millions.

But workers' efforts in China to organize themselves into class institutions had only just begun. They were only at the earliest stage of organizing unions and other class institutions. They did not get much beyond spontaneous outpourings from working-class neighborhoods in support of student demonstrators. They had neither reached the point of organizing themselves in their workplaces nor had they begun to advance their own class demands.

Nevertheless, these outpourings of as many as 1 million people, the bulk of whom were workers, into Tiananmen Square and at strategic points leading into the Square, had amazing success in dissuading military convoys from attacking student demonstrators for weeks.

Soviet workers' political demands

The revolutionary logic of proletarian struggle continues to develop throughout the "socialist" world. Now, Soviet workers are carrying consciousness to a higher level. In beginning to organize through their workplaces, they very naturally discuss and vote on their demands, and elect their committees to lead their struggle for workers' power—following the example of their Polish worker comrades.

Soviet workers are especially positioned to most rapidly reach the highest levels of consciousness and self-organization. The natural course of their struggle cannot fail to evoke the memory of October 1917, when their predecessors carried the logic of proletarian revolution to its final conclusion.

Almost at the very outset, coal miners began the Soviet workers' mass mobilizations with very advanced political demands. Miners made emphatically clear their aspiration for control over their workplaces and the right to determine who gets the fruits of their labor. Their demands unambiguously point toward the goal of democratic workers' management of the Soviet economy.

Today, mass consciousness is further reflected by Soviet coal miners demanding the right to decide where to put the profits from the mines. The message they sent to the Soviet parliament set up by Gorbachev is abundantly clear. Their demand to immediately change the Soviet constitution to guarantee basic civil rights and liberties has little to do with abstract or bourgeois democracy.

Above all, the miners want their right to organize fighting class institutions to be guaranteed by law. Tomorrow, they will not fail to insist that their strike committees, factory committees, and elected workers' councils make all economic and political decisions, and be responsible for carrying them out.

Nor will they fail to follow this logic to its end—to drive the bureaucracy out of their positions of power. This is what is meant by "political revolution."

Gorbachev and the bureaucracy

The *Nightline* television program on July 20, 1989, focused on the Soviet coal miners' strike going on at the time. The commentators had a different analysis than ours. They suggested that the miners' revolt was the intended result of Gorbachev's new political program of *glasnost* and *perestroika* (democratization and restructuring of the economy by introducing capitalist market forces as an incentive for increasing production).

They suggested that the revolt of miners is what Gorbachev was after all along; that this is what Gorbachev needed to "break the resistance" of the "conservative wing" of the bureaucracy to his economic reform program.

Anyone who really believes that Gorbachev aimed for or hoped for this working-class mobilization—or that Gorbachev or any other representative of the Soviet bureaucracy has the slightest intention to reform themselves

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out of existence, or that workers want or will accept the reintroduction of unemployment or any other of the capitalist evils their grandparents and great-grandparents abolished in 1917—must also believe that the moon is made of green cheese.

Gorbachev's main preoccupation is to break the resistance of the workers to his economic reforms, which are based on austerity for the workers and the most offensive forms of capitalist incentives (such as the planned reintroduction of capitalist-style hiring and firing).

Gorbachev was convinced that this worker rebellion was coming—and soon. He feared that the threatened upsurge, which we are now witnessing, could not be put down by naked force, as in the past.

Gorbachev knew, on the contrary, that terror could set into motion the speedy deterioration of morale in the Red Army itself—as we see it having begun to do in China. And, no less importantly, it would make any attempt to find a way out of the Soviet economic crisis—which requires the toleration, if not the active support of the workers—impossible.

Parliament or workers' democracy?

Gorbachev's motives for *glasnost* have nothing to do with a revolutionary reform of the Stalinist political system. His aim was to get out in front; only to appear to be leading a meaningful reform of the bureaucratic system. His policy of *glasnost* is entirely designed to put the bureaucracy in position to head off revolt before it begins. His aim is to contain the discontent within the framework of controllable forms of parliamentary democracy and bourgeois economic reforms.

Just as in capitalist America, "free elections" regularly replace one group of legislators with another; but the executive agencies of the state—the police, the army, and the ubiquitous bureaucracy which fills in all the pores of the capitalist state—remain beyond the control of the "democratically elected" legislators.

So too is this the case in the Soviet Union. The parliamentary system is inherently structured to maintain a monopoly for those in control of the executive agencies of state power, which in workers' states is proletarian only to the extent it defends workers' forms of property ownership.

Gorbachev's "democracy" is purposefully constructed to separate the legislative from the executive powers of government. This is designed to permit the state to remain ruled by a caste of unremovable bureaucrats—in the military, as well as in the civil structure. And his parliamentary-style democracy is being implemented in the context of his policy of weakening the anti-capitalist economic foundation of the workers' state.

In the United States, this guarantee of the dictatorship of the capitalist class is touted as "the democratic system of checks and balances." In the Soviet Union it is presented, with even less credibility, as a "revitalization of the soviets."

But the parliamentary system remains in bourgeois democracies, nonetheless, a bulwark of the continued social and economic dictatorship by the capitalist class. And in the Soviet Union, it is being introduced—albeit, still a caricature of the bourgeois version—to bolster a continued political dictatorship by the bureaucratic caste.

Taking a page from Stalin

Gorbachev's democracy is entirely in the spirit of Stalin's "democratic" constitution of 1936. Leon Trotsky explained, at the time, the spuriousness of Stalin's claim. In his book, "The Revolution Betrayed," he pointed out:

"In the political sphere, the distinction of the new constitution from the old is its return from the Soviet system of election according to class and industrial groups, to the system of bourgeois democracy based upon the so-called 'universal, equal, and direct' vote of an atomized population. This is a matter, to put it briefly, of juridically liquidating the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Stalin, of course, followed up his "democratization" of the Soviet constitution with his launching of the infamous Moscow Trials, which purged in blood virtually the entire leadership of the October Revolution.

History has so far permitted Gorbachev to go further than Stalin down the path of "democratic reform." He has succeeded, through *glasnost*, in his immediate purpose—to give false hope to the workers that real improvements in their living standards are on their way, and to provide the bureaucracy with

an extended base of support among the Soviet middle class. This, he hopes, will give him time and the opportunity to patch up the faltering Soviet economy.

The middle class is most entranced by bourgeois-style democratic elections; and from their ranks comes the largest majority of professional officeholders—an indispensable byproduct of the parliamentary system and bulwark of the status quo. And similarly, the middle class is among the first to enter into the ranks of the new bourgeoisie being created by *perestroika*. The middle class also provides the bureaucrats with a more reliable base of support in the population.

The bureaucracy is counting on inspiring these new allies to help pacify the workers and harmlessly channel the mass discontent that will grow along with inflation and unemployment when Gorbachev unleashes market forces.

Gorbachev has also placed himself in position to co-opt a wing of the independent workers' institutions that is gestating—if he is unable to block them—just as Jaruzelski is doing in Poland. But he will prove unable to make it stick if he cannot successfully carry through his economic program to the point of significantly increasing the supplies of



'Gorbachev's main preoccupation is to break the resistance of the workers to his economic reforms, which are based on austerity for the workers and the most offensive forms of capitalist incentives.'

desperately needed consumer goods.

Therein lies the bureaucracy's desperate gamble: If market reforms are unable to improve mass living standards in the near future, workers will increasingly mobilize to impose their own solutions, and their own methods.

Divisions in the bureaucracy

But no one should misunderstand this. In rejecting the notion that Gorbachev seeks to diminish or abolish the bureaucratic dictatorship which he heads, we do not give one iota of credibility to the more Neanderthal sectors of the bureaucracy. The latter's concern is not over Gorbachev's tactics. What they fear is that these tactics won't work and will, instead, inspire greater worker opposition.

The division in the bureaucracy is a product of their eroding position. It is entirely tactical and is fueled by the mounting threat of political revolution—not a division between Stalinists and anti-Stalinists, or reformers and conservatives.

Trotsky, again, showed his keen understanding of this dynamic in his prescient analysis of Stalin's Constitution of 1936. He wrote in "The Revolution Betrayed:"

"In introducing the new constitution, the bureaucracy shows that it feels this danger [the beginning of an open political crisis] and is taking preventive measures. However, it has happened more than once that a bureaucratic dictatorship, seeking salvation in 'liberal' reforms, has only weakened itself.

"While exposing Bonapartism, the new constitution creates at the same time a semi-legal cover for the struggle against it. The rivalry of bureaucratic cliques at the elections may become the beginning of a broader political struggle. The whip against 'badly

working organs of power' may be turned into a whip against Bonapartism. All indications agree that the further course of development must inevitably lead to a clash between the culturally developed forces of the people and the bureaucratic oligarchy.

"There is no peaceful outcome for this crisis. No devil ever yet voluntarily cut off his own claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The development leads obviously to the road of revolution."

Source of economic crisis

With remarkable insight, Leon Trotsky further foretold the current crisis of Stalinist rule in the degenerated and deformed workers' states. In 1936, again in "The Revolution Betrayed," he pinpointed the Achilles' heel of bureaucratic mismanagement of the planned economies in the "socialist" countries:

"While the growth of industry and the bringing of agriculture into the sphere of state planning vastly complicates the tasks of leadership, bringing to the front the problem of quality, bureaucratism destroys the creative initiative and the feeling of responsibility without which there is not, and cannot be, qualitative progress. The ulcers of bureau-

privileged ruling caste.

The only road out of the current impasse, however, that is consistent with the perpetuation of privilege is by conversion of the bureaucratic caste into a possessing class, based on the traditional rights accorded to the holders of private property in the means of production.

Trotsky explained that from its birth, the Stalinist bureaucratic dictatorship has been a regime of crisis. It performs no special role in the socialized productive system, and therefore is without roots. A rootless parasitic formation, it cannot rule with the consent of the masses. Its power is based on military-police repressive force, which it exercises through its affinity and control over the privileged officer corps.

On the one hand, it bases its privileges on the conquests of the socialist revolution. But it must be on constant guard to defend these stolen privileges from the workers. Thus it must lean for support upon the neo-capitalist forces constantly being recreated in these societies—and upon world imperialism itself.

On the other hand, it must be on constant guard against the very same forces of capitalism, inside and outside the workers' state, upon which it leans for support. Those who would restore capitalism in the workers' states would much prefer to overturn the socialized property forms—and with that, sweep the bureaucracy from political power as well.

Trotsky reached into history to find a historic parallel for this phenomenon. Here he gives a brief description of the first Stalinist regime:

"Caesarism, or its bourgeois form, Bonapartism, enters the scene in those moments of history when the sharp struggle of two camps raises the state power, so to speak, above the nation, and guarantees it, in appearance, a complete independence of classes—in reality, only the freedom necessary for a defense of the privileged. The Stalin regime, rising above a politically atomized society, resting upon a police and officers' corps, and allowing of no control whatever, is obviously a variation of Bonapartism—a Bonapartism of a new type not before seen in history."

The Stalinist bureaucratic dictatorships cannot much longer maintain the status quo—balancing themselves, ever more precariously, between antagonistic class forces. Historical necessity is irrepressible. Gorbachev, Deng Xiaoping, Jaruzelski, and their ilk play no progressive role. Incapable of leading the workers' states forward, they are increasingly attracted by the pull of world imperialism. Reaching the end of their rope, they are being irresistibly drawn toward a fundamental restoration of capitalist property relations.

Stalinist bureaucracies everywhere have taken the road of ever-greater dependence on imperialism. In China, and to a lesser degree in the Soviet Union, they have already given the world's capitalists a big down payment on their promises of new openings for capitalist penetration.

Imperialism, however, never in doubt over where its class interests lie, is holding back. It has given barely more than a trickle of aid, and only dangles the promise of much more to come.

The imperialists are driving home the message to Gorbachev and Co. that real help will come only if more irreversible changes are made toward opening the Soviet state to capitalist penetration. Most important, they are demanding guarantees that future investments cannot be expropriated by an aroused working class.

What kind of guarantees? Imperialism requires, above all, a real economic foothold directly within the Soviet population. Parliamentary democracy is now opening the door to such a foothold in the political structure—opening a pathway to the middle classes and thus to leverage inside the Soviet political system. But imperialism requires, as well, direct economic and social agents inside the Soviet population.

The right of majority control over joint ventures, which Gorbachev and Co. has granted to foreign investors, is another lever required by imperialism. But this concession alone is not sufficient.

What if there is a failure to honor debts or other commitments? What if a change in circumstances leads a future Soviet government to confiscate foreign investments? Legal contracts and other pieces of paper are effective only if there is a dependable social force capable and willing to back them up. At the present time, such a

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Workers and students in Warsaw commemorate the victims of a 1968 police crackdown.

Wojtek Marek Druszc

... Prospects

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force doesn't exist inside the Soviet Union.

The promise to permit individual managers of nationalized enterprises to negotiate contracts with each other and with foreign capital, independently of the state monopoly of foreign trade, points toward creation of such a force. It opens the possibility of transforming portions of the bureaucracy into compradores—that is, into junior partners, and thus direct agents of imperialism. This is another guarantee being demanded by imperialism before launching any major investments into the Soviet Union.

But even that won't be enough to satisfy imperialism. They are demanding the convertibility of the ruble. A stable ruble—ideally a monetary unit that reflects real values—would be an enormous gain for the organizing of the planned economy. It would create the basis for determining the real costs of production, and thus provide an indispensable tool for steadily improving productive efficiency and far more effective planning.

But this is far from what imperialists are seeking in their demand for convertibility. What they really want is the abolition of the state monopoly of foreign trade—or at least a lowering of the barriers against the unrestricted export of cheap commodities into the Soviet economy. Such an unrestrained opening of the economy to goods produced by more advanced industrial societies with far lower costs of production would crowd domestic, nationalized, industry out of the Soviet economy.

A convertible ruble, under the conditions proposed by Gorbachev, would permit imperialist capital free rein inside the Soviet economy. The new class of entrepreneurs, including those who are presently a part of the ruling caste, could join the club of world imperialism's junior partners who keep at least a reserve portion of their wealth in imperialist bank accounts and invest it in foreign, as well as domestic, enterprises.

This little detail, too, will help cement the bond between this neo-capitalist layer to the world's intransigent opponents of socialism. Imperialism, thus, would be well on the road to establishing a dependable social agency for defending the sanctity of private property inside the Soviet Union.

The state sector would gradually come under the domination of forms of private ownership: first, perhaps, Chinese-style co-operatives with shareholding by the enterprise's employees and management, and later by the sale of shares outside the enterprise. Eventually, the Soviet economy would become entirely subjugated by imperialist capital.

A good example of what the imperialists have in mind is revealed in a guest column by Paul Craig Roberts in the July 20, 1989, *Christian Science Monitor*. Roberts had been invited to appear before "Mr. Gorbachev's reformers" at the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Asked to present his case for the restoration of capitalism, he argued that it is

the only solution for the "collapsing" Soviet economy. He writes:

"Nothing can be done until private property rights are established. Peasants will have to be given the land and workers and managers will have to become the owners of the factories. Once property rights are assigned, prices can reflect true values, and the Soviet economy can begin its recovery from 70 years of socialism."

"All of this made sense to my sophisticated Moscow audience. Still the question arose, 'What do we do with the Communist Party?' 'Give them a disproportionate share of the new ownership rights,' I said, 'and make them the idle rich.'"

"Soviet reformers saw this as a common-sense proposition. Historically, ruling classes have had to be accommodated or overthrown. Golden parachutes for Communist Party members is an inexpensive way of obtaining an efficient private economy."

Of course, Gorbachev will not lightly launch such a definitive course toward capitalist restoration. He knows that the Soviet workers will have a thing or two to say about it. His initial economic cure already requires the workers to swallow some bitter medicine.

According to the bureaucracy, that merely would be a "temporary" decline in living standards. But already, the miners have not only rejected further cuts in living standards, they have forced real concessions from Gorbachev.

And how will the bureaucracy refuse similar demands from the rest of the Soviet working class? Gorbachev, unable to put his "restructuring" of the Soviet economy into effect so far, has been forced to retreat before he could begin to force his capitalist medicine down workers' throats.

Furthermore, the bureaucracy as a whole is not ready to leap into the uncharted and perilous waters of capitalist restoration. Their choices are increasingly being restricted by the proletarian Scylla pressing in on one flank and the imperialist Charybdis on the other.

But these choices are not symmetrical. As the *Monitor* columnist suggests, the latter option has the advantage of golden parachutes for the ruling bureaucratic caste, while the former denies them such a soft landing.

In the long run, it is an absolute certainty, the bureaucracy in its overwhelming majority will opt for the golden parachute, not socialist democracy. A bitter struggle between workers on one side, and bureaucrats and bosses on the other, is inevitable.

Revolutionary leadership required

To win this unfolding struggle, the workers will have to create a revolutionary party to lead them through the complex tactical problems all revolutionary classes face. To win in the struggle for political power, the world's workers must build a leadership that understands history and its lessons.

As can be seen in Poland, this consciousness is developing; the differentiation between the reformists in Solidarity and the future cadres of the revolutionary party has already begun to take place.

The basic program for such parties everywhere—including in the so-called

socialist countries—already exists. It goes by the name of "The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution." This document is, of course, buttressed by the wealth of theoretical and programmatic conquests of the revolutionary Marxist movement, which is continuously, and consistently, being updated as new events occur.

This is neither pretentiousness nor sectarian self-delusion. The test of any scientific thesis is its ability to predict. "The Transitional Program"—the basic programmatic foundation of the Fourth International (F.I.), written by Leon Trotsky and adopted by the founding convention of the F.I. in 1938—has already passed this test.

This document, together with Trotsky's fundamental analysis of the Soviet degeneration—"The Revolution Betrayed," which outlines the program for political revolution in the Soviet Union—should be read by everyone who wants to understand the current crisis of Stalinism and to find a way forward in the United States and other capitalist countries.

Let me cite only the most recent confirmation of the power of revolutionary Marxist political analysis contained in the "Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution." In 1938, the author of this basic document predicted:

"A fresh upsurge of the revolution in the U.S.S.R. will begin under the banner of the struggle against social inequality and political oppression. . . ."

"The struggle for the freedom of the trade unions and the factory committees, for the right of assembly and freedom of the press, will unfold in the struggle for the regeneration and development of Soviet democracy."

"The bureaucracy replaced the soviets as class organs with the fiction of universal electoral rights—in the style of Hitler-Goebels. It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks [rich peasants] were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets!"

The struggle has begun in Poland, China, and the Soviet Union, as we have seen, exactly as was then projected. Events pile on events bringing the programmatic view of the future to life. On July 21, *The New York Times* reported a strike leader in Rostov-on-Don who declared he speaks for all the coal field workers in that southern Russian mining area. He called for an immediate national congress of coal workers with senior industrial managers to be excluded.

Every such event confirms the viability of our program. It is as if it were written just yesterday.

Revolutionary internationalism

I will conclude by discussing the question of the perspective of world revolution today. The organic connection between the revolutionary workers' struggle in each country to every other is obvious. The world economy is dominated by the advanced capitalist countries. They exclude the workers' states from free access to the world division of labor.

This places an intolerable extra burden on these countries, which had been among the most undeveloped in the world before overturning capitalism.

They have all been struggling merely to catch up with the advanced capitalist countries and still have a long way to go. They cannot succeed in catching up without the help of one or more of the advanced industrial countries—not to mention surpassing them and entering the era of socialism.

Lenin and Trotsky and their Bolshevik Party never for an instant failed to recognize this fundamental materialist conception of the road to socialism. The Bolsheviks, from the outset, called for the formation of the Third or Communist International (Comintern) to extend the socialist revolution beyond Soviet borders and ultimately to the whole world. This, it was explained, was the only road to socialism anywhere.

The Comintern, the world party of socialist revolution, was founded in March 1919. Its goal was unequivocal: the defense of the first workers' state, which was seen as the advanced outpost of the world revolution, and to carry the banner of socialist revolution wherever objective conditions opened up the possibility of establishing workers' republics.

The leaders of the Third International—especially Lenin, Trotsky, and their Bolshevik Party—focused their attention on Germany, which was in revolutionary turmoil. Lenin and Trotsky never wavered from this fundamental outlook and the course of action it dictated.

It was Stalin, and the bureaucracy—whose caste interests he came to incarnate—who abandoned the revolutionary perspective of extending the revolution to the advanced countries and toward a world socialist society. Stalin's slogan, "Socialism in One Country!" became the euphemism for worldwide class collaboration, counterrevolution, and in reality, "Socialism in No Country!"

Revolutionary opportunities were at first missed, and by 1927—with Stalin's counter-revolutionary policy definitively put into effect in China—betrayed in one country after the other. This opened the door to World War II and further betrayals. Ultimately, this allowed world capitalism to become restabilized—at least in its imperialist strongholds—for an unprecedented four decades.

The consequent decline in revolutionary mobilizations in the centers of imperialist power explains in great part why revolutionary movements, which have had much greater successes at the extremities of imperialist power, have tended to keep a blind eye toward the perspective of world revolution.

This same factor also explains the weakness of the Fourth International, whose entire programmatic outlook is organically founded on the perspective of world revolution.

We are reaching the end of that period. The forces of history, blocked for so long by subjective factors—the absence of a mass revolutionary leadership—relentlessly builds up behind these barriers. Evidence accumulates that the historical logjam is about to break open. And with the collapse of world capitalist equilibrium will also come the revival of the perspective of world revolution.

When that time comes, the program for world revolution, summed up in outline form in "The Transitional Program," is certain to gain millions of new adherents. The working class in the strongholds of world capitalism is destined, once again, to take the center stage of history. ■

International VIEWPOINT

Bloody baptism of workers' struggle for democracy



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Trotskyists in Stalin's Gulag: A dark chapter in Soviet history



1928: Left Oppositionists demonstrating in Siberia on the anniversary of the revolution. One banner says: "Long Live the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

By HAYDEN PERRY

Now that Trotsky's name is heard openly in the Soviet Union, there is renewed interest in the fate of his followers in the Left Opposition. Survivors of Stalin's prisons are emerging to tell part of the story of the Gulag, that vast system of prisons and labor camps, stretching from the Arctic to the Pacific.

On March 5, 1989, the 36th anniversary of Stalin's death, Moscow citizens rallied in Gorky Park to demand that a monument be erected to memorialize the millions who died in Siberia from hunger, cold, or the executioner's bullet.

Unable to answer the Left Opposition's political arguments with logic, Stalin determined to deal with his opponents as the Czars had dealt with theirs. "Send them to the Arctic wastes of Siberia!" Stalin knew the way there. He had been there himself. So had many of the Trotskyists who were once more to face the hunger and cold of the Russian penal system.

What were the thoughts of these veterans of the Czar's prisons as they found themselves once more on the road to Siberia? Reports from survivors tell us they had one overriding concern—to continue the struggle against Stalin by any means necessary. This meant to use the exile system as a political university and organizing center.

The political center of the Left Opposition had to be located outside of Russia. Germany, which was convulsed by the struggle against Hitler, was the logical venue. Trotsky wanted to settle there, but he was denied permission.

Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, was able to enter Germany as a student in 1931. He pursued his studies, but his main task was organizing the international center of the Left Opposition. Soon from Berlin came issues of the *Bulletin of the Opposition* which, like Lenin's *Iskra* before, had to be smuggled into Russia and the Siberian prison camps.

Hunger strikes

The remnants of the Siberian exile system were still run by Czarist holdovers under the old rules. Although termed "isolators," these camps scarcely isolated Trotskyist inmates from political life and thought.

A Croatian revolutionist, Ciliga, described the isolator of Verkhneodra in 1930. "It became the only free university in Russia," he said. Trotskyists were able to receive the *Opposition Bulletin*, write articles themselves, and circulate them in other camps through the waves of political prisoners passing through.

Within limits, the political prisoners could bargain with the camp authorities. They were tightly organized and could exert collective pressure. Their ultimate weapon was the hunger strike. In 1929, 1930, and 1931, Trotskyists staged successful strikes. But this situation was to change dramatically.

In 1933, German Stalinists and Social Democrats let Hitler take power virtually without a fight. Stalin turned to pacts with capitalist states to shore up his regime. All talk of "permanent revolution" had to be silenced, its advocates eliminated, and all opposition cowed.

The Moscow trials of 1937, where old Bolsheviks were forced to confess to monstrous crimes against the revolution, was the public stage on which the remnants of the Bolshevik leadership was destroyed. The Siberian exile system was regenerated to crush every citizen who raised a dissenting voice.

Rebellion in Vorkuta

Now titled Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps (GULAG), the system became a vast processing plant geared to break down the body and spirit through overwork, malnutrition, and exposure. The Gulag was vast enough to accommodate millions of prisoners toiling on projects from building railroads to sewing work gloves. Work quotas and food rations could be so finely tuned that life expectancy was gauged in months.

Four hundred Trotskyists confronted the Gulag in 1937. They were in Vorkuta, a series of labor camps stretching along the route of a railroad being built in the Siberian Arctic.

Goaded by inhuman conditions, the Trotskyists and others confronted the authorities. They presented the following demands: 1) Separation from criminal elements; 2) Reuniting families in different camps; 3) work according to specialties; 4) permission to receive books and periodicals from outside; 5) improvements in food and living conditions.

To enforce their demands, the 400 went on a hunger strike. This time the authorities would not yield. They exerted counter pressure. They cut off the heat in 40-below-zero weather. They resorted to forced feeding. For three months, the prisoners held out—even as individuals began to die.

Then, suddenly, the authorities gave in. They granted every demand. They even fed the emaciated Trotskyists special rations to restore their strength. But, actually, they were only being fattened up for slaughter.

We have eyewitness accounts of what happened next. Maria Joffe, a Left Oppositionist and veteran of eight years in the Gulag, was in one of the Vorkuta camps. In her memoirs, "The Long Night," published in 1977, she graphically relates the fate of the Vorkuta Trotskyists.

She and her fellow prisoners had followed the progress of the strike, and rejoiced in their apparent victory. Then terrible rumors began to ripple through the camp. Joffe writes: "A duty overseer came into our large tent and unfolded an order paper ... my eyes saw every

one clambering down, walking along passageways, rising from benches. Every one was standing up, standing stiffly, as if paralyzed.

"The following have been shot..." The first lines contained the names of all those who had been leading the hunger strike. And then names, names, and more names."

A camp doctor gave details of the executions which he witnessed. In an abandoned brickyard nearby there was a huge pit. All the hunger strikers and all the Trotskyists, even those who had opposed the strike, were marched to the the pit. As the condemned men and women reached the edge of the pit, their lifeless bodies tumbled in, riddled by machine gun bullets.

In a last gesture of revolutionary elan, the line of prisoners approaching the pit broke into the revolutionary song, "Whirlwinds of danger."

The convict hierarchy

Open, collective challenge to the prison regime was henceforth impossible while Stalin lived. But throughout the vast reaches of the Gulag, men and women individually resisted the relentless pressure grinding them down. To succumb meant to betray one's comrades or to die.

Maria Joffe vividly describes the torment and terrors the women political prisoners endured. The position of the Trotskyists was at the very bottom of the convict hierarchy, she writes.

Common criminals were told that the Trotskyists were the vilest scum. "We call upon you Soviet citizens to help fight these counterrevolutionaries," they were exhorted. Then the criminals were given license to rob and brutalize all political prisoners.

What the authorities wanted from the surviving Trotskyists and others were confessions and names of accomplices. The

Maria Joffe was the second wife of Adolf Joffe, a Bolshevik and close friend of Leon Trotsky. As a political act in protest at the expulsion of Trotsky from the Party, Adolf Joffe shot himself.

Maria Joffe was arrested in 1929 for supporting the Left Opposition. Her only son was taken from her, never to be seen again. After 28 years in the Gulag, she was freed and partially rehabilitated by Khrushchev.

Nadezhda Joffe, a participant in the Walnut Publishers tour of the United States this month, is the daughter of Adolf Joffe by his first marriage. This makes Maria Joffe her stepmother, although she is only three years older.

Nadezhda was also imprisoned by Stalin for many years, but the two prisoners never met.

following ... names, names, names." She would read no further. She refused to sign.

The Long Night

The penalty was the punishment cell. Maria gives a glimpse of this hellish form of coercion when she was thrust into a tiny cell. "An enormous latrine bucket ... with strings of wood lice all over it, all over the walls, ... the floor covered with human excrement with white maggots crawling out of it ... no air ... only unbearable stench, stifling my throat ... I thought I was dying."

For seven days and nights she stood in that filth. Leaning against the door, her nose to gaps where she could breathe outside air, she was allowed no sleep, jerked awake every time a guard peered through the peephole. "Back! Do you hear? To the back of the cell. Back!"

Joffe endured the week of hell and was



The principal leaders of the Left Opposition in 1927: Left to right: front row, Leonid Serebriakov, Karl Radek, Trotsky, Mihail Boguslavsky, and Evgenli Preobrazhensky; standing, Christian Rakovsky, Yakov Drobnis, Alexander Beloborodov, and Lev Sosnovsky.

most dreaded figure in the camps was the interrogator. He held the power of life—or mutilation and death.

"Names, names, names"

Maria Joffe describes her reaction to her first interrogation. As her name was called out, she thought, "Why me ... why first? ... terror, abject, absolute terror strangled all thoughts and feelings, swelled, expanded and then poured through every opening, every twist and turn of my being. I felt numbed and deafened with fear from head to foot."

But when she confronted Kashketin, the dread interrogator, she saw, "A very ordinary, non-descript man, sent to do an ordinary, unremarkable, routine job; to destroy human beings." With this insight, Maria recovered. Despite three rubber clubs on the table, she felt the inner strength to resist.

After endless interrogation interspersed with threats of the "brickyard" where executions were carried out, a paper was put before her. She read: "Joined the party to carry out subversive activities ... conspiracy ... plot to organize killing ... a group containing the

returned to the company of her fellow prisoners. They cheered. "We knew they would not get anything out of you."

Joffe reports: "I went over in my mind the day-nights of 'my cell'—and a warm feeling of satisfaction kindled inside me. I had managed to climb the first difficult and slippery slope. I must continue to work on those tasks that life had set me."

Her task was to remain true to the goal of revolutionary socialism, under the most difficult conditions possible. Maria Joffe endured 28 years of the long night, and survived unbowed.

Reading her memoirs, we who have never been tested as she and other Gulag victims were can only be inspired. Our task is to rid the Soviet Union and the world of Gulags and the exploiters who make use of them.

For further reading: "One Long Night" by Maria Joffe, 248 pages, New Park Publications. Distributed by Labor Publications Inc, 540 West 29th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.

Brazil's Workers Party shifts to the right on eve of elections

Agencia JB



Luis Inacio "Lula" da Silva, left, leader of the Workers Party (PT), and bourgeois populist leader Leonel Brizola after municipal elections last November

(Second of a two-part series)

By SCOTT ADAMS-COOPER

A deepening economic crisis, a militant wave of strikes (including a general strike last March), and an upsurge in the fight of workers and peasants to defend their rights all form the backdrop to the November presidential elections in Brazil. In last month's issue of Socialist Action, the economic crisis, the rise of the Workers Party (PT), and the PT's administration of Brazil's largest city was outlined. In this issue, the PT's electoral program and campaign will be examined.

Nearly one year ago, the Workers Party (PT) was swept to power in many Brazilian cities, winning the mayoralty in Sao Paulo and elsewhere, including interior cities that had traditionally voted for right-wing candidates.

Public opinion polls put Luis Inacio da Silva ("Lula"), a popular trade union leader and PT presidential candidate, at the top of the heap along with another "left" candidate, Leonel Brizola, a leading bourgeois-nationalist figure and long-time opponent to the former military dictatorship. *The Wall Street Journal* warned of a "leftward lurch" in Brazil.

But now, less than one year later, the PT has plunged dramatically in the polls. One candidate from the right wing, Fernando Collor de Mello, has risen to the top of the polls, taking advantage of the crisis of the main capitalist parties and the growing disillusionment with the PT. What happened?

The PT leadership attributes the rise of Collor de Mello to his co-opting of the "corruption" issue. In an article in the Sept. 13, 1989, issue of the radical newsweekly *The Guardian*, Maria Helena Moreira Alves writes of how "this basically right-wing politician was carried to the top of the opinion polls on the banner of a key left issue."

The article is entitled "Left's star sinks in Brazil"—a reference to the drop of the PT in the polls. Moreira Alves is a founder of the PT and is a professor of political economy at the State University of Rio de Janeiro.

Leading bourgeois candidate

Fernando Collor de Mello is the young former governor of Alagoas, Brazil's second smallest state. His party, the PRN (National Reconstruction Party), was founded only in February. He advocates foreign aid to save the Amazon, and capitalism and foreign investment to save Brazil's sinking economy.

Until recently, he was hardly known even inside Brazil. But he is, in many respects, a creation of the powerful Globo television network, which has given generous time to his campaign and with which his family has strong economic ties. He has been portrayed as a JFK type, handsome and athletic.

His program, as *The New York Times* put it, calls for a "clean house on a national level, dismissing millions of civil servants, jailing corrupt officials, and selling inefficient state industries to the private sector." But it is the dismissals and sales that he is most interested in. The "millions" will be comprised mostly of working-class government workers. And

selling the state industries will help his backers—the Brazilian ruling class—gain more direct control of the economy.

Collor de Mello told interviewers from *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, the newspaper of Sao Paulo industrialists, that if elected he is "going to establish the minimum conditions so that finally there is capitalism in Brazil."

The PT backtracks

While Collor de Mello's candidacy has been on the rise, the PT's has been sinking. There is widespread disillusionment among the workers who voted for the PT last fall.

The PT leadership, radically breaking with the party's past positions, has chosen to play the role of administering the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) austerity measures in the cities. The PT's 36 mayors and over 1000

city council members—with only a few exceptions—agreed to pay the municipalities' share of Brazil's foreign debt. (The national government apportions part of the debt to the municipalities as a means of strangling them.)

The PT leadership backed off from forming a common front of mayors to repudiate the payment of the imperialist debt. To meet their debt "obligations," the mayors were thus compelled to hike prices for public services and lay off thousands of city workers. [For a more detailed account of the PT's record in office, see September 1989 *Socialist Action*.]

But the PT leadership's decision to "responsibly" administer the cities is just one facet of its sharp retreat from the PT's historic program of mass struggle and working-class political independence.

In October of 1988, for example, Brazil adopted a new bourgeois constitution that codified the maintenance of the major institutions of the capitalist state, including the armed forces. The PT leadership, after voting against the constitution in the Constituent Assembly, ended up signing it (as did all the other political parties).

After the passage of the constitution, Brazil faced a tremendous upsurge in the class struggle. The strike wave hit, the Volta Redonda massacre took place, the PT won the mayoralties. Throughout the spring, with the 35-million strong general strike of May 14-15 and other struggles, the Brazilian workers and peasants did not let up.

But the PT leadership not only failed to centralize and deepen these struggles; it actively opposed the general strike, arguing for the need to "show restraint" in the face of the growing assault on the workers by the Sarney government and the bosses. Top PT leaders called on the workers to "defend the democratic opening" and to focus their attention on the upcoming presidential elections. Lula was intent on appearing

"presidential."

It was only after the rank-and-file metalworkers shouted down and overruled the PT leaders at the SBC Corp. on May 2—the first time this occurred—that the PT leadership agreed to support the May 14-15 general strike organized by the CUT (Unified Workers Federation).

Also breaking with its past positions, the PT's parliamentary fraction voted to approve a reactionary law on wages. The law did not include an escalator clause to keep wages apace with the increase in the cost of living. (The yearly rate of inflation is 1500 percent.) The law also established a minimum wage below the level set by the DIEESE institute of statistics.

Major programmatic retreat

It is in relation to the Nov. 15 national elections, however, that the PT leadership's break with the party's working-class program has been the deepest.

At its meeting in April, the National Directorate of the PT decided it had to "broaden its alliances" if Lula was to win the presidential elections. It therefore voted to form an electoral bloc with petty-bourgeois and splinter bourgeois parties to compete in the Nov. 15 elections.

The bloc, which was named the Brazil Popular Front, agreed to run Lula as its presidential candidate. It was formed by four parties: the PT, the PCdoB (Communist Party of Brazil, a Maoist split from the Moscow-oriented Brazilian Communist Party), the PSB (Brazilian Socialist Party), and the PV (Green Party).

The 13-point program of the Brazil Popular Front was submitted by the PT leadership. (It was later ratified, with only minor amendments, by the PT's 6th National Convention in June.) The central focus of the document is to "democratize the [capitalist] state and society" within the framework of the new constitution. It marks a major reversal of many of the PT's traditional positions.

Whereas the PT once called for cancellation of Brazil's crushing foreign debt—at \$120 billion the world's largest—the PT now calls for negotiations with the IMF to work out an agreement on a "suspension of payments." This is to be followed by an "audit to verify the legitimacy of the existing debt."

The PT's previous position was that the debt must be rejected wholly at all levels, and that the masses of Brazilian workers and peasants—and their allies internationally—must be organized *politically* to fight the debt. Instead, the PT's new program now calls for "organizing an international conference of debtor nations to adopt a common course of action." Similar calls have been issued by numerous capitalist politicians in the semi-colonial countries for many years.

The PT also dropped its call for the nationalization of the banks under workers' control.

Retreats on land and bread

The program of the Brazil Popular Front
(continued on next page)



Striking railworkers outside Rio de Janeiro in early 1986

Luiz Morier/AJB

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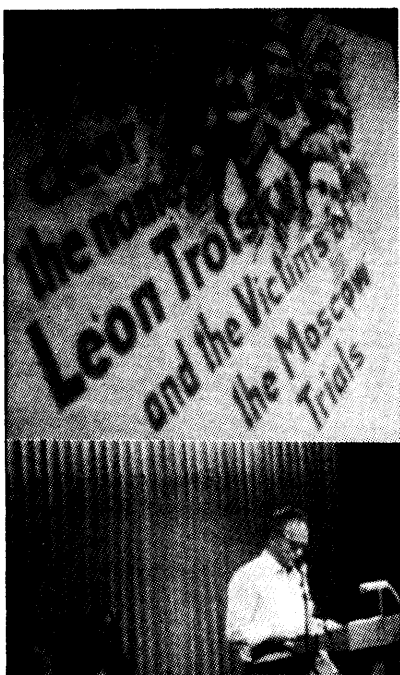
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Esteban Volkov at 50th anniversary celebration of Fourth International in San Francisco on Aug. 6, 1988.

Walnut Publishing's new book "Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead?" will be published this month in conjunction with a national speaking tour by the authors. The book is a result of visits to the Soviet Union in 1988 and 1989.

A special feature of the U.S. speaking tour will be the participation of Nadezhda Joffe, who will arrive from Moscow as the guest of Walnut Publishing.

Receptions for Joffe will be held in Boston and New York.

In the 1920s, Joffe was a young organizer of the Bolshevik Left Opposition to Stalin before being imprisoned in the slave labor camps of Kolyma and Magadan. Her father, Bolshevik leader Adolph Joffe, committed suicide as a political

Soviet speaking tour kicks off

statement against Stalin; her husband was shot as an "enemy of the people;" and her children were sent to labor camp orphanages.

Through it all, Joffe maintained the principles of her youth—that the only genuine socialism is one based on the fullest workers' democracy encompassing the goals and aspirations of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

A \$3000 fund appeal to finance Joffe's visit to the United States will continue through Nov. 15. All donations go exclusively toward Joffe's expenses. Walnut Publishing thanks the numerous friends who have already contributed.

Trotsky's grandson

Esteban Volkov, Leon Trotsky's grandson, will speak in Boston, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Volkov is leading an international campaign to clear the name of Trotsky and other victims of the Stalinist Moscow Trials frame-ups of the 1930s.

Trotsky's biographer

Professor Pierre Broué will appear in all the cities listed. Broué is the director of the Leon Trotsky archives at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and at Harvard University. Based on his research of formerly sealed archives that were opened in 1980, Broué has written the most comprehensive biography of Trotsky yet available.

Other speakers on the national tour include Susan Weissman, Ralph Schoenman, Paul Siegel, and Carl Finamore—all of whom visited the Soviet Union on behalf of the family of Leon Trotsky. Not all these speakers will appear in every city.

Meetings in several cities will be sponsored by major universities. In Boston, the Harvard University Archives is sponsoring a meeting. In New York City, the Averell Harriman Institute at Columbia University is a sponsor. In the San Francisco Bay Area, the Hoover Institution Archives and the Center for Russian and East European Studies at Stanford University and the Slavic and East European Studies Program at the University of California, Berkeley, are sponsors.



Pierre Broué addresses Memorial rally in Moscow on Nov. 15, 1988, as speakers leaf through his 1100-page biography of Trotsky.

Soviet speaking tour schedule

Boston

Oct. 18, 1 p.m., Center for European Studies, Harvard Univ.
Oct. 18, 4 p.m., Reception, Trotsky Archives, Houghton Library, Harvard Univ.
Oct. 19, 2 p.m., Brown Univ.
Oct. 20, Evening citywide rally, with special presentation by Bernie Sanders, Kennedy Institute fellow and former mayor of Burlington, Vt. (For time and place, call 617-497-0230.)

New York City

Oct. 21, 7 p.m., Citywide meeting, P.S. 41, 116 W. 11th St.
Oct. 22, 12 noon-3 p.m., Reception, 101 W. 85th St. #2-1.
Oct. 23, 12 noon, Averell Harriman Institute, Columbia Univ.

Baltimore

Oct. 24, 7 p.m., Univ. of Maryland Baltimore County, Lecture Hall 4, 5401 Wilkins Ave, Catonsville.

Chicago

Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m., U. of Ill., Chicago Circle Center, Cornucopia Room 329, 750 S. Halsted St.

Minneapolis

Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m., St. John's Univ., Collegeville, Minn. (sponsored by Global Awareness Project).
Oct. 27, Citywide meeting. (For time and place call, 612-430-1476.)

San Francisco

Oct. 28, 7:30 p.m., Citywide meeting, Horace Mann School, 3351 23rd St. (at Valencia St.).
Oct. 29, 2 p.m., Reception, (Call 415-821-0458 for invitation.)
Oct. 30, 3 p.m., Hoover Tower, Stanford Univ.
Oct. 30, 7:30 p.m., U.C. Berkeley, 155 Dwinelle.

Los Angeles

Oct. 31, Reception, (Call 213-96-6945 for invitation.)
Nov. 3, Citywide meeting.
[In addition, Carl Finamore and Paul Siegel will be speaking in Cleveland on Oct. 13 (216-429-2167) and Youngstown, Ohio, on Oct. 14. Finamore will also speak in Cincinnati (513-272-2596) on Oct. 16 and Kansas City on Oct. 17.]

... Brazil

(continued from preceding page)

also represents a tremendous retreat on the question of land reform. The PT has long stood for undertaking a massive land reform—under worker and peasant control—with expropriations and redistribution of the land holdings of the big agricultural capitalists. But now the PT calls for a limited land reform within the guidelines of the new capitalist constitution.

In addition, the PT dropped the demand for a sliding scale of wages to keep up with inflation. At the party's June National Convention, PT leader Aloisio Mercadante opposed a minority resolution calling for a sliding scale of wages, arguing that it was "irresponsible" and "senseless" to promise something that could not be delivered. This new-found sense of "responsibility" is part of appearing "presidential."

To not demand a sliding scale of wages is to accept the capitalists' program of placing the burden of the economic crisis on the backs of the workers. Unfortunately, this is what the PT leadership has fallen into.

Bourgeois running mate

One of the most important issues facing the 600 delegates at the PT's 6th National Convention (each delegate represented 1000 members) was the selection of Lula's vice presidential running mate. Numerous PT candidates, including leaders from the peasants' movement and from the Amazonian rubber workers' unions, had been proposed by the party's rank and file prior to the convention.

But the Lula leadership caucus (or *Articulação*) argued that it was up to the leadership body of the Brazil Popular Front—and not the PT convention—to select a vice presidential candidate. Through parliamentary maneuvers, it bureaucratically referred this entire matter to a future meeting of the PT's National Directorate.

Weeks later, Lula announced his running mate: José Paulo Bisol, a leading member of the PSDB (Social Democratic Party of Brazil), a capitalist party that arose last year out of a split within the PMDB (Democratic Movement Party of Brazil), the country's main bourgeois party. Brazil's current president, José Sarney, is a member of the PMDB.

Bisol, moreover, became Lula's running mate without even having to resign from the PSDB. He is a seasoned capitalist politician

with a long history in the PMDB.

The selection of Bisol is significant for many reasons. In addition to codifying the reformist program of the Brazil Popular Front, his selection represents an alliance with the country's liberal bourgeois opposition, primarily in the PSDB.

The PSDB is running its own presidential candidate, Mario Covas, a man who "combines the most qualities to be a viable candidate for the business community," according to a statement by the Sao Paulo Federation of Industrialists. Covas was recently quoted in *The New York Times* as declaring that Brazil needs "a capitalist shock."

The November presidential elections will be held in two rounds, like in France. Hence only the two front-runners (out of an initial field of 24 candidates) will make it to the second round, which is scheduled to take place Dec. 16.

It is highly unlikely that the PT will make it to the run-off elections. The PT will therefore come under increased pressure to support the "lesser-evil" capitalist politician in the second round. The polls indicate this may be Covas, or perhaps even Leonel Brizola of the PDT (Democratic Labor Party), another capitalist formation.

It is widely speculated that the selection of PSDB member Bisol as Lula's running mate was the result of a deal in which the PT leadership agreed to support Covas, or Brizola, in the second round of the elections.

A rightward shift of the masses?

Numerous leaders of the PT's right wing are arguing that the PT's drop in the polls—and Collor de Mello's sudden rise—is the result of a "rightward shift" on the part of Brazil's workers and peasants. The *Guardian* article by Maria Helena Moreira Alves is one example. She argues that the "political winds have shifted to the right" and that Brazil is entering a period where the masses could be looking for a "rightwing populism—as was the case with fascism in Italy or Germany."

The purpose of this specious argument is to justify support to a "lesser-evil" capitalist politician as a means to defeat the "fascist threat." In her *Guardian* article, Moreira Alves is in fact quite explicit about this. She writes, "The period between the two votes [the two rounds of voting for president] will be marked by political alliances across ideological lines. It is already apparent that the left and the social democrats [that is, the PSDB] will unite behind the candidate closest to their platforms."

If the PT were to support Covas or Brizola

Gorbachev's USSR: Is Stalinism Dead?



A collection of essays in defense of socialist democracy

Edited by Carl Finamore

Essays by
Esteban Volkov, Pierre Broué, Susan Weissman,
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in the second round, it would represent a major step toward the destruction of the PT as an independent workers' party.

While it is obvious that there is a growing polarization in Brazil, with sectors of the middle class moving to the right, it is not true that the Brazilian workers and peasants are moving to the right. The increasing number of strikes, land occupations, and mobilizations by shanty-town dwellers all show that the opposite is true.

The PT has declined in the polls because it has changed its stance toward the workers and peasants. Last fall the PT swept to victory as the representative of the aspirations of the Brazilian masses, but once in office it agreed to administer capitalist austerity. This is the reason the PT's base of support has eroded.

What next?

The right wing course of the PT leadership has not gone uncontested. A sizeable left wing exists in the PT which has pushed for the party to remain loyal to its founding program of independent, working-class politics.

This left wing opposes the popular-front

electoral bloc formed by the PT in the upcoming elections, calling instead for Lula to break with his bourgeois partners and advocate a "Government of the PT to Break with the Imperialist Debt."

In addition, as a result of the pressure generated by the left wing opposition forces at the PT's 6th National Convention, the PT leadership agreed to hold an Extraordinary National Convention one week after the first round of the presidential elections to discuss what position the party should take in the second round.

This convention will most likely witness a sharp political confrontation between the PT's left wing and the majority leadership caucus. What the outcome of this political fight will be is by no means certain.

The PT, once clearly on a growth path and consistently independent of the ruling class, has strayed. The PT has always stood for the transformation of Brazil from a weak link in the chain of world capitalism to a government based on human needs, run by the workers and peasants. The task ahead for the left wing of the PT is to return the PT to this class-struggle perspective. ■

Thousands march to demand housing for America's homeless

By HAYDEN PERRY

On Oct. 7, thousands will march in Washington, D.C., to demand housing for America's homeless. This demonstration, organized by Homeless Now and supported by the country's major trade unions, is one of the first organized responses to what has become a catastrophic situation.

It is estimated that there are 3 million to 6 million homeless people trying to survive on the streets of the richest country in the world. Food, clothing, and shelter—the three essentials for human existence—are a daily struggle for these brothers and sisters.

Industrialized nations like the United States have the ability to provide the food and the clothing. Enough food is thrown away by restaurants and supermarkets to feed every person in a breadline. Mountains of cast-off clothes pile up in Salvation Army depots to clothe every American in need, at least decently if not stylishly.

But capitalist America has failed to provide even minimum shelter to millions of desperate citizens. The evidence of this is seen on the streets of any American city. Scruffily dressed men and women pushing shopping carts piled with plastic bags. At night they try to sleep curled up in doorways, or in tents or cardboard boxes in city parks.

Homelessness in America is a terminal disease. It is a situation that increasingly debilitates a person the longer it lasts. Without a home (an address) it is virtually impossible to establish the stability necessary for finding a job.

So the vicious circle closes. Without enough money you can't afford shelter; without shelter you can't keep up your appearance. Thus the downward spiral continues.

What puts a person on that slippery slope in the first place? "Drink, drugs, and mental instability," supporters of the status quo will quickly reply. But this ready-made answer can't be stretched to cover the whole problem. We have always had drunks and addicts. Why are so many of them homeless now?

Statistics prove that personal failings are not a primary cause of homelessness. It is estimated that a quarter of the homeless are working 40 hours a week at minimum-wage jobs. They are living in their cars, trying to accumulate the \$1000 or more demanded for advance rent and security deposits.

Single mothers

The fastest-growing segment of the homeless are not even visible on the street. They are the single mothers who could not pay the rent for their last apartment. Or they are women who have lost their HUD-subsidized low-rent apartment because the landlord has paid off his 20-year mortgage and can now charge market rates. A typical rent raise goes from \$260 to \$650 a month.

Mothers and children have the first call on housing services. The law says children must go to school, and be brought up in a safe and healthy environment. But the system fails to deliver.

Single mothers are supposed to find their own permanent homes. The community offers only temporary shelter. For a week or two, a mother and her children may find refuge in a fairly decent women's shelter; but their time is soon up and they are on the street again.

Jonathan Kozol, the author of "Rachel and her Children" described how a homeless mother might sit all day in a New York welfare office, while a social worker phones desperately around town to find a hotel to take the family for a night. Finally she is sent by bus across town to a last-chance hotel. Arriving there at nearly midnight, she is told she must check out at 8 a.m. Then it is back to the welfare office for another night's lodging.

Government and private profit

Sometimes, compassionate social workers will stretch all the regulations to help their clients. Nonetheless, this piecemeal, bandaid



Nancy Miller Elliott

'Homelessness in America is a terminal disease. It is a situation that increasingly debilitates a person the longer it lasts.'

approach is very expensive—and ineffective. Hundreds of decent apartments could be built with the money spent on putting the homeless in sleazy "room for a night" hotels.

But that alternative would collide with the interests of two powerful forces—the real estate corporations, which operate strictly on the profit motive, and the U.S. government, which hasn't built any publicly funded housing since 1970. Here is the root cause of homelessness!

A contractor sees little profit in building low-cost housing. So none is built. In fact, they take affordable shelter away from the poor. Thousands of single-occupancy rooms have been bulldozed so speculators can make a bundle of money out of luxury condominiums. These rooms were home to thousands of the poorest, who paid less than \$50 a month. Now the few units left in the "rehabilitated" neighborhood rent for over \$500 a month.

Inflation in house prices has gone far above the general rise in prices. In San Francisco, the median price for a small two-bedroom house is \$250,000! Only nine out of 100 working San Franciscans can qualify for a mortgage. Thus ends one chapter of the American dream.

In the United States, even conservatives concede there are times when government-built houses are needed. During World War II, the government built thousands of housing units for shipyard workers and others. After the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, the city built hundreds of simple cottages to house the homeless victims of that catastrophe.

But the capitalist forces that run this country refuse to recognize today's housing crisis as a catastrophe. The money needed for a crash program to build decent housing for everyone is used instead to fund the contras, build weapons of destruction, and line the pockets of bureaucrats and real-estate speculators—as the HUD scandal revealed.

Nevertheless, the government and the capitalist class are finding homelessness an embarrassing nuisance that has become too visible. And pushing the homeless out of sight is not so easy. The homeless are beginning to stabilize their existence with tents and camp stoves—often situated right in the shadow of city hall.

Organizing is indispensable

Among the homeless, two conflicting forces are at work. The misery of life on the

streets is enough to drive anyone to drink. Many succumb to individual despair. Then life on the streets becomes a hopeless "dog eat dog" existence. To go to the shelters is to risk assault and robbery. Many prefer to take their chances outside.

But some have found a better way to confront a common misfortune. Homeless people are joining other homeless people and making demands on the authorities. Some demands are very immediate: stop police harassment, provide toilet facilities, open day centers where mail and telephone messages can be received.

Demands are being directed to municipal, state, and federal governments.

The Oct. 7 Homeless March on Washington, D.C., is the type of mass action that is necessary to put political pressure on those who are responsible for the lack of adequate housing for millions of Americans.

Over 100 buses have been chartered from the New York City area, and significantly, over 60 buses have been chartered by the labor movement. The fact that the AFL-CIO has endorsed this march indicates that the homeless have powerful allies.

Far from being atomized and isolated, the homeless movement is beginning to fight back and reach out to their brothers and sisters in the labor, Black, Latino, and women's movements. These forces, all of whom who are represented in the ranks of the homeless, can force the government to reverse its criminal policies.

Instead of the current government policy of waging war against homeless people, a war should be waged against homelessness. The right of every citizen to protection from the elements was recently confirmed by a New York court. This should be translated into the right of every citizen to decent housing.

As an emergency measure this winter, there must be enough shelters and day centers to get everyone inside. These centers and shelters should be supervised by organizations representing the homeless to assure their liveability.

But more permanent measures are needed. Adequate low-cost housing must be provided—at no more than 10 percent of a family's income. This will mean conflict with many capitalist institutions. The grip of real-estate interests on prime building sites will have to be broken.

Government bodies (on up to the federal level) will have to get into the housing business—but the job can't be left to the politicians. The construction and maintenance of new homes (and the rehabilitation of old buildings) must be must be controlled by committees involving the labor movement, the homeless, and the poor.

The housing crisis reveals a huge crack in the edifice of capitalism. It is beyond repair. The whole structure will have to be torn down and replaced by a socialist system that puts people's needs before private profits. Money for Housing, Not for War!

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