

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Lessons of Polish workers' struggle

Working-class fighters throughout the world have been inspired over the last year-and-a-half by the heroic struggles of the Polish workers and farmers.

The militancy and determination of working people fighting against a privileged minority, and for the right to control the society in which they live, has set an example that cannot be

EDITORIAL

crushed by martial law, arrests, and shooting down of workers.

As is the case with every truly revolutionary upsurge of the masses, what has been gained, what has been demonstrated before the whole world, and what has been learned cannot be undone by repression. These victories will endure. And they will form the foundation on which the next round of the struggle will be built.

The struggle for workers democracy in Poland has been the deepest and most successful of the series of workers' battles that have broken out in the bureaucratized workers states since the rise of Stalinism in the 1920s. The Polish struggle has gone further and accomplished more than the Hungarian revolution in 1956, and the reform movement that began unfolding in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

In both of those cases, the Soviet bureaucracy

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United Press International/Polfoto

Warsaw, December 16: police line halts demonstrators near the National Academy of Sciences. See pages 3-5 for additional coverage of events in Poland.

January 22 protests to hit threats to Central America

By José G. Pérez

January 22, the International Day of Solidarity with the Salvadoran Revolution, has been set for the next major actions against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) has issued a call for activities to be held the week of January 18-22 in defense of the right of the Salvadoran people to control their own affairs. The CISPES national office told the *Militant* December 21 that, although the call for action had only been sent out shortly before, it had already received word of planned activities in San Francisco; Los Angeles; Detroit; Washington, D.C.; Tallahassee; and New York.

The January 22 actions will commemorate the victims of the 1932 massacre of more than 30,000 workers and peasants by the predecessors of the current military dictatorship in El Salvador, as well as the 1980 march by more than 200,000 people that was murderously attacked by junta troops.

The First International Conference in Solidarity with the Salvadoran Revolution, held last October in Mexico City, called for activities to be held all over the world on January 22.

Some 300 people from twenty-five countries attended that gathering.

In New York, a commemoration of January 22 has been initiated by the Emergency Campaign Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, the coalition of more than forty groups that called the November 21 protests of U.S. war moves against Cuba, Grenada, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

The Emergency Campaign plans to hold a commemorative rally at a church, which will be addressed by representatives of the Salvadoran freedom movement and by prominent U.S. religious and trade-union officials.

The January 22 actions have taken on added importance since the date was set in mid-October, because it has become even more clear that the Reagan administration has stepped up its preparations for military intervention in the region.

Since mid-October, hardly a week has gone by without some fresh indication of Washington's aggressive designs. Administration spokespeople have laid down a heavy smokescreen of lies about supposed Cuban and Nicaraguan military buildups, arms smuggling to the Salvadoran freedom fighters, and even direct participation

in the Salvadoran civil war by hundreds of "elite Cuban troops."

These lies are accompanied by an unceasing barrage of threats of U.S. retaliation, ranging from tightening the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba to a full naval blockade of that island and Nicaragua.

In response to the U.S. threats, the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenadian governments placed their nations on military alert and launched a vigorous political campaign to counter the U.S. threats.

For its part, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador, which includes the five guerrilla organizations fighting the U.S.-backed junta, also issued an appeal for "a common front to stop U.S. military intervention in the region."

According to the November 16-22 issue of *Esta Semana*, a Salvadoran news service published in Costa Rica, the FMLN communique called for "a common front to safeguard the sovereignty of our countries and to stop the imperialist boot from crushing our peoples." The FMLN also denounced "the unfounded accusa-

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... lessons of Polish struggle

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sent in tanks and troops to crush the movement. In Poland so far, the Kremlin's work has been carried out by the forces of repression at the disposal of the Polish bureaucracy. Nonetheless, this bureaucracy remains in power solely because of the backing it receives from the Stalinist rulers in the Soviet Union.

Once again, the bureaucratic rulers of the Soviet Union and Poland have shown themselves to be betrayers of the ideals of communism, and obstacles to its advancement. These privileged bureaucratic castes are the deadly enemy of the fight for workers democracy and the right of nations to self-determination, which were a central part of the program that the Bolshevik Party in the time of Lenin fought to implement.

Although Poland is ruled by a privileged bureaucracy, it is not a capitalist country, but a workers state. The mines, factories, and shipyards are nationalized, not owned by capitalists. The capitalist class has been expropriated by the workers. Therefore, the task of the revolution in Poland is not to overturn the economic foundations of society. Rather, the workers' struggle in Poland is aimed at winning democratic control over economic, social, and political life. It is aimed equally at eliminating the pervasive privileges and inequality that undermine efficiency and productivity of society as a whole and erode the very foundation of the Polish workers state.

The goal of their struggle has been a total change in the way the country is run, from top to bottom. To achieve this revolutionary transformation, the Polish working people have resorted to the same proletarian methods of struggle utilized by the working class in the capitalist world. This includes strikes, union organizing, street demonstrations, and other forms of mass action.

Seeing these repeated and massive working-class mobilizations has inspired workers in the capitalist countries to feel solidarity with the struggles of Solidarity.

This consciousness has been deepened by the growing realization that, at bottom, the very same international capitalist crisis that has led to increased attacks on the working class in the United States and throughout the world is at the root of the economic crisis in Poland. Even though Poland is a workers state and not a capitalist country, it is deeply affected by the capitalist world economy. The Polish people have been squeezed dry by the massive debt Poland owes to the capitalist banks. This exploitation has been coupled with the decline in the export market due to the economic downturn in the capitalist countries.

Thus, in a very real way, the Polish revolution

has been part of the struggle that has included such diverse forces as the Iranian masses, the rebel forces in El Salvador and Guatemala, and the workers of capitalist Europe and the United States.

The Polish workers are now waging defensive battles, trying to preserve their forces to be in the best position to continue their fight. (See news story, page 3.) But if there is one thing history proves, it is that the struggle for workers democracy in the Stalinized workers states is irrepressible. In Poland alone there have been four major upheavals in the past quarter of a century. But the repression carried out by the bureaucracy proved in each case to be only a stopgap.

These antibureaucratic struggles repeatedly burst forward because the privileged bureaucratic castes that govern in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are parasitic formations. They stand in the way of the development of society, while fulfilling no socially useful role whatsoever. Even in their role as "managers" of the economy they are able only to contribute to dislocations, shortages, and wasteful inefficiency.

Unlike the capitalist class in this country, whose control of society is based on its private ownership of the means of production, the bureaucracy relies completely on its control of the government. As the upsurge in Poland progressed, it became increasingly the case that the regime had no basis of social support.

It is because the bureaucracy relies on its total political monopoly to defend its privileges and its rule that it cannot tolerate, on any permanent basis, democratic participation by the masses. Workers democracy would quickly spell the end to its existence.

Thus the Polish and Soviet bureaucracies suppress democratic rights, exclude the workers and peasants from meaningful participation in political life, and deny the masses the opportunity to learn the truth about what is going on in the world. The bureaucracy does what it can to depoliticize the working class.

In doing so, the privileged ruling castes block the development of proletarian internationalist consciousness, that is, workers solidarity on a worldwide scale. The course the bureaucracy follows internationally is aimed at blocking the extension of the socialist revolution. Privileged bureaucracies, like the one governing Poland, view revolutionary struggles in other countries as a threat to the stability necessary to preserve their privileges and their position. Their strategy is to reach an accommodation with imperialism in order to protect that stability.

In contrast, a government that represents and fights for the interests of the workers and farm-

ers, such as the revolutionary government of Cuba, acts on the view that victories for revolutionary struggles are in the interests of the working people of their own country. The Cuban leaders understand that such victories strengthen the world revolution and weaken imperialism.

It is no coincidence that Cuba, which is the most democratic workers state in the world, is also the land where the toiling masses have achieved the highest levels of political consciousness, including internationalist consciousness. The Cuban working class is the most politically advanced working class in the world.

As the Cuban example proves, workers democracy and proletarian internationalism go hand in hand.

That is why the imperialists have viewed with horror the prospect of a victory for the political revolution in Poland. Despite their hypocritical statements of support for union rights in Poland, they understand that a victory for the Polish working people would open the possibility of bringing to power a revolutionary government, like the one in Cuba.

Thus, as the *Wall Street Journal* noted December 21, "many U.S. bankers see Soviet-style

This is our last issue for 1981. We will have a two-week break and resume publication with the issue dated January 22, 1982.

authoritarianism as their best hope for recovering the \$1.3 billion that Poland owes them.

"Most bankers think authoritarian governments are good because they impose discipline," said an executive at a bank with millions of dollars in Polish loans."

These views, however, have not prevented the Reagan administration and its imperialist allies from having an international field day of anti-Soviet and anticommunist propaganda. At the heart of this campaign has been the lie that the Polish working people have been demanding a return to capitalism.

But the fact is that the Polish workers have been fighting against social inequality and privilege. They have been demanding the right to control conditions of work, and to choose their own managers. They have been battling for a shorter workweek and higher pay. They have insisted on the right to know the truth about what their government is doing in their name, and for an end to censorship.

But, as workers in the United States know very well, granting such workers rights and benefits is not on the capitalists' agenda. What the capitalist rulers have in store is just the opposite.

This is why real solidarity with Polish Solidarity begins with telling the truth about what the Polish workers and farmers have been fighting for.

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Poland: Workers in Revolt

By Dave Frankel, DeAnn Rathbun, and Ernest Harsch.

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Poland: mass arrests, strike breaking

By Suzanne Haig

With a massive show of military force, large-scale arrests of Solidarity leaders and activists, and continued control of communications, the Polish ruling bureaucracy has dealt the working class a severe blow.

Despite the repression, working people are continuing to fight as best they can, recognizing that the struggle now is a defensive one. They are retreating in the face of the savage attacks, but trying to cut their losses and preserve as much as possible for the next round of struggle.

Some scattered, open resistance is continuing, notably in the coal mining areas and in the industrial city of Gdansk. Polish government officials confirm that at least two coal mines in southern Poland remain occupied by several thousand workers. Workers are also holding out inside the huge Katowice steel mill, in factories on the Baltic coast, and elsewhere.

The authorities are following a ruthless pattern in breaking strikes, sit-ins, and demonstrations. Units of internal security police and elite troops are sent to factories and mines where actions are occurring and methodically dispersing the protesters using tear gas, water cannons, truncheons, and bullets.

On December 16, at least seven miners were killed by security police trying to break their strike at the Wujek coal mine near Katowice in southern Poland.

Demonstrations broke into fierce fighting in Gdansk December 16, when workers demonstrated there, as in several other cities, in commemoration of the 1970 uprising, when scores of workers were killed.

A Warsaw radio report said 164 workers and 160 cops were injured.

At the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk — where the movement began in August 1980 — most workers have been driven out by tanks that crashed through the gates, and tear gas. Some workers remain barricaded in a building containing explosives, according to news reports.

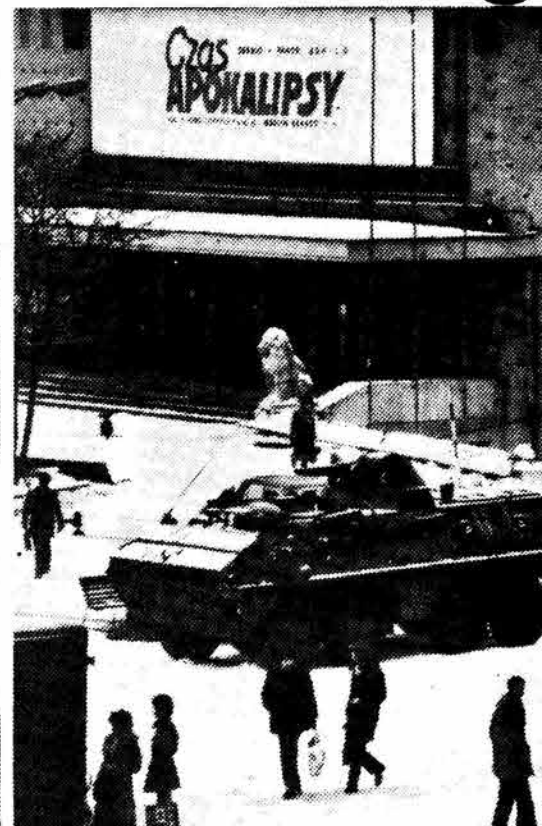
But given the extreme difficulties of coordinating and carrying out an effective nationwide response, the working class is primarily resorting to passive resistance.

In Warsaw, after a demonstration December 17, apartments across the city were darkened for several hours and candles were placed in windows, following a leafleting campaign by Solidarity.

In a number of plants, workers are showing up, but only pretending to



Polish police question driver at a checkpoint (left). Tank sits in front of a Warsaw movie theater (right). Martial law aims at crushing Solidarity and intimidating working class.



work. Such slowdowns were reported in textile plants in Lodz, the Warski shipyard in Szczecin, and the big Cegielski railroad manufacturing plant in Poznan.

Solidarity activists in the Warsaw region have reportedly gone on a hunger strike at an overcrowded prison.

The workers in Poland were stunned and surprised by the swiftness and depth of the crackdown.

Explaining why they had given up their strike and gone home, one worker at the Huta Warszawa steel mill said, according to a news report, "We really had no other choice. They had live ammunition and their guns were raised. They seemed as scared as we were."

"Right now people are working," one Solidarity member told a reporter on December 15 outside the Ursus tractor plant following the end of a one-day protest strike.

"But they are thinking," he continued. "They are not sure of what to do. There isn't a feeling of defeatism yet. We don't regard ourselves as losers. There is just no clear line about what should be done. We figure we should wait and see."

The regime is combining its repression with promises of future conces-

sions. Food is also being used as a weapon. The critical food shortages of the last months seem to have quickly abated. Shelves are now stocked with meat, smoked fish, cheese, cabbage, fresh currants, and pickled mushrooms. The Hungarian, East German, and Soviet governments are sending plane-fuls of food in addition to the stocks, which some claim the Polish government has kept stored away.

It has been reported that the minister of labor has been instructed to prepare a system of wage compensation for the rising cost of living. A minimum wage of 3,300 zlotys per month, an increase over the current minimum, is scheduled to go into effect in January.

Although repressing the workers movement, the government crackdown does not deal with its root causes.

At issue is the desire of the Polish working class to exercise control over the nationalized property relations and planned economy of this workers state.

Blocking them is the privileged bureaucracy, maintained in power by brute force and backed by Moscow. It has no intention of relinquishing its control.

By the imposition of martial law, however, the Warsaw bureaucracy, in-

cluding General Jaruzelski and his military commanders, have shown the working class that they never had any intention of living in co-existence with a mobilized, well-organized labor movement.

Their strategy all along has been one of calculated deceit.

They have talked of reforms, while negotiating in bad faith with Solidarity, trying to undermine the union. Their goal has been to stall for time and to wear down and confuse the working class with food shortages, a mixture of repression and promises, and the refusal to grant any meaningful change. All the while they have been preparing for a crackdown.

Despite the tremendous blow dealt the Polish workers, the depth of their anger and desire for fundamental change, coupled with the scope of their organization over the last eighteen months, make it clear that it will be impossible for the Stalinist bureaucracy to turn back the clock to the days before Solidarity was born.

Just as the Polish workers have learned from every major struggle they have waged in the past, they will grasp many lessons over the next months.

Golan Heights: Israel's new provocation

By William Gottlieb

On December 14, taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the events in Poland, the Israeli government of Menachem Begin moved to formally annex the Golan Heights. Annexing the Golan Heights, seized by Israel from Syria during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, was a total slap in the face of the entire Arab world. There could be no pretense that declaring the Golan Heights legally part of Israel was necessary to stave off some imminent danger to Israel's security.

The annexation is the latest in a series of provocative moves taken by the Israeli regime. Last June Israeli warplanes bombed Iraq's nuclear reactor. Israel has also conducted massive terror bombings and raids against Lebanon this year and stepped up its repression against the Palestinians living under Israeli rule.

The truth is that the Israeli regime is itching for a new Middle Eastern war. Israel sees southern Lebanon as the next area it would like to conquer.

Southern Lebanon has become a hav-

en for the Palestinians who were driven out of Jordan in 1970 and a center for the Palestinian liberation struggle. By making southern Lebanon a part of Israel, the Palestinians would be driven further from their homeland.

The Zionist regime is also eager to take advantage of the Camp David agreements that freed it up on its southern front. Israeli forces are scheduled to be replaced by a "peacekeeping" force made up of U.S. and other imperialist forces. Realizing that the opportunity provided by Camp David may not last forever, the Israeli government is anxious to move on its northern front.

Fundamentally, Israel's capitalist rulers want to grab more territory, not give up territory. That is how they view the Camp David accords.

Why is the Israeli regime so bent on war and territorial expansion?

Israel cannot tolerate any development on the part of the Arab countries because such development would threaten the very existence of this racist settler state. For this reason, Israel

finds itself in a permanent war with all its Arab neighbors as well as the dispossessed people of Palestine.

In addition its economy and financial situation are extremely shaky. Inflation is running at 130 percent on an annual basis. The deficit in its balance of payments was \$911 million in the first quarter of 1981 alone. Without American aid the Israeli economy would collapse. The mounting economic crisis in Israel threatens to heat up the class struggle between the Israeli working class and the Israeli capitalist class, within Israel itself.

Washington expressed public displeasure with the Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights. The Israeli action interfered with the anticommunist, anti-Soviet campaign that the Reagan administration is waging around the military repression in Poland. The State Department issued a statement that complained, "We are particularly disappointed that the government of Israel took this action just as we were facing a serious political crisis in Poland."

In response, Washington announced that it was suspending its so-called Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation that it signed with the Israeli government three weeks ago.

However, Washington has no more intention of breaking off its close alliance with the Israeli regime now than it did at the time of the Israeli bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor last June. Then Washington also expressed its "displeasure" and "suspended" some military aid. But the military aid was quickly resumed. This time the December 19 *New York Times* reports that State Department spokesman Dean Fischer "said there were no plans to curtail shipments of American military equipment or economic aid to Israel."

Washington backs the Israeli state because it is U.S. imperialism's only firm ally against the Arab revolution. The reactionary Arab regimes are simply too weak, and too subject to anti-imperialist pressures from their own people to be reliable bases of support for U.S. imperialism.



Workers and students commandeer Soviet tanks during revolts in Hungary (1956, left) and Czechoslovakia (1968)

The 'Militant': a record of solidarity with Hungarian, Czech workers

By Nelson Blackstock

The crackdown in Poland marks the third time in little more than twenty-five years that Eastern Europe has seen a major move to roll back working-class gains threatening to lead to a victorious antibureaucratic revolution.

In the summer of 1968 Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia. A reform movement by sections of the Czech bureaucracy responding to mass pressure was threatening to get out of hand.

In 1956 Soviet troops marched into Hungary to stamp out a workers uprising that was sweeping aside the Stalinist bureaucracy.

A review of the *Militant* from these years shows how this paper dealt with some of the same political questions being raised by current events today in Poland. One of these is the need to distinguish Marxist opposition to reactionary moves by the Soviet bureaucracy from the loud chorus opposing it from a pro-imperialist perspective. Related to this is the need to focus attention on the hypocrisy of U.S. rulers by exposing and condemning their crimes.

The August 30, 1968, *Militant* ran

this headline across page one: "Soviet troops, go home! U.S., get out of Vietnam!"

A statement by Fred Halstead, then Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, said in part: "The assault [by Soviet troops] not only damages and discredits socialism in the eyes of world opinion. It likewise undermines the security of the Soviet Union and the other workers states by disrupting and weakening the fraternity and solidarity of the forces for socialism in East Europe and on an international scale."

"The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia directly injures the Vietnamese revolution since it is being exploited by the U.S. imperialists and their allies to sanction the continuation of their war against the Vietnamese people. It serves to dishearten the antiwar forces within the United States. A call for [Soviet troops] to get out of Czechoslovakia must be coupled with an equally vigorous demand for U.S. troops to withdraw immediately from Vietnam."

A statement by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, published in the September 6, 1968, issue,

said: "While condemning the crimes of the Kremlin, the workers must not forget for one moment the bloodier crimes committed by imperialism every day in Vietnam. Let us tear away the hypocritical mask worn by imperialism. The imperialists are shedding crocodile tears over the violation of the right of the Czechoslovak people to determine their own destiny, but they rain napalm and poison gas on the Vietnamese people to prevent them from setting up the kind of government and social regime they want."

The December 10, 1956, *Militant* ran an article headlined: "The Real Counter-Revolutionaries in Hungary."

It warned that "Stalinism, devoted only to the preservation of the privileges of the Soviet bureaucracy, brutally crushes the independent action and organization of the workers and everywhere undermines the revolutionary potential and will of the masses. And it gives an invaluable propaganda weapon to the capitalists — a weapon as dangerous as their atom bombs."

An editorial entitled "How to aid Hungarian Revolution" cautioned

against steps by American labor officials — in this instance Walter Reuther, then president of the United Auto Workers — to join the reactionary maneuvers by Washington masquerading under the guise of aid to the Hungarian workers.

"Genuine support to the Hungarian revolution by American labor," it said, "means, first of all, to expose and to combat the reactionary aims of U.S. Big Business in Hungary."

"U.S. labor must couple its support of the Hungarian workers' demand on the Kremlin — 'Get your troops out!' — with demands of its own addressed to the U.S. government: 'Hands off the Hungarian Revolution!' 'Withdraw all American troops from foreign soil and waters!'"

The December 31, 1956, issue reported an example of how some were speaking out against Washington's hypocrisy. In a meeting in New York, Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "It is very strange that the United States righteously condemns the repression of the Hungarian people, but utters not a word about repression against the American Negroes."

Why defend workers states against imperialism?

By David Frankel

Marxists condemn the crackdown on Solidarity because, among other things, it weakens the defense of the Soviet Union and the other East European workers states against imperialism.

But a reader might ask, "What stake do workers in this country, or anywhere else, have in defending the Soviet Union? And how can you call a country like Poland a 'workers state' anyway? The government there is arresting union leaders, breaking strikes, and trampling on the rights of the masses. That's not my idea of a workers state!"

Such a response is understandable. But it looks only at the political form the governments of the bureaucratized workers states assume. We have also to look at the social foundations that these governments rest on and defend.

The Soviet Union, for example, originated in a popular revolution of the workers and peasants in 1917. For the first time in history, the classes that produce the wealth of society conquered governmental power and set out to rebuild the social order on the basis of production for human needs instead of for private profit.

Russia was a backward, predominantly peasant country in 1917. But the revolution there posed a deadly threat to the old ruling classes in the rest of the world.

Counterrevolutionary armies led by the old landlord class were armed and financed by the imperialists. At the same

time, the Soviet Union was invaded by troops from Britain, France, Japan, Germany, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland — and yes, the United States. Efforts of the workers to take power in other countries in Europe, especially Germany, failed.

So heavy were the pressures from imperialism that the Soviet masses, who were war weary and poverty stricken, became worn out. They retreated from political activity. This opened the door to the seizure of political power by a layer of privilege seekers. The same kind of bureaucratic caste continues to rule the Soviet Union and Poland to this day.

Does this mean that the Russian revolution is dead?

Not at all. The proof of this can be seen in the continuing hostility of the imperialists to the Soviet Union and the rest of the workers states.

No matter how bureaucratized these regimes are, they rest on an economic system that has done away with private property in the means of production, and private profit as the motor force of economic activity.

The existence of the Soviet Union is a historic conquest of the world working class. If it were not for the existence of the Soviet Union, the U.S. rulers would have crushed the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions. The racist regime in South Africa would have turned Angola into a colony.

The Soviet workers state is able to play the role it does because it is not

driven by the pressures of capitalist competition to continually seek new markets and new areas for the investment of capital. There are no Soviet corporations controlling the economies of semicolonial countries. There is no drive toward war built into the Soviet economy.

Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Russian revolution, explained the contradiction between the progressive economic foundations of the Soviet state and the reactionary character of the ruling bureaucracy by comparing the workers state to a trade union.

Trade unions were created as a result of the struggles of workers to defend their interests. But we all know that there are trade unions led by reactionary bureaucrats who run the union without regard to the democratic rights of the workers, and who rake off tidy sums from the union treasury. Nonetheless, class-conscious workers defend such unions against the bosses' attacks *unconditionally* — that is, despite the rotten leadership — because they know if the employers break the union, the workers will be weaker. The same is true in regard to the Soviet Union and other workers states. As Trotsky explained in his book, *In Defense of Marxism*:

"Defense of the USSR does not at all mean rapprochement with the Kremlin bureaucracy, the acceptance of its politics, or a conciliation with the politics of her allies. In this question, as in all oth-

ers, we remain completely on the ground of the international class struggle."

Trotsky was especially insistent that no revolutionary policy could be arrived at by abstracting the question of the Soviet bureaucracy from the larger framework of the class struggle. As he put it:

"We must formulate our slogans in such a way that the workers see clearly just what we are defending in the USSR (state property and planned economy), and against whom we are conducting a ruthless struggle (the parasitic bureaucracy and its Comintern)."

"We must not lose sight for a single moment of the fact that the question of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy is for us subordinate to the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR; that the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR is subordinate for us to the question of the world proletarian revolution."

Further Reading

In Defense of Marxism

By Leon Trotsky

221 pp., \$4.95

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include \$.75 postage and handling.

SWP maps solidarity effort to defend Polish workers

By Nelson Blackstock

Within days after the crackdown in Poland, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) organized meetings in cities across the country to defend Solidarity and explain the issues at stake to working people in this country.

"Our job tonight is to think about our stake — the stake of working people in this country — in defending the workers in Poland," said Larry Seigle, speaking at a New York City meeting December 18. Seigle is a member of the SWP Political Committee.

"We need to understand what kind of solidarity is needed and what kind of solidarity really defends what the people of Poland are fighting for — and to prepare ourselves to act to make that solidarity real in this country," Seigle said.

A similar meeting two days later in San Francisco drew people from San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, and elsewhere in the area. Barry Sheppard, national co-chairperson of the SWP, was the featured speaker.

In Newark December 19 Malik Miah, SWP national co-chairperson, addressed a meeting of the Militant Forum. Also speaking was Martin Koppel, a staff writer for *Perspectiva Mundial* who was in Poland for the first national congress of Solidarity.

Other meetings took place in Birmingham, Atlanta, Boston, Los Angeles and Denver.

Speaking on behalf of the Young Socialist Alliance at the New York meeting was Tom Pontolillo, chairman of Division 501, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

Pontolillo slammed the hypocrisy of the Reagan administration and the AFL-CIO bureaucrats in posing as supporters of Solidarity.

He urged the audience to "translate our support into action" by attending the upcoming YSA National Convention. Poland will be a major topic of discussion there, he said. It will be held in Philadelphia, December 31-January 3.

George Saunders, who visited Poland earlier this year, also spoke.

How to aid Polish workers

Larry Seigle told the meeting that to understand what real solidarity with Polish workers and farmers means, "We have to step back and look at the revolution in Poland within a broader framework. We have to see it as part of the class struggle on a world scale — not as an isolated event."

"To get oriented within that framework we have to understand the interests of working people everywhere — including workers in this country — are indissolubly bound up with the fate of the workers states — including the Soviet Union, as well as Poland."

Seigle explained that the workers states are "those countries where the means of production — the factories, the mines, the mills — have been taken out of the hands of the capitalists and the capitalist class has been smashed by mobilizations of the working class."

The first workers state came into being with the Russian Revolution of 1917, Seigle said. "That was the great dividing line in the history of the human race. It was the first defeat for the capitalist class. It was the beginning of the construction of socialism."

Defense of Soviet Union

"That's why our party has always said: Without the existence of the Soviet Union, giant victories that we have experienced in our lifetime — and we are seeing now — would be impossible. Victories such as the Cuban revolution would be impossible if the Soviet Union was crushed and destroyed. Without Soviet economic aid — aid that comes fundamentally not from the bureaucrats but from the working class that took

power in 1917 — without that aid the Cuban Revolution would have been destroyed.

"That is why our starting point is that what is good for the defense of the Soviet Union and the other workers states — and for the extension of that revolution — is good for workers everywhere, including in this country." And it is above all because the suppression of Solidarity weakens the defense of the workers states, he said, that the SWP condemns it.

Seigle said that it is impossible to defend Solidarity without understanding that imperialism is the deadly enemy of the Polish workers, as it is of working people everywhere in the world.

"It is imperialism that threatens Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union militarily. It is the economic pressure of imperialism that has squeezed Poland and other countries to the point where the economic crisis becomes intolerable. It is the imperialist governments and banks that have Poland indebted to the tune of \$27 billion. It is the downturn of the capitalist economy on a world scale — and the decline of markets for exports from Poland — that triggered the crisis.

"That is why the enemy of the Polish workers is the same enemy we confront here every day. It's the same enemy that the workers and peasants in Central America and the Caribbean are confronting every day," Seigle continued.

Seigle said that solidarity from those who "use events in Poland to cover up their support for imperialism is no solidarity at all."

Seigle said that the AFL-CIO leaders were using the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy to justify urging American workers to support the policies of American imperialism on a world scale. That "is not giving one ounce, not one atom, of solidarity to the workers and the farmers in Poland," he said.

In fact, Seigle said, everything that "strengthens the position of imperialism, that covers up for imperialism, paves the way for imperialist aggression and weakens Polish workers."

Referring to the top AFL-CIO officials, the speaker said, "They don't have an independent program. They follow the domestic program of big business. They follow the foreign policy of big business. They want the workers to accept the domestic policy of the capitalist class and to line up behind its foreign policy."

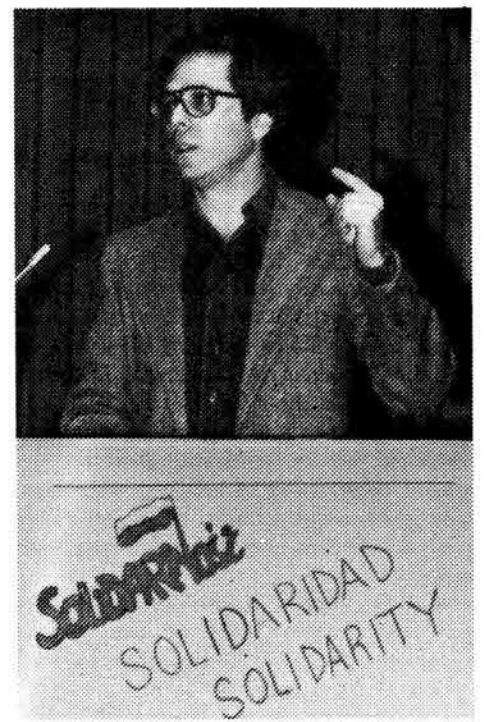
This explains why the AFL-CIO officials are "so enthusiastic over the so-called solidarity campaign with Poland," Seigle said. "Because it's just what imperialism is doing. It fits right in. They can join the orgy of anticommunism and do it all in the name of the workers' struggle, in the name of the unions, in the name of union democracy and union rights."

"The AFL-CIO solidarity campaign has been part and parcel of their support to the foreign policy of American imperialism. That's all it is."

'Tell the truth'

Just as socialists campaigned to spread the truth about the Iranian revolution in the face of the barrage of reactionary, proimperialist propaganda during the hostage crisis, Seigle said, the primary responsibility today is to "tell the truth about what Solidarity is fighting for in Poland, to explain what our stake is here, and to mercilessly expose the hypocritical campaign coming out of Washington, and Paris, and London, and the other capitals of imperialist countries."

"If we do this, we will get a hearing. We will win over young workers, militants, whose instincts tell them that when Douglas Fraser and Lane Kirkland start to campaign alongside Ronald



Militant/Lou Howort

Socialist Workers Party Political Committee member Larry Seigle was among speakers at New York meeting.

Reagan, it's time to look a little deeper into what's going on.

"We will win to our ranks young people who want to defend the revolution that is advancing in El Salvador, in Central America, and in the Caribbean.

"If we tell the truth about Poland and about imperialism in meetings like this — and where we work, on radio, television . . . everywhere — that will be the kind of solidarity that we owe to our brothers and sisters in Poland," Seigle said.

"Our responsibility to Polish workers is the same as our responsibility to the rebels in El Salvador, to our fellow revolutionists in Cuba, to workers in capitalist countries in Europe, to liberation fighters in Africa, and to those who fought — and are still fighting — so heroically in Vietnam.

"And that is this: To tie the hands of American imperialism — to weaken it every way we can. And to build in this country the kind of movement that can wipe it off the face the earth."

Rightists flood AFL-CIO Poland rally

By Suzanne Haig

NEW YORK — The AFL-CIO leadership sponsored an anticommunist rally here at the Polish consulate December 19.

Billed as a protest against the military crackdown in Poland, the event was actually a support rally for Washington's foreign policy and an occasion for various right-wing groups to give vent to their hatred of those countries where capitalism has been overthrown.

Despite a massive media buildup, only 1,500 people showed.

Banners and posters were displayed from the International Bricklayers Union, the Office and Professional Employees International Union, the AFL-CIO, and at least one from the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee. These mixed with such signs as "Communists raped Poland"; "U.S.A. wake up, help us to victory over the communists"; "Soviet imperialism out of Poland"; and "The Afghan nation supports the Solidarity union in Poland." Signs of this ilk were carried by right-wing Cubans, Ukrainians, and well-to-do Polish emigrés.

A contingent from two Irish freedom groups, the H-Block/Armagh Committee and the Irish Northern Aid Society, joined the rally.

The speakers, including onetime civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, had nothing to say about the Reagan administration's preparations for military intervention in Central America. Nor did they mention the attack on the air traffic controllers union, voting rights, affirmative action, busing, abortion rights, and social programs.

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers; Michael Mann, AFL-CIO regional director; and an official of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union all called for action — not just talk — by the Reagan administration against the Soviet Union and the Polish government.

The crowd was brought to a white-hot frenzy by New York Mayor Edward Koch, who called the Soviet Union the world's "chief murderer."

"What's happening to Poland," he ranted, "can happen to all of us. The Soviet Union wants to destroy democracy. Today it is in Poland, tomorrow it will be somewhere else."

He compared the situation in Poland to the march of the Nazis into Czechoslovakia. "We were silent then, but let us never be silent again," he said, calling for a trade embargo on the Soviet Union and Poland.

The president of the reactionary Polish-American Congress called for "an end of the Soviet Union forever."

Among the various capitalist politicians speaking were Senator Daniel Moynihan and Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein.



Militant/Suzanne Haig

Scene at December 19 rally in New York. Other banners read: 'U.S.A. wake up, help us to victory over the communists'; and 'The Afghan nation supports the Solidarity union in Poland.'

Antilabor firings at McDonnell Douglas

By Harry Ring

Union members everywhere have a stake in the outcome of a grievance filed by an International Association of Machinists (IAM) lodge in St. Louis on behalf of three of its members.

If the grievance is won, it will be a setback for a growing practice by major companies of using government police agencies to help them get rid of union activists they consider "undesirable."

The St. Louis case involves members of IAM Lodge 837B at the 35,000-employee McDonnell Douglas aircraft plant in St. Louis.

Two of the three, Harris Freeman and Barry David, have been fired. Jody Curran is under "investigation" and is also threatened with loss of her job.

All three are members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

Earlier, Jim Garrison, a machinist trainee, was fired on the eighty-ninth day of his ninety-day probationary period, despite a good record in his training class. Garrison, too, is a member of the SWP.

Because Garrison was a probationary employee without union protection, he was dismissed without a reason.

Freeman and David were told they were being dismissed because of misstatements on their job applications. This was after they worked at the plant for a year and a half.

But the story about their job applications was bunk. This was confirmed when the targeted workers utilized the Freedom of Information Act to obtain dossiers from the federal Defense Investigative Service, part of the Defense Department.

Because McDonnell Douglas has government war contracts, employees must have Defense Department security clearances. This is used as the justification for the snooping activity of the Defense Investigative Service.

It also gives them the authority to arbitrarily reevaluate the "security" status of workers already granted clearances.

This is what was done to Freeman, Curran, and David. Although they had

already been issued clearances, they were given special five-page clearance forms to fill out. These forms require a detailed history of every job you held from the time you were eighteen, what you did in every period of unemployment, and every political organization or social club you were ever involved with.

After they filled out this mandatory form, Freeman and David were charged with the alleged misstatements on their original job applications.

The government files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act tell a very different story than any alleged concern for total accuracy on job applications.

The agency charged with checking security clearances is the Defense Industrial Security Clearance office. This spy outfit, which has millions of "defense" plant workers as its special preserve, is known by the cheerful acronym, DISCO.

One DISCO record obtained is a memo by an agent describing a report he made "telephonically" regarding "3 cases DISCO is processing."

"DISCO's action," the memo states, "was precipitated upon a letter furnished in confidence which alleged that these 3 persons visited Cuba and that the three were involved with the SWP."

Another report to "Chief, DISCO," gives added reasons why the three were up for "processing."

Like documents grudgingly released by the FBI, this one is heavily censored. There are four points to the report, but point one is totally blank.

The source of DISCO's information is also deleted.

Point two declares: "Subjects were observed at IAM Union meetings held at the IAM union hall, wearing 'T' shirts proclaiming the Socialist Workers Party. Subjects also posted notices of Socialist Workers Party meetings in this area in the IAM union hall."

Point three declares: "It was brought to the attention of [deleted] that all three subjects may have recently visited Cuba."

Point four declares: "On 2 April

1981, at 1800 hours, Joanne [Jody] CURRAN appeared on local TV station KTVI. At that time she stated: 'A lawsuit filed by the Socialist Workers Party against the Federal Government got under way today in New York. In St. Louis, local Socialists held a news conference to offer their support for the action. The suit alleges that the FBI and other Federal Agencies spied on and harassed socialists over a period of 40 years.'

Each of the points are a product of the political police mentality.

Taking them in reverse order, Point four: Isn't this very document one more proof that Jody Curran was simply stating a well-established fact in pointing to federal spying and harassment?

Point three: Only one of the three, Jody Curran, went on a tour of Cuba.

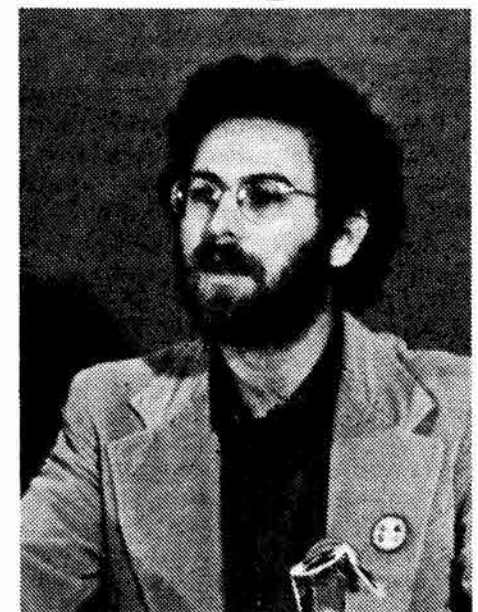
Point two: Harris Freeman, in a telephone interview with the *Militant*, said, "This is a false statement. None of us ever wore SWP T-shirts to union meetings. All of us have worn political T-shirts on the job — antinuke, support of the Irish struggle, things like that."

"We've never posted SWP leaflets in the union hall. We have distributed many leaflets at the plant gates announcing forums, or supporting our candidates. And we've also sold the *Militant* at the gates. These are things we have every right to do."

Everyone concerned with the good and welfare of the union movement should consider these police reports carefully.

The first important thing that they confirm is that companies like McDonnell Douglas, and the government, make a practice of having spies at union meetings (and don't mind doctoring their reports). Isn't this clearly something the unions should seek a halt to?

And what of the "derogatory" information about these three unionists? Can the union movement afford to permit members to be victimized because they visit a country not popular with the government or employers? What if labor decides to send a fact-finding team to check out what's really happening in Nicaragua or Grenada?



HARRIS FREEMAN

Militant/Etta Ettlinger

You can help

The St. Louis Political Rights Defense Fund is circulating petitions calling for an end to the political victimization at the McDonnell Douglas plant. The petition sheets are combined with a leaflet giving the salient facts of the case. Copies can be obtained by writing to PRDF, Box 24229, St. Louis, Mo. 63130.

Would that go into the DISCO dossiers?

And, if being a socialist and defending political rights is the basis for a secret snooper's report, isn't it clear that broader layers of union activists stand to be targeted as well?

IAM Lodge 837B has every reason to defend these three unionists. It's a matter of elementary union solidarity and it will help strengthen the union movement at a time when maximum strength is needed.

FBI threatens Black writer

PHILADELPHIA — Two FBI agents entered the home of Black writer and activist Sonia Sanchez here on December 4 and belligerently interrogated her. Sanchez, an English professor at Temple University, said one of the agents thrust pictures of a dozen or more Black people into her hands.

According to an exclusive interview with the *Philadelphia Tribune*, a local Black paper, the agents asked her if she knew any of the people in the pictures. She told them she didn't. One of the agents told her that one of the men was wanted in connection with the Brink's robbery in Nyack, New York, in October. He said that she had written a poem about him.

The agents threatened her with imprisonment for her alleged acquaintance with Black activists that the FBI claims are connected to the robbery. "If we ever see you with one of these people . . . we will put you in prison and lock you up," one of the cops told Sanchez.

As for the alleged "terrorists" involved in the robbery, she was told, "We will kill them. There will be no imprisonment; there will be no jail for them. We will kill."

Sanchez is a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance lawsuit against forty years of secret police spying and harassment. She has spoken at rallies sponsored by the Political Rights Defense Fund, which is organizing support for the suit.

She says that the harassment against her is not an isolated incident. "The target of Black writers by the FBI is not by chance. . . . They know that Black writers have a long tradition of struggle and resistance."

'PATCO will stand as one with you'

The December 3 issue of the 'Labor Tribune,' weekly paper of the St. Louis AFL-CIO, published the text of a speech by Vincent Micciche, vice president of St. Louis Patco Local 352. The speech was made at a November 14 Political Rights Defense Fund rally in support of the three victimized McDonnell Douglas workers. The following is the concluding section of Micciche's speech. The note at the end is by the 'Labor Tribune' editor.

The main thing that I have personally gained from this strike is a rude awakening. I would never have believed the amount of control that the government can exert on the press. I would never have believed the amount of control that the government can exert on industry. And I would never have believed the lengths that our government would go to repel a group that it disagrees with. I have seen the government thwart attempts of PATCO members to adopt children because of their participation in the strike. I have seen the black-balling of PATCO members from controllers jobs overseas, and even from jobs in this country, especially with firms who rely on government contracts. I have seen PATCO members denied basic federal aid in mortgage foreclosures, unemploy-

ment and food stamps. I have seen PATCO members denied their full rights during the dismissal and appeals process. I have seen PATCO members barred from military service. And worst of all, I have seen PATCO members chained and handcuffed . . . and all they did was refuse to work for an unfair employer.

Yes, I have had a rude awakening . . . and although I knew all of this could happen, I hoped for the sake of this country that it never would. But this experience is exactly why I am here tonight. I recently talked to an attorney from Guatemala named Enrique Torres. He told me of a struggle in his country by unionists at Coca-Cola plants. Fully fifteen union activists have been assassinated and Torres himself was forced to flee for his life because he represented the union. His story made PATCO's fight pale in comparison.

However, the turn toward totalitarianism that President Reagan has created in this country is just as real. The Political Rights Defense fund is one of the vanguards of the fight against that trend. Here in St. Louis, we're seeing political rights being challenged. Jody Curran, Barry David and Harris Freeman have been singled out of a workforce that exceeds ten thousand workers. They are members of the Socialist Workers Party and The Young Socialist Al-

liance; but more importantly, they are trade unionists, political activists and honest American citizens.

They are the local cause celebre in a much larger struggle that has been going on for 40 years. Forty years of government intervention. FBI infiltration and clandestine invasion of privacy. All because of a political ideology. All in spite of repeated rulings of the unconstitutionality of this type of action. This harassment affects us all, whether we are proponents, opponents or neutral of the political philosophy under threat. The fact is, the right to embrace any political viewpoint is one of the basic ingredients of our constitution and is worth fighting for. I am proud to represent PATCO here tonight. And I am proud to say that PATCO has joined the impressive and distinguished ranks of those dedicated to the goals of the political rights defense fund. I pledge to you, Jody, Barry and Harris, that even in our time of turmoil, PATCO will stand as one with you. In solidarity, we both shall prevail.

The McDonnell Douglas employees to whom Micciche refers, Jody Curran, Barry David, and Harris Freeman, are members of Machinists District 837. The union has filed a grievance on their behalf charging the company with harassing them for their political beliefs. — Ed.

'An injury to one is an injury to all'

Democratic rights supporters rally behind socialist lawsuit

By Matthew Herreshoff

"The case of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) versus the federal government is one of the most important cases going on in this country for labor," said Andrew Stern, president of the Pennsylvania Social Services Union, the state employees union.

Stern chaired a Harrisburg rally in defense of political rights. It was one of thirty-seven rallies in cities across the country, organized by the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF).

The fall rallies are the broadest PRDF has ever held. They won impressive support for the socialists' lawsuit among Blacks, from women's groups, from civil libertarians, and especially in the labor movement.

Union support

Herb Mills, secretary-treasurer of International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 10, addressed the San Francisco rally. He brought with him a statement of support for the socialists' suit from his international union.

Mills likened the attacks on the Socialist Workers Party to the attacks on the ILWU, especially the government's attempts to deport former ILWU president Harry Bridges and other union leaders.

The rallies built support for union activists across the country who have been victimized by the bosses and their government because of their socialist and pro-labor views and activities. Workers at Lockheed in Atlanta, McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis, and General Dynamics-Convair in San Diego have been fired through company/government conspiracies.

Many union leaders voiced outrage at these victimizations. In a statement sent to the San Diego rally, Doug Dunker, newly elected president of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Lodge 2215 at General Dynamics-Electronics, said: "After looking at the case at Lockheed and here, I concluded that my experiences during our strike were not too different from those of the SWP."

The rallies also brought together victims of government repression and supporters of democratic rights. And they brought vanguard fighters against government cutbacks and attacks on the unions and Black organizations together with hundreds of young people, mainly workers, who are looking for ways to fight back.

Leaders of the newly formed National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) spoke at seven of the rallies. The party's charter calls for breaking from Democratic and Republican party politics.

This article is based on reporting by Clemens Bak, Ellen Berman, Marty Boyers, Steve Craine, Jan Gangel, Jon Hillson, Lois Klinglesmith, Kathy Mickells, and Bev Scott.

Funds needed

Fighting back against the secret police agencies and giant corporations like Lockheed, Tenneco, and McDonnell Douglas, takes money. Taking on their government takes even more. If you would like to help defend your democratic rights, please send your contribution and this coupon to: Political Rights Defense Fund, Box 649 Cooper Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10003.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____

NBIPP's program against repression states, in part: "We believe that the police and federal intelligence agencies such as the FBI and CIA exist to carry out widespread acts of lawlessness and terror against Black and oppressed people in order to stop our struggle for freedom."

Leaders of the striking Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) spoke at a dozen rallies, and sent greetings to three more.

"We decided we were worth more than a side of cold beef hanging in a cold locker on the Southside," said PATCO representative Carl Kern to the Chicago rally. "We decided to fight back."

The government aims, Kern said, to "reduce civil liberties, reduce freedom. They will make us chattels of our own employers if we let them."

Kern saluted the efforts of the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance to push forward the fight for democratic rights. "From my reading of history," he said, "I know that the communists and socialists are forerunners in labor."

Fight against war

"The Democrats and Republicans know their policies are unpopular, especially their plans for war," said Betsy Soares to fifty people at the Portland rally. "To carry them out they have to resort to more illegal spying, threats, harassment and intimidation."

Soares is one of seventeen leading socialist workers who toured the country for PRDF this fall.

"We will see the government relying upon anticommunism to drive a wedge between activists in the coalition and the revolutions they defend," Al Petrarca of the Central American Mobilization Committee told 100 people at the Pittsburgh rally. "The FBI and grand juries will be used against participants in the fight against the U.S. war drive."

Antiwar activists spoke at almost every rally. Longtime antiwar leader Sid Peck, addressing the Boston rally, hailed the socialists' lawsuit. "There was always a principle in the labor movement," he said, "that an injury to one is an injury to all. That's a very, very important political principle, and that is what the SWP's suit, I think, is basically coming from. What is injuring them . . . a determined effort on the part of intelligence agencies to literally

undo their right to function as a political party in this country, is an injury to all."

Veteran civil rights leader Anne Braden was a featured speaker at the Louisville rally.

'New generation'

"The more working people get angry and seek ways to fight back — the more formations like the National Black Independent Political Party begin to chart a course of action against racism, cutbacks, and war — the more Reagan, the Democrats, and Republicans will seek to restrict our right to organize, to protest, to make use of the Bill of Rights to mobilize the majority against the capitalist misrulers," said Peggy Brundy at the Chicago rally.

"This is the 1980s, not the 1950s," said John Hawkins at the Birmingham rally. "Working people and the oppressed are on the march here and around the world. A whole new generation of fighters is coming to the fore."

Brundy and Hawkins are two of the SWP leaders who toured the country this fall. Along with the other socialists

on tour, they spoke at approximately 100 high school and college meetings. Dinners and discussions were organized with local unionists in many cities. They appeared on numerous TV news shows, on TV and radio talk shows, and were widely quoted in the press.

Thabo Ntweng, one of the touring socialists, reported that "people were most interested in our ideas, the ideas the government wants to suppress."

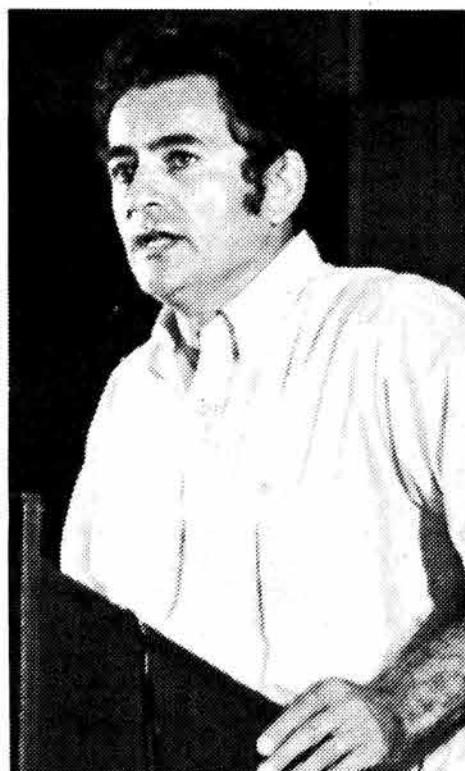
A key goal of the tours and rallies was to raise the money needed to continue to fight back against the companies, their government, and its political police. Over \$50,000 was pledged at the rallies, which will give a big boost to PRDF's \$125,000 fall fundraising effort.

So far, \$70,800 has been raised toward the \$125,000 fund. Over \$35,000 remains to be collected. Many workers donated their holiday overtime pay to make the goal.

Collecting these pledges by the January 31 deadline will make it possible for PRDF to make the \$125,000 goal and meet its responsibilities in defending democratic rights.



Militant/Nelson Blackstock



Militant/Brian Shannon

Veteran civil rights leader Anne Braden addressed Louisville gathering. Antiwar leader Sid Peck reminded Boston rally of old labor movement tradition: 'An injury to one is an injury to all.' He added, 'That is what the SWP's suit, I think, is basically coming from.'

Black party organizes meeting for suit

By Ellen Haywood

MEMPHIS — A December 11 rally organized by the Memphis chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) hit government attacks on political rights and built support for the lawsuit filed by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) against the government and its political police.

"We have an interest in the outcome of the suit," said Ron Ivy, NBIPP's southeast regional coordinator, who chaired the rally. "It is going to affect everybody that is talking about opposing — that may be thinking about opposing — the policies of this government."

"So, consequently, we have a definite position, we have an interest in the outcome of this suit, which is the major reason we decided to sponsor this rally tonight."

Ivy continued, "What the lawsuit is talking about is an organization that has been harassed, repressed, oppressed" by the government. "This organization has been oppressed for many, many years for one reason, and that is their ideas."

"When a group of people have been treated like that just for their ideas for that many years, no one in the organization having been convicted of any crime

. . . then it makes me know how it relates to me," Ivy said.

"I know how long I've been treated like that. I'm just like the SWP; I've been subjected to all this oppression."

Ivy hit the government's news blackout on the socialists' suit. "The government is very sorry that the suit is on trial. . . . They don't want the issues involved in the suit to come before the people. They are fundamental issues."

John Hawkins, a Black Pennsylvania coal miner and member of the SWP National Committee, hailed NBIPP's leading role "in exposing the mass hysteria that the Reagan administration has tried to whip up around the Brink's robbery. At the last meeting of its Central Committee, the NBIPP issued a very strong statement denouncing that."

"I think that NBIPP passed a test, even before the national party congress in August," Hawkins said. "NBIPP received poison-pen letters charging that some members were agents. Rather than falling into the trap of coming to blows with one another, people in the chapter saw it for what it was."

Speaking of the government's attacks on the Black movement following the Brink's holdup, Randy Potts, cochairperson of Memphis NBIPP, said: "Why this new offensive and why the severity of the new offensive against political or-

ganizations and against Black political organizations in particular?

"In the face of the worst unemployment since the Great Depression, what did the Reagan administration just do?"

"They obliterated social programs and social agencies. This callous disregard for the poor and working class, coupled with the assault on Black political organizations, has laid bare the fact that the civil rights struggle of the 1960s just didn't go far enough. . . ."

"What is needed is political organization. Political organization is the key, is the vehicle for transforming discontent into a concrete political force."

"That is why the U.S. government has moved to crush Black organizations that aim to organize the Black masses. That is why it is also urgent for us to escalate our efforts in building consciousness through our community, and building the political organizations of the Black people. That is the task undertaken by the National Black Independent Political Party."

Also speaking at the rally were John Bowen, a representative of the All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party and Memphis NBIPP; Julie Steiner, director of the Memphis American Civil Liberties Union; Mark Curtis of the Young Socialist Alliance; and a representative of the Citizens' Party.

YSA holds convention

Black party leader to address Philly rally

By Margaret Jayko

"The Fight Against Reaganism at Home and Abroad." That's the theme of a rally the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) will be sponsoring in Philadelphia on January 2.

The rally will be a highlight of the YSA's twenty-first national convention, which will run from December 31 to January 3.

Heading the list of speakers will be Mel Mason, a city councilman from Seaside, California, and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

Mason will talk about his experiences as a revolutionary Black elected official.

He'll explain why the only solution to the policies of the ruling rich and the parties they control is a socialist society run by working people.

Sharing the platform with Mason will be Barbara Arnwine, a national representative of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP). Arnwine will discuss why this new party was formed and how NBIPP views the fight against racism, capitalism, and imperialism.

Opposition to U.S. war plans in Central America and the Caribbean will be a thread that runs through the entire rally.

Victor Rubio, a representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador, will speak.

Defense of democratic rights against the bosses and their government will be one of the themes of the rally. Speaking on this topic will be Jody Curran.

Curran works for McDonnell Douglas aircraft company and is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Her employer, in cahoots with the government's political police, is victimizing Curran and other socialists in her union for their ideas.

She'll talk about the attempts to drive militant unionists out of war plants and the stakes all workers have in defending democratic rights.

A representative from Revolution Youth, a socialist youth group in Britain, will discuss how British youth are fighting back against their own version of "Reaganism" — "Thatcherism." They'll also describe the fight against nuclear weapons in Europe.

Tom Pontolillo, chairman of Division 501 of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, will explain why the best way to fight back against the rulers' offensive is to join the YSA, something Pontolillo recently decided to do.

He will appeal for contributions to a \$10,000 fund, which will be launched at the rally, to build the socialist youth movement.

Lisa Baird, from the Philadelphia Reproductive Rights Organization, will speak on the recent struggle in Pennsylvania to defeat the reactionary Abortion Control Act.

The rally will be chaired by DeAnn Rathbun, a Pennsylvania coal miner, who will also explain how the YSA is defending the Polish workers who are under attack.

Earlier this year Rathbun visited Poland, and she is the co-author of a pamphlet published by Pathfinder Press about the Polish workers' and farmers' struggle for socialist democracy.

The rally will take place on Saturday, January 2, at 8:30 p.m.

It will be held at the Philadelphia Centre Hotel, 1725 J.F. Kennedy Boulevard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Admission is \$3.00 and \$1.50 for high school students and the unemployed.

For more information about the rally and the convention, call (215) 927-4747 or (212) 989-7570.

Schedule

Thursday, December 31
12:30 p.m. International Report
4:00 p.m. U.S. Political Situation Report
8:30 p.m. Workshops/Classes
10:00 p.m. Welcome to Convention Reception
11:00 p.m. New Year's Eve Party

Friday, January 1
11:30 a.m. Black Struggle Report
4:30 p.m. Trade Union Workshops
6:30 p.m. Introduction to Socialist Classes
8:30 p.m. Building the Socialist Movement Slide Show
10:00 p.m. Film/Disco

Saturday, January 2
9:00 a.m. Fight for Women's Rights Report
2:30 p.m. Tasks and Perspectives Report
3:15 p.m. YSA Finances Report
5:00 p.m. Workshops/Classes
8:30 p.m. Rally: THE FIGHT AGAINST REAGANISM AT HOME AND ABROAD

Sunday, January 3
3:00 p.m. Film

JOBS, NOT WAR!

AGAINST REAGAN'S CUTS!

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FOR A LABOR PARTY!

Join the Young Socialist Alliance

21ST National YSA Convention
Dec. 31-Jan. 3, Philadelphia

Philadelphia Centre Hotel, 1725 J.F. Kennedy Blvd.

YSA
110 West 11th Street
New York, NY 10003

YSA
1811 N. Broad St.
Philadelphia, PA 19141

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Union/School _____ Phone _____

☐ I want to join the Young Socialist Alliance

☐ I want to attend the YSA convention

☐ I want a year's subscription to the Young Socialist newspaper. Enclosed is \$2.00. Clip and mail to: YSA, 14 Charles Lane, New York, NY 10014. Or call 212-989-7570.

Interview with young N.Y. garment worker

By Kara Obradović

NEW YORK — Pedro is a twenty-four-year-old Guatemalan who was recently laid off from his job in a large garment shop in Manhattan.

Most of the 300 workers there were Black or Latino, and women. Pedro worked in the shipping department with forty other workers. He made the union-negotiated minimum — about \$4 an hour.

Two months ago, he joined the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA). I interviewed Pedro right before he was laid off.

Pedro often explained to the other workers why he prefers working in a union shop. Especially to the younger workers who thought the union was "ok" but weren't union activists and didn't see the need for a union.

"I worked in California in a nonunion shop making zippers. The bathroom stank. We had no breaks. The worst is the job insecurity — you can be fired at the whim of your supervisor.

"Because we have a union here, we have a health plan. They have to pay us at least minimum wage. We have some job security, though the union leadership does nothing to combat the frequent layoffs. The union gives us some measure of defense against the bosses.

"The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) has a position in defense of undocumented workers. They have been able to curtail the Immigration and Naturalization Service's (INS) raids on union shops to round up the undocumented.

"The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) is opposed to U.S. intervention in El Salvador. Because there's a union, workers can talk about the struggle in El Salvador on the job."

Both the ILGWU and the ACTWU had large and militant contingents at the New York City Labor Day parade this year.

Pedro works with Salvadorans, Haitians, and other Guatemalans. Like many of them, he fled repression and poverty at home and came to this country looking for a better life.

Guatemala is a poor Central American country of about 7 million people.

In 1976, a powerful earthquake struck, leaving tens of thousands dead and injured and over half a million homeless.

Kara Obradović is a garment worker in New York City and a member of the YSA National Executive Committee.

"After the big earthquake I worked as a valet in a hotel. I made \$80 a month. But clothes, food, and rent cost the same as here. I couldn't support myself."

In October 1979, Pedro witnessed a demonstration in Guatemala City, the capital, protesting the doubling of bus fares.

"In front of the Palacio Nacional [government building], people began shouting that the police were coming. Police poured out of three vans wearing masks and throwing U.S.-made canisters. They opened fire on the crowd."

After twelve days of protests and strikes, the army and police had murdered fifty people and wounded 600 others.

"That's when I decided to try and get out. Many of my friends have been killed by the regime. They were students or unemployed and on the streets.

"But it's not like I thought it would be. We have a lot of illusions there, that here is the easy life. I wasn't prepared for the hunger, La Migra [INS], and the racism."

Pedro explained that he sells "socialist newspapers at work and every Saturday on the streets."

The papers he sells are *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Young Socialist*, both of which reflect the views of the YSA.

"My co-workers know from their own experiences how important the fight is that is being waged all over Latin America and the Caribbean against the U.S. imperialists.

"They can explain better than anyone else that the draft is not in the interests of workers here. They could tell you in graphic detail what kind of young fighters U.S. GIs are sent to kill."

Pedro finds the younger workers are usually more militant against the boss and the government. But others who have come here recently and have witnessed the anti-imperialist upsurges in the Caribbean and Central America often share the views of the youth.

He gave the example of a man from the Dominican Republic who thinks Fidel Castro is "a good man." "He tells me I'm doing an excellent job selling papers and building solidarity.

"Some of the workers from other countries think that people here don't care enough. That youth in the United States just want to hang out. That's not true.

"I joined the YSA after reading *Perspectiva Mundial* because it's a good organization with good ideas, and these young people do care."

Anti-apartheid conference set for Kentucky

By Margaret Jayko

On January 23 and 24, Kentucky's first major Southern Africa Solidarity Conference will take place in Berea. It's sponsored by the Berea College Students United Against Apartheid.

The conference aims to mobilize support for the "Two Weeks of National Anti-Apartheid Action in Support of Southern African Liberation Movements." The weeks run from March 21, which is the anniversary of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre of seventy Blacks in South Africa, to April 4, which is the anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

These two weeks of protests were called by a National Student Anti-Apartheid Conference that was held in New York City in October. They were then endorsed by a National Solidarity Conference on Southern Africa, also held in New York City, which attracted nearly 1,000 participants from all sectors of the anti-apartheid movement.

The four general political themes of

the Kentucky southern regional conference include:

- Support for immediate independence for Namibia;
- The links between the southern African freedom struggles and the struggles against racism in the United States;
- The demand for corporate divestment from South Africa and Namibia; an end to all U.S. cultural, academic, military, and sporting ties with South Africa;
- Opposition to the Reagan administration's friendly policy toward South Africa and Washington's support for the dictatorship in El Salvador.

Registration is \$2 per person, and the conference organizers would like to receive the money before January 7.

For more information, write or call: Vernae Williams, CPO 2259, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky 40404. Telephone number (606) 986-9341, extension 286 or 451, Monday-Friday, after 8 p.m.

'We are the eyes and ears of the police'

By Nelson González

In February of 1979, the Guardian Angels were formed in New York City.

Their composition is majority Black and Latino, and their avowed purpose is to wage "a war against crime." Their top leadership is white and is mostly made up of ex-security guards, national guardsmen, and martial arts instructors.

Since their founding, the Angels have spread to at least twenty-four cities in the United States and Puerto Rico with 2,000 members and 1,700 more in training.

Their standard operating procedure, when they set up a new chapter, is to go straight to local businessmen, police, and politicians in order to legalize their operation.

According to the January 15, 1981, *New York Times*, Angels founder Curtis Sliwa "says the patrol has grown so much that it must be monitored by some branch of government."

The Guardian Angels have emerged and grown in the context of a stepped-up ruling class propaganda campaign around the issue of "crime."

This campaign aims to terrify working people into accepting more cops, more prisons, and more restrictions on democratic rights. And they are asked to go along with this while being hit with more cutbacks in basic social services, unemployment benefits, etc.

One result of this campaign is the proliferation of hundreds of civilian block patrols and tenant security organizations. These have been set up in many cities for the ostensible purpose of stemming the "crime wave" that is about to engulf the country. Many of these organizations are police adjuncts directly tied to the municipal police forces.

Progressive?

Since the Guardian Angels were formed, a debate has developed as to whether this organization represents a progressive form of community self-defense or is a reactionary development.

For example, in an article in the February 4 *Soho News*, Felipe Luciano, a reporter for NBC news and formerly a leader of the Young Lords, a radical Puerto Rican organization active in community struggles in the late 1960s and early 1970s, claims that the Guardian Angels are a "citizens' militia." This "militia," he says, aims to fight crime in order to reaffirm "community and ethnic pride."

Much of the confusion also stems from the Black and Latino composition of the group.

A clear examination of the facts reveals that the Guardian Angels are the opposite of independent labor- or community-controlled self-defense organizations. Instead, they are an example of what can develop in the absence of mass political struggles by the working class against unemployment, racist violence, attacks on women's rights, etc. In such a vacuum, frustrated layers of young people can be manipulated by demagogues with anti-working-class schemes.

Police adjunct

The Guardian Angels represent a particular scheme to confuse the real issues in the class struggle and to lead young people in the direction of the "law and order," anticrime axis that pits Black and Latino youth against working people. They are an incipient right-wing, vigilante formation under the control of the police agencies of whatever city they operate in. Despite their composition, they objectively reinforce racist attacks against Black and Latino youth.

"We are the eyes and ears of the police," Angels leader Sliwa explained to a *Miami Herald* reporter last March.

"We work with the police. We go where the police aren't," Richard Dominique, leader of the Los Angeles chapter, told the *Los Angeles Times*.



Guardian Angels divert youth from dealing with the real criminal — the capitalist ruling class.

Sliwa, a twenty-five-year-old white male, is by no means your average poor youth attempting to fight his way out of a run-down neighborhood.

He comes from a middle-class family and, since his youth, has had a long history of collaboration with, and connections to, the New York City political establishment.

Altogether, Sliwa has received two dozen awards from officials like New York City Mayor John Lindsay, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, and President Richard Nixon for his role in organizing civic volunteer programs involving youth. Sliwa currently makes management training films for the McDonald's hamburger chain. In 1979 he decided to form the Magnificent 13 subway patrol that eventually became the Guardian Angels.

Angels' outlook

What is the Guardian Angels' philosophy, as put forward by Sliwa, with regard to "crime," and what solutions do they propose?

To sum it up in Sliwa's own words, "We use a decoy like a salve to draw out the pus."

This refers to the fact that when Sliwa began conducting his in-depth research into the criminal mind he picked up his data by practicing entrapment in New York City's subway system. A July 16-22 *Village Voice* article gave the following account:

"Night after night Curtis wore the gold medallion, wore the gold watch, carried the briefcase, and people would come up. Curtis would blink. They sniffed him. It was like the jungle, they thought they smelled fear and they would circle him, rub against him, start to punch him in the groin, punch his face, hold a knife to his throat, and then the Chinese guy would thunder in and Curtis would all but duck into a phone booth, his head would come up suddenly and he would be strong, and together they would bash brains in. . . . They rode the trains for a year and a half and Curtis says he was assaulted and together they beat people badly a hundred times or so."

Entrapment

The Guardian Angels are instructed in entrapment technique and use their youngest and most fragile members for the assignment.

Sliwa concluded from his "research" that a large multinational group, trained in martial arts, is needed.

It's crucial to have a racial mix, Sliwa explains to the *Village Voice*, because

you can't have white vigilantes beating up on Blacks. The patrols should also be large in order to be more intimidating.

What constitutes crime for Sliwa and what kind of criminals would the Guardian Angels apprehend?

According to interviews and statements Sliwa has made, they apprehend "graffiti writers" and throw them off the trains, or if they offer resistance, they are physically subdued and turned over to the cops.

Similarly, they throw sleeping bums off the trains and stop turnstyle jumpers.

Lisa Evers, national coordinator of the Angels, blames 80 percent of all crimes on young people.

To date, the Angels have been credited with 150 arrests in New York and 204 nationwide. At least thirty have resulted in sentences of a year or more.

What is Sliwa's opinion of the "criminal element"?

Besides referring to them as pus, he is fond of using terms like "The Beast" to describe the Number 2 train that services a mostly Black and Caribbean area in New York.

The November 24 *New Yorker* magazine gives the following description of an Angels patrol. The patrol "invested the Beast in crisp military fashion. Their faces were hard, and it was apparent that they would tolerate very little from a group of feisty adolescents surprised by their sudden appearance. The youngsters slouched in their seats, pulled in their legs, and began giving the Angels furtive, sullen looks.

"It's all psychological," Sliwa said. "We are in control of the situation psychologically. The enemy is psyched out."

The plan, according to Sliwa, is to combat "the evil ones" (young people) in those places of "darkness and terror" (the Black and Latino communities).

Carlos Valentino, a member of the group's elite SWAT team that patrols areas such as Times Square, Bryant Park, and the Lower East Side, thinks that "every criminal should get the juice, you know the chair. Every one of them."

What connections do the Guardian Angels have with community organizations or other organizations?

Not welcome

Not a single Black, Puerto Rican, or Chicano community organization has endorsed the Guardian Angels. As a matter of fact, when they sent eleven of their best Angels to "train" Black youth in Atlanta to fight crime, they were met

by residents from a housing project they visited and told they weren't welcome. No wonder, considering that all but four of the eleven Angels who went to Atlanta were either security guards or national guardsmen.

On the other hand, despite a little bickering with New York's Mayor Edward Koch, the mayor finally warmed up to the group. Last January he agreed to give them official status with free identity cards and free access to the transit system. The officials of the various branches of the police in New York have, from the very beginning, been very pleased by the Angels' efforts.

Mario Cuomo, lieutenant-governor of New York, has been designated the group's "Arch-Angel."

He is also the head of its fundraising arm. Some of New York's most notoriously right-wing figures, such as Barry Farber, have endorsed the organization. From their inception, the bourgeois media have given them favorable publicity. They have been endorsed by the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, and even the London-based *Economist*.

Rather than being an example of an independent labor or community-controlled self-defense organization, the Guardian Angels is a police-controlled adjunct at the service of the real criminal class — the big bankers and corporate heads and their political agents in the Democratic and Republican parties.

Young Blacks and Latinos must be won away from this perspective and to the perspective of becoming active in the fight for jobs, against the draft, and in solidarity actions with their young brothers and sisters in Central America and elsewhere. This is the only way to fight the real criminals and the real crime.

The Guardian Angels present an obstacle to this perspective. Instead, they offer youth the alternative of collaborating with cops, the very same force that protects the criminal multinational corporations and enables them to perpetuate the miserable conditions under which oppressed nationalities and workers in general live.

The next logical step for an Angel is to graduate from an unarmed police adjunct to the real thing — a cop with a loaded gun, licensed to kill.

Instead, young Blacks and Latinos must be won over to a fighting organization of young people that is anticop, antiracist, and anticapitalist. The Young Socialist Alliance has such a program and is active in presenting such an alternative.

Growing workers' battles in Britain stimulate debate in Labor Party

By Cindy Jaquith

"No government constitutionally or politically dependent on organised (let alone disorganised) labour must again be allowed to rule Britain," declared the *British Economist* last September.

"The duty of the responsible left in British politics . . . is no longer in doubt. It should abandon Labour."

The *Economist* called on Labor Party members to join the Social Democratic Party (SDP), a right-wing split from Labor last year, and through the SDP "smash, . . . demoralise," and "split" the Labor Party.

The *Economist* editorial was written as an election battle was taking place at the Labor Party conference over who should be the party's deputy leader: Tony Benn, leader of the left wing, or Denis Healey, a leader of the right wing.

Although Healey eventually squeaked by with a less than 1 percent majority over Benn, the battle was over as far as the *Economist* was concerned. The Labor Party could never be the same.

Benn and his supporters "are already the most powerful political element within Labour's ranks," said this prominent voice of British big-business. "The Labour Party is at the mercy of block union votes" and "the party's parliamentary leadership can no longer rely on union bosses to get out of trouble. . . ."

"It is equally inconceivable that the forces now rampant within the Labour party will allow it, before the next elections, to put forward policies to reform industrial relations, support the Nato alliance or defend free trade. . . . The party's enmity towards free enterprise can only deepen."

Even if a Labor government headed by the right wing were to take office, the *Economist* warned, it would be "blighted by Bennites at every turn." It would be "an extremist group" — "a disaster for Britain."

The *Economist's* horror at what is happening inside the Labor Party, and its fear of what might happen if that party takes power in the next elections, accurately reflects the thinking of British capitalists — and those in the United States as well.

Opportunity for workers

The changes in British politics reflected in the Labor Party and the movement around Tony Benn represent the biggest opportunity in decades for British workers to push forward the fight for a workers government. And that struggle will have big repercussions on this side of the Atlantic, where workers don't yet even have a labor party.

Where did the British Labor Party come from, and why have the British employers always considered it a mortal enemy?

In the late nineteenth century, British trade unions had grown relatively strong. The working class was in fact the majority of the population. Yet the unions maintained their practice of supporting one of the two capitalist parties, the Tories or Liberals, and usually the latter.

In the 1880s a group of socialists in the labor movement founded the Social-Democratic Federation, whose object was to build an independent labor party fighting for socialism. Frederick Engels, who lived in Britain at that time, worked closely with the group.

Changing composition

As British capitalism stepped up its exploitation of colonies abroad and began restructuring industry at home by lowering wages, introducing speedup, and attacking union rights, it became

more and more clear that the workers were foolish to keep voting for one of the bosses' parties.

At the same time, the composition of the labor movement was changing, with a massive influx of unskilled workers as changes in industry wiped out more and more of the skilled trades. This brought younger, more revolutionary-minded workers into the labor movement, less conservative than those in the craft-dominated unions.

They saw a powerful example in the Irish nationalist party, which was fighting for home rule and running candidates independent of the Tories and the Liberals.

In 1893 the Independent Labour Party (ILP) was formed. Marxists played an important role in its founding.

The ILP made a big advance in 1900 when it convinced some unions to join in setting up the Labor Representation Committee (LRC) to run candidates for Parliament independent of the two ruling-class parties.

It soon became clear that labor could win in elections. In 1906, the LRC got fifty candidates elected as Members of Parliament (MPs). The group took the name "Labor Party."

When the Labor Representation Committee was set up, the Marxists in the Social-Democratic Federation had argued that workers who got elected should form a "distinct party based upon the recognition of the class war and having for its ultimate object the socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange."

Other forces in the new formation did not draw clear class lines. Some tried to maintain a policy of running labor candidates only in districts where the Liberals couldn't win. They continued to view the Liberals more as allies than as representatives of the enemy class.

But this policy broke down as Labor showed its ability to get elected. The very break with the capitalist parties and formation of a workers party raised the question of which class should rule. It pointed in the direction of the Labor Party fighting to take power and establishing a workers government. In the eyes of the working-class supporters of the party, the obvious next step was to end private ownership of basic industry and the banks. It was under this pressure that the Labor Party affiliated to the socialist Second International in 1908.

First step

The Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir I. Lenin supported this move, on the basis that the Labor Party "represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organizations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a socialist workers party."

The enemies of the working class also saw this logic. The British ruling class worked to integrate Labor MPs into the capitalist state apparatus and into helping administer its antilabor, proimperialist policies. Labor MPs were brought into cabinets, where they were used to defuse strikes and other protests by the unions. These MPs often argued that the unions should stick to economic struggles and leave the political struggles to the chambers of Parliament.

Anti-working-class forces also began joining the Labor Party. Some Liberal politicians, seeing a way to get re-elected, switched their party affiliation to Labor. Social reformers, like Sidney and Beatrice Webb, joined and argued that socialism could be achieved by winning reforms in Parliament, one by one until all the evils of capitalism were expunged.

When World War I broke out, Labor

was split. The Marxists in the Party opposed the imperialist war. Some Labor leaders equivocated, and most supported the British capitalist class's war aims and the expansion of the British Empire that resulted from the war.

Despite the pro-imperialist, antilabor role of the Labor Party leadership, Lenin urged British communists to work inside the party and fight to bring it to power. He explained in 1920 that Labor "is a thoroughly bourgeois party" in its program and the outlook of its leadership, but that the great majority of workers supported it. Abstention from the party by communists would leave the Labor misleadership unchallenged. Far better to join the party, fight for a revolutionary program within it, and build a communist party outside it at the same time.

Labor in power

Since Lenin's time, the British workers have brought Labor to power several times in their fight against ruling-class attacks. Under some Labor governments, when capitalism was still expanding in Britain, the workers were able to wring significant concessions, especially in the years immediately after World War II.

But Labor's subservience to the domestic and foreign policy of the capitalists has not changed. Labor governments during the 1920s administered Britain's colonial empire, and in the period following World War II a Labor government presided over a full-scale colonial war in Malaya and was responsible for brutal repression of the independence struggle in India. During the 1970s Labor governments carried out the same brutal policies against Northern Ireland as the Tories.

And when the world economic crisis hit Britain in the early 1970s, the Labor governments of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan followed the example of the Tories in imposing austerity measures against the working class. Callaghan's government became so unpopular that Labor lost the elections in 1979. Margaret Thatcher of the Tory Party became prime minister and stepped up the ruling-class offensive with a vengeance.

New opposition

The 1979 defeat for Labor opened a major debate inside the party. The party leadership's support for imperialism, the austerity drive, and its lack of internal democracy became focal points of discontent. The main leader of this opposition was Tony Benn, who had been a minister in five previous Labor governments.

"Capitalism cannot work because it rests on inequality," Benn explains. "What's happening is not some left-wing takeover of the Labor Party. Rather, the party is moving back to its socialist roots. People who vote Labor should know that if we win we'll get Britain out of the Common Market, get rid of American nuclear bases, get back to full employment, and expand public service."

He has spoken out in defense of the freedom struggles in Central America, and against the role of the U.S. and British governments in propping up the shah of Iran, the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, the Chilean junta, and the racist regime in South Africa.

He defends Black and women's rights. "The results of mass unemployment are far-reaching," he says. "It particularly affects women, because when there are few jobs on the market we are often told that women ought to go back to the home and leave room for men. Unemployment strikes at Blacks more sharply than whites. . . . If a Black man has



The Labor Party was initiated by socialist trade unions. Above is a socialist candidate crowd, early in this century.

a job then he is said to have stolen a white man's job; if he has no job, he is called a scrounger on the welfare state."

Benn calls for the abolition of the House of Lords, the parliamentary body that is not elected but hereditary and for reform of the parliamentary system. He speaks out for free speech. He has also focused on the lack of democracy inside the Labor Party, from the failure of elected MPs to carry out the mandate of party members, to the bureaucratic structures of the party.

He calls for opening up the party: "We must work with the trade union movement; establish workplace branches; strengthen the party itself; and attract community groups, many of which were formed because they did not see in Labor the instrument for realizing their hopes."

"They must find their hope in labor now. Labor must cooperate with and speak for the women's movements; the environmental groups; the ethnic communities; the peace movement. We must reawaken rural radicalism which is still reflected in the battle against the squirearchy."

Benn is not a revolutionary socialist. He believes there can be "evolutionary change towards democracy," won through Parliament, and that through these reforms socialism will be established.

"The basis of the deep commitment of the Labor Party to the parliamentary system lies in the belief that, by the adoption of candidates who are pledged to policies agreed at annual conference, the party rank and file can . . . win a majority to carry through those policies in a peaceful and democratic way," he says.

The workers movement has always sought to end capitalism by peaceful means, but the bourgeoisie historically has never permitted that. Rather the workers have been forced onto the road of socialist revolution — involving mass strikes, insurrection, and other forms of struggle — in every case.

Along this revolutionary course, reforms have always been a byproduct, not the goal, of the struggle, just as parliamentary activity has played a subordinate role to the mobilization of the workers and their allies to bring down the capitalist order.

Benn & the left

A positive feature of Benn's policies is his appeal to leftists who have shunned participation in the Labor Party in the past.

"All who call themselves socialists and are truly committed to democracy should abandon their sectarian isolation and become loyal individual members of the Labor Party," he says.

Most groups on the left in Britain today are becoming involved with the Labor Party. A significant exception is the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), a sect



the International Labor Party and several in Reading, Britain, addressing a lunch-



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

Mine workers at an October 24, 1981, antimissile march in London. Their union, which just elected a left-wing Labor Party leader as president, is challenging the Thatcher government's wage-control policy.

that calls itself Trotskyist but holds the non-Marxist position that the Soviet Union is a capitalist country.

The British SWP argues that the most important developments today in Britain are occurring in the trade unions, counterposing these to the Labor Party. They dismiss as a passing phenomenon the movement around Benn and encourage their supporters to have little to do with the Labor Party.

By contrast, the recent congress of the International Marxist Group (IMG), the British section of the Fourth International, decided to campaign for all workers to join the Labor Party and push forward the fight to change it.

This approach was totally connected to the perspective of getting the majority of IMG members into industrial jobs. The congress itself registered significant progress toward this goal, and linked it to the crucial role industrial workers must play inside the Labor Party.

Contradictory party

A resolution adopted by the IMG conference explains, "We wholeheartedly endorse . . . the battles to democratise the [Labor] party, to win support for a programme adequate to meet the needs of the working class and to elect a Labor government committed to socialist policies. . . ."

"The Labor Party is a contradictory party. It is dominated by a leadership that expresses the political interests of the trade union bureaucracy. Nevertheless the LP has the affiliation and support of all the main sections of the working class. The formation of the LP was a huge step forward in the fight for political independence from the ruling class.

"But, as the workers come into collision with the interests of Capital, so they are pitched against the politics, traditions, and apparatus of the labor leadership. This tension pushes to the fore new forms of struggle, like the democracy campaign, and new leaders who take up those struggles. . . ."

"The revolutionaries will go as far as it is possible to go with those in the LP who fight the present leadership on a class struggle basis."

New membership

As a result of the movement to change the Labor Party, tens of thousands of workers, — including immigrant workers from India, Pakistan, and the West Indies — have joined in the recent past. Under their impact, the last two national Labor conferences have been quite different affairs than previous gatherings of the party. At the September conference where Benn nearly won the position of deputy leader, the ranks were able to get some important stands adopted:

- Reaffirmation of unilateral disarmament and opposition to Cruise and Trident missiles;

• Opposition to wage controls;

• Nationalization of major industry and commerce;

• A campaign for a thirty-five hour week and against the Tory 4 percent wage ceiling for public employees;

• Repeal of the anti-immigrant Nationality Act;

• Repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which has been used to brutally suppress the Irish freedom struggle, and support for the eventual reunification of Ireland.

Despite his loss in the election, Benn declared it is "quite clear that the forces of democracy and socialism cannot be stopped in Britain. This is only the beginning, and not in any sense the end."

The ruling class also recognizes that the battle is not over. They have stepped up their attacks on Benn and their promotion of the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Social Democratic Party

The SDP was formed last March when several leaders of labor split from the party. Since then, more than twenty MPs have gone over to the SDP and it has won several local elections in alliance with the Liberal Party.

The SDP has not yet entered contests in strong working-class districts. In fact, its victories have been mainly in middle-class areas where the Tories had been in office.

The bourgeois media particularly hailed the election victory of SDP leader Shirley Williams in early December. Interestingly enough, the largest meeting held during her campaign was one addressed by Tony Benn, who was backing her Labor opponent.

The SDP enthusiastically supports NATO, although it is more cautious about whether to install Trident missiles on British soil. It's for remaining in the Common Market. It favors wage controls.

The bourgeois press in the United States and in Britain is trying to portray the SDP as what British workers really want. The *Washington Post*, for example, editorialized that Williams' victory "hints at the formation of a constituency that accepts what seem to be the economic realities of the 1980s — a decade of growth but growth that is neither so steady nor so easy as the past two decades' rhetoric had led voters to believe."

The British press has made similar pronouncements. They clearly hope the SDP can win enough votes in the next general election to deny Labor a majority and prevent a Labor government.

The capitalists are also using the SDP as a club over the Labor Party, warning more conservative Labor leaders that if they don't tone down their program and take measures against the left wing, they'll be defeated at the polls.

In response Michael Foot, LP leader, and Denis Healey have openly violated the party's policy on unilateral disarmament. Healey explicitly denounced it in Parliament. And Foot gushed with praise for Ronald Reagan's November 18 speech demanding the Soviet Union get rid of its medium range missiles in return for the United States not adding to its arsenal on European soil. Foot called the proposal "a response which people in Europe can understand."

Meanwhile both have demanded that the left shut up, suggesting that debate inside the party hurts Labor. "What worries me is that all this infighting among ourselves is distracting us from what should be our task," said Foot, "bringing down the dismal Thatcher government."

Healey has gone further.

"Anyone who seeks to disrupt and divide the movement by trying to blow up differences . . . into major issues of principle is simply a recruiting sergeant for the Social Democrats and handing the election to Mrs. Thatcher on a plate," he charged.

Nationalization

What particularly angered Foot, Healey, and the capitalists was Benn's speech in November during a Parliament debate on Thatcher's proposal to denationalize oil production. Benn stated that the next Labor government would renationalize the companies without compensation.

The capitalist media went wild. An editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* declared his proposal "barefaced robbery . . . tyrannical expropriation," and "state theft."

"We would like there to be a reasonable Labour party," the *Telegraph* had written earlier that week. It warned that the party would "drift absurdly to the barbarous Left" under the rein of "the fevered and unforgiving young men with clenched fists and clenched minds."

But the working class has not paid

much attention to these screaming editorials. In early December the coal miners elected Arthur Scargill as their new president by more than 70 percent. Scargill is part of the Labor left and an ally of Benn.

He campaigned in the mineworkers election for a break with the union's conciliationist approach to the government and pledged he would lead a fight for a major wage increase and a halt to mine closings. He emphasized the need for union democracy.

The miners are asking for a 23.7 percent wage increase, a big challenge to the government's efforts to keep increases within the 4 percent range. They are the union in the strongest position to wage this fight. In 1974 their strike eventually contributed to the downfall of the Tory government headed by Edward Heath. Scargill says this year's contract battle "looks as though it is a little comparable with 1974."

Scargill's election demonstrates that the miners are prepared to wage quite a struggle to gain a decent contract.

That poses a big problem for the Thatcher government. In the past Thatcher has chosen to make concessions to the miners in order to avoid a showdown with the powerful union. If she decides to take the miners head on this time and loses, there is a good likelihood her government would fall and the Labor Party would then have a chance of forming the next government.

Given the expectations of workers in Britain today, and the development of the left inside the Labor Party, a Labor government would be an explosive development.

It would be "a disaster," to use the *Economist's* phrase, for the ruling class. And the best opportunity in decades for the working class and revolutionary socialists, to advance the struggle for a workers government that breaks with the Labor policy of imposing the needs of the capitalist class, and instead defends the interests of the working class.

For Further Reading

Articles on Britain

By Karl Marx and Frederick Engels
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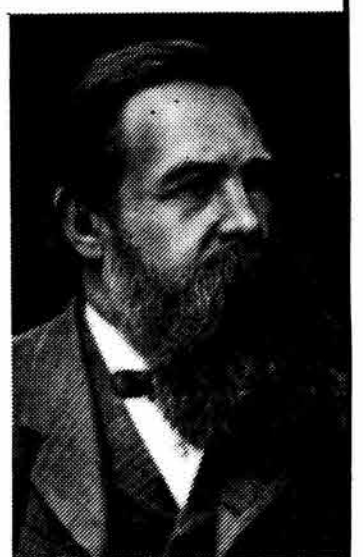
Leon Trotsky on Britain

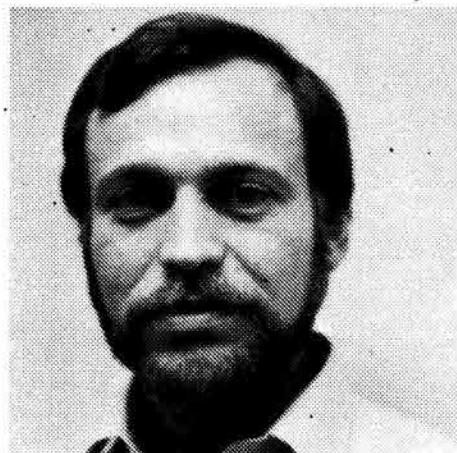
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JESSE SMITH Militant/Jon Hillson

Radio debate airs war threat

By Jon Hillson

GARY, Indiana — Sparks flew on WWCA radio on November 25 here when socialist steelworker Jesse Smith and Rep. Adam Benjamin (D-Indiana) locked horns over U.S. foreign policy in Central America and the Caribbean.

Smith, a member of United Steelworkers Local 1010 at Inland Steel, is challenging Benjamin, who represents Indiana's heavily industrial first con-

gressional district.

Benjamin, who passes himself off as a "friend of labor," an illusion cultivated by local union officials, lined up squarely behind Reagan's military preparations for intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.

When Alexander Haig speaks, he said, he does so with "one voice for all America."

Benjamin backed U.S. military support to the El Salvadoran junta, "a government supported by the people."

He lashed out at Sandinista "totalitarianism" in Nicaragua.

He chimed in against Cuban "terrorism" and its alleged military intervention in Nicaragua.

Smith took the opposite stance. He denounced the U.S. military base in Cuba at Guantánamo, noting that Cuba "doesn't have troops stationed in the United States."

Smith said the people of the Americas "look to Cuba as an example," a country to "emulate" because of its social achievements.

He opposed U.S. aid to the bloody El Salvadoran junta, "which kills its own people."

Working people, he said, have no stake in a new Vietnam-type war in Central America and the Caribbean.

Killer cop back on street

INDIANAPOLIS — Socialist Workers Party candidates here blasted the exoneration by the city of a cop who killed a twenty-four-year-old Black man.

Beth Julien, candidate for U.S. Senator, and Dave Ellis, candidate for Congress from the tenth congressional district, stated:

"Dennis Cress, the cop who shot and killed James Edward Grimes on November 20 for the 'crime' of double-parking on Monument Circle, has a long and sordid record of belligerent and provocative behavior against citizens of Indianapolis. Yet the Police Review Board, in a few hours, cleared him of any wrongdoing."

The candidates expressed their support for a wrongful death suit filed by Sheila Grimes, widow of the latest victim of the police, against the city of Indianapolis.

They also called for an independent investigation by Black community organizations and unions of the latest shooting and for the "complete withdrawal of the Indianapolis Police Department from the Black community."

"They should be replaced by a force

drawn from and responsible to the Black community," Ellis and Julien urged.

20,000 sign for Ohio socialists

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Nominating petitions with 20,000 signatures were filed at the Secretary of State's office here December 17 to put the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) ticket for the November 1982 state elections on the ballot.

The petitions were presented by SWP candidates Alicia Merel, U.S. senator; Kurt Landefeld, governor; and Rachel Knapik, lieutenant governor. They are the first candidates to file for these offices.

Merel is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1050 in Cleveland and will be running against incumbent senator Howard Metzenbaum.

Landefeld is a machinist in Toledo. He is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 134-6 and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Knapik is from Cincinnati where she is a member of the United Steelworkers union, the National Organization for Women, Coalition of Labor Union Women, and the Ohio River Valley Committee on Occupational Safety and Health.

Cuts in unemployment aid bring headlines

By William Gottlieb

The scene is a Chicago breadline. One of the women standing on the breadline, Ruth Wilson, explains to a reporter, "This is the first year we have ever been this way." She is there to pick up Thanksgiving dinner for her family. It will consist of a small bag of canned goods, a loaf of bread, a box of cereal, some condensed milk, and two scrawny chickens.

A description of the Great Depression of the 1930s? No. This is Chicago, November 1981. And it underlines a special feature of the current slump that has hit this country. The cutbacks made by the Democrats and Republicans in Washington have removed many of the "built-in stabilizers" that cushioned the blows of past downturns. In increasing numbers, the unemployed are turning toward private charity to avoid starvation, just like the victims of the depression of the early 1930s and earlier depressions were forced to do.

David Chandler, director of the Chicago Food Depository, a private charity, declared, "We're distributing about 250,000 pounds of food a month, which is about 80 percent more than we were distributing a year ago."

Last summer, Congress approved the elimination of the national "trigger" base. In the past, this allowed those out of work to collect unemployment insurance for an additional thirteen weeks beyond the twenty-six-week period covered by most state unemployment insurance programs. The measure took effect October 1, just in time for the renewed "recession," which, thanks to the bipartisan cutbacks, is more like an old-fashioned depression.

"They enacted permanent extensions in 1970, and then added onto that during the 1975 recession," James Manning, chief of the Labor Department's statistics division, noted. "By the time the unemployment rate had reached the current level in the last recession, Congress had made it possible for a worker to get up to sixty-five weeks of benefits. With the current political climate, I doubt that will be repeated."

The Trade Adjustment Act (called "TRA"), which gave workers who lost their jobs due to "foreign competition" an additional amount of unemployment compensation, has been gutted. These benefits enabled workers to receive up to 70 percent of their regular

income while unemployed. A \$1.3 billion cut in the program by Congress last summer means that workers eligible for TRA will now receive only regular unemployment benefits. They will simply be able to collect unemployment insurance a little longer than those workers not eligible for TRA. Also, many company unemployment plans like the Supplementary Unemployment Benefits (SUB) programs in auto and steel are fast running out of money.

Since the time of the Great Depression, Washington has responded to business-cycle downturns by increasing public works and public employment programs. During this recession, the exact opposite is being done. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, the federal government's public-jobs program, is not only not being extended, it is being eliminated.

Also, the Reagan cuts are forcing state and local governments to cut back on their programs. "We're seeing declines in state and local government spending for the first time in the post-World War II period," said Leland Prussia, chairman of the Bank of America, the largest bank in the United States.

Prussia thinks that unemployment will very likely reach the double-digit range next year. According to official government figures, unemployment was 8.4 percent in November. At the worst point of the 1975 depression, the official unemployment rate reached 9 percent.

Greatly exacerbating the economic hardship are cutbacks in the food stamp program of \$1.66 billion approved last summer.

The news media have given a lot of publicity to Congress's decision, before its Christmas recess, to rescind the elimination of the minimum benefits for those now receiving Social Security. However, the minimum benefit was not restored for those who become eligible for Social Security after January 1.

These cutbacks won't only increase the suffering of those now unemployed. It will further increase unemployment, since the victims of these cuts will be able to buy very few commodities. The result will be more unsold commodities in warehouses and deeper cuts in production, as business "adjusts" inventory. And this will mean additional unemployment and misery.

Gov't moves to restart Harrisburg nuke plant

By Paul Mailhot

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Nearly three years after the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant disaster, government agencies and the utility companies are stepping up their efforts to reopen the plant.

The Reagan administration, through the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), has recently given a vote of confidence to plans to reopen the Unit One reactor. The Unit One reactor, not damaged in the March 1979 accident, is the exact twin of the damaged Unit Two.

On December 13, the NRC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board issued a recommendation that Unit One be allowed to restart at low power. Low-power testing could begin in January, following thirty days allowed for response to the 800-page recommendation.

These moves are being taken in spite of the facts that:

- The majority of people continue to oppose the reopening of the plant,
- Cleanup of the damaged Unit Two is years from completion,
- None of the inherent safety problems of generating electricity through nuclear power have been solved.

A public hearing was held December 17 to consider a government evacuation plan in the event of another TMI acci-

dent. The hearing was designed to divert attention from whether the plant should be reopened.

The government plan, which presupposes the reopening of TMI, called for the evacuation of all people within an approximate ten-mile radius of the plant. But the plan leaves out all the major population centers just outside this radius, such as the cities of Harrisburg, York, and Lancaster. Population within ten miles of the plant is about 100,000 people. Over 700,000 people live within 20 miles of the plant.

Evidence from the March 1979 TMI accident is overwhelming that there is no safe way to evacuate the hundreds of thousands of people living near the plant. One person at the evacuation hearing explained that the whole plan was a sham:

"The only way for it to work is if the accident happened on a sunny Sunday afternoon when all the families in the area are assembled at grandmother's house for dinner. In fact, what I am saying is that the only workable plan is to keep TMI shut down forever."

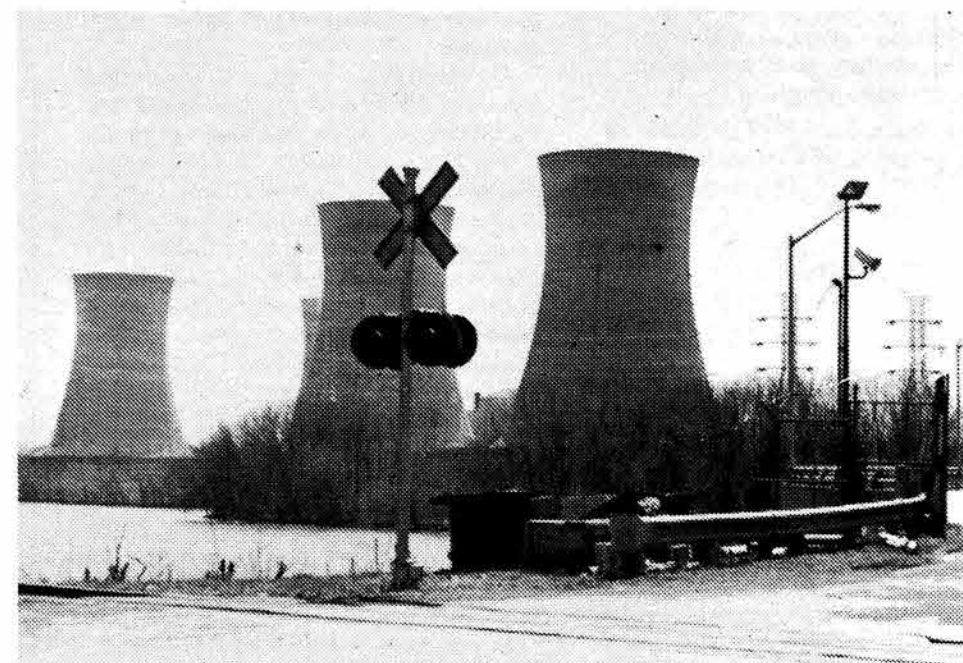
Katherine Sojourner, a Harrisburg steelworker and Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania, also called for keeping

TMI shut down forever. She stated:

"The state of Pennsylvania is sitting on millions of tons of coal reserves that could be mined cheaply, safely, and — with modern technical advances — cleanly; and could put thousands of Pennsylvanians back to work. Coal is a viable, cheap, and immediately availa-

ble energy alternative to costly and dangerous nuclear power."

Protest actions and education against the reopening of the plant continue to be organized. On December 15, a group of seventy-five demonstrators held a candlelight vigil at Governor Richard Thornburgh's mansion.



Three Mile Island

Militant/Nancy Cole

Why Steelworkers lost DuPont elections

By Stu Singer

In elections held the second week in December, 14,000 workers at DuPont chemical plants at fourteen locations voted against being represented by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). The election results, with the union defeated in every plant, end a stage in the biggest union organizing drive in years.

The DuPont setback hurts the entire labor movement. It leaves workers at DuPont in a weaker position against the giant company. It will discourage other union organizing drives.

The Steelworkers are part of the AFL-CIO's recently launched organizing campaign in Houston. At the AFL-CIO convention in November, this campaign was pointed to as the front line of union-building activity. But the effort to organize workers in that large industrial city is jeopardized by the same factors that led to the union defeat at DuPont.

The DuPont experience reveals much about the state of the unions, the challenges they face, and the attitudes of American industrial workers.

Most of the DuPont plants targeted by the union were in the South. The DuPont effort has been compared to the union victory in 1979 and 1980 at the Tenneco shipyard in Newport News, Virginia.

There are similarities.

The same union was involved; Tenneco is as anti-union as DuPont; about the same number of workers were involved; both organizing drives ran up against racism and antilabor "right-to-work" laws.

But it is the differences that account for Newport News being a victory and DuPont a defeat.

The Newport News organizing drive

was initiated by workers in the yard, not by Steelworkers officials. A core of mostly Black workers had been trying to organize the shipyard for a long time.

When they convinced the Steelworkers to get into the fight, the USWA was in a different situation than today, even though it was only a couple of years ago.

The Steelworkers had been buffeted by civil rights battles inside the union. In 1977, an insurgent slate of candidates calling for more militancy and democracy captured a third of the votes in the international union elections.

These factors pushed the union to throw its resources into the Newport News fight.

And the Newport News shipyard workers saw a union that held strong contracts throughout basic industry.

The Steelworkers organizing effort at DuPont was mostly from the top down. Some of the union's initial supporters were the heads of the old company unions, who do not generally have the reputation of being fighters.

DuPont is the second largest nonunion industrial employer in the country. They beat union organizing efforts for decades with the carrot and the stick. DuPont wages are generally above average for industrial workers, and the rich company has had relatively few layoffs and plant closings in recent years.

DuPont workers have no doubts about the power of their employer.

The key challenge facing a union organizing drive is to convince workers the union is tough enough to stand up to this company and win.

This is where the Steelworkers failed. The union did have a number of things going for it.

It exposed company files that revealed



It took years of organizing, massive support from the entire labor movement, a twelve-week strike, and standing up to police repression to organize the Newport News shipyard. Steelworkers union did not inspire DuPont workers with this militant example.

the DuPont network of spies, union-busting techniques, and policies such as encouraging racism to keep out unions. These revelations got wide publicity when they were first announced, but the union did not push them throughout the campaign as much as they could have.

The union got another boost when a new study revealed DuPont has the worst safety record of any chemical company. A lot of company propaganda stresses DuPont's commitment to safety. But again, the union did not mobilize the kind of campaign possible around safety.

DuPont workers were incessantly barraged with anti-union propaganda. But the worst publicity for the Steelworkers was the reports in the news media about the layoffs, plant shutdowns, and giveback contracts that union members are suffering from.

The company devoted many of its attacks to the specter of inevitable, long, and violent strikes if the union was voted in.

The union officials responded that it leads few strikes.

That's the wrong answer. After the union lost the vote, top Steelworker officials blamed the DuPont workers for being too conservative and not knowing what was good for them.

But the union failed to give the only honest answer about strikes: Yes, we'll lead strikes, if necessary; and we know how to win them.

The union was so conservative they did not use the excellent film and other material documenting the Newport News strike, for fear it would play into company hands about the likelihood of a strike.

The Steelworkers union was defeated at DuPont because the union officials were too conservative, not because of conservative workers.

That's the lesson of DuPont. And this experience should be carefully considered by the union activists involved in the Houston organizing drive.

Victory in Canadian steelworkers strike

The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) won an important victory in Canada after four months on strike against the Steel Company of Canada (STELCO).

Led by the 12,000 members of USWA Local 1005 at the Hilton Works in Hamilton, Ontario, the strike set an example of how to take on an industrial giant and beat it.

Using procedures similar to the United Mine Workers, the strikers got a chance to read, study, and discuss the proposed contract for forty-eight hours before they approved it by

over 77 percent on December 3.

In the course of the strike, which began August 1, there were regular bulletins to keep the members informed about negotiations, many plantgate collections, and solidarity activities organized by a Wives Support Committee. About 10,000 people participated in a support rally in Hamilton November 12. A large contingent of strikers participated in the large labor demonstration in Ottawa November 21.

The final contract covers 15,000 workers in three locals in Hamilton,

one in Edmonton, and five in Quebec. They won advances over the contract some other Steelworker locals settled for early in the strike.

In a significant show of solidarity, the Local 1005 leadership refused to sign the final contract for a few days until the company backed down on changing some of the contract language of the small Quebec locals.

The example of the Canadian steelworkers is the kind of unionism that could have inspired the DuPont workers.

Film documents U.S. chemical war on Vietnam

By Fred Murphy

NEW YORK — A powerful new documentary film on Vietnam was premiered here December 11, at a screening sponsored by the South East Asia Resource Center.

Entitled *Ecocide: A Strategy of War* and produced by Green Mountain Post Films, this work presents footage taken by the University of Montana zoologist Dr. E.W. Pfeiffer on repeated visits to Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea between 1969 and 1973.

"I hope our film will be widely shown in this country," Dr. Pfeiffer told the audience at the United Nations Church Center, "because I think the American people need to be reminded of what our weapons did in a small and distant land."

As an American scholar, Pfeiffer was allowed by the U.S. armed forces in Vietnam to accompany chemical-warfare missions as they sprayed forests and fields with deadly herbicides. Agent Orange and Agent White were used to defoliate forests and jungles; Agent Blue destroyed food crops. Contaminants in these chemicals included the notoriously toxic dioxin (TCDD), which has caused persistent rashes, cancer,

and birth defects among both the Indo-Chinese people and U.S. veterans and their offspring.

The aim of the systematic destruction of Vietnam's environment, Dr. Pfeiffer explains in the film's narration, was "to force the peasants off the land and into dependence on the money economy in the urban areas or in refugee camps." In this way, Washington hoped to deprive the Vietnamese freedom fighters of their base of support among the people.

According to figures presented in the film, U.S. forces dropped seven pounds of chemicals for every Vietnamese man, woman, and child during the period from 1961 to the end of U.S. involvement in the war.

The destruction was not limited to chemical warfare. *Ecocide* also shows us field after field riddled with immense bomb craters. We see the gigantic U.S. bulldozers, or Rome Plows, that cleared an area the size of the state of Rhode Island of forest and vegetation.

Since the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam in 1975, the film explains, the government there has made great efforts to begin restoring the land. Bomb craters are being refilled and forests re-

planted. But it is a slow, painstaking, and even dangerous process. Thousands of unexploded bombs are scattered about the countryside, posing a continual threat to farmers and reclamation workers.

In remarks after the film showing, Pfeiffer's colleague, Dr. Arthur Westing of Hampshire College in Massachusetts, contrasted the postwar recovery of Europe in the 1950s with that of Vietnam today. In Europe, he said, industry and transportation was restored quite rapidly through massive U.S. aid. But in Vietnam, which is a predominately agrarian society, "the land itself was attacked." The aid reaching Vietnam now is far from adequate, but even big quantities of material assistance could do little to accelerate the regeneration of the environment.

Pfeiffer and Westing also took up in the post-film discussion Washington's recent charges that the Vietnamese government is using biological warfare ("yellow rain") against the right-wing Pol Pot guerrillas in Kampuchea. The State Department has presented "no evidence that would stand up to decent scientific scrutiny," Westing declared, adding that as a scientist he found the

claims of the government "downright embarrassing."

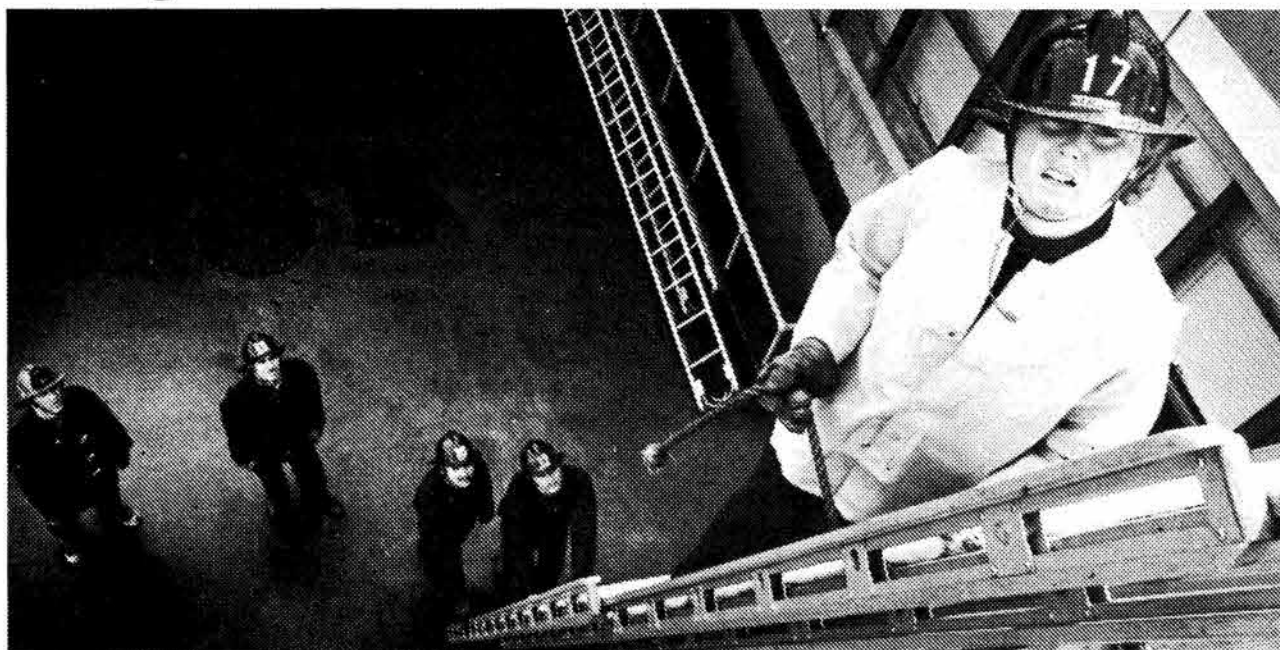
Westing also noted that a United Nations commission set up at the urging of the United States to investigate the charges found no witnesses and no physicians (aside from one U.S. air force colonel) who could verify the allegations of biological warfare by the Vietnamese. "In no way could the commission corroborate any of the evidence," Westing said.

Dr. Pfeiffer pointed to two possible motives for the State Department's unsubstantiated, but highly publicized, charges: "to dispel the Agent Orange controversy and to justify the United States's own research and development on chemical and biological warfare."

Ecocide: A Strategy of War is available for rental at a cost of \$30 to \$55, or for purchase at \$350, from Green Mountain Post Films, Box 229, Turners Falls, Massachusetts 01376. Videocassettes are available for purchase at \$175.

Further information on U.S. destruction of the Vietnamese environment may be found in Dr. E.W. Pfeiffer's 1972 book, *Harvest of Death*, published by Collier-McMillan. (The book is now out of print but may be available in libraries or used book stores.)

Abortion rights: why women need them, why rulers fear them



Influx of women into workforce helped spur movement for abortion rights.

By Margaret Jayko

On January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the constitutional right to privacy includes the right of women to choose an abortion for any reason.

This was a great victory for women.

Today, this right is under heavy attack from foes of a woman's right to choose. And they are making headway.

In fact, this "right" is becoming harder and harder to exercise, with the cutoff of Medicaid funding for abortions, mounting restrictions on the ability of teenagers to get abortions, and the refusal of many medical facilities to perform this operation.

Today, abortions are unavailable in more than 80 percent of U.S. county and city hospitals.

This is not simply the work of some right-wing fanatics. Democratic and Republican politicians and the ruling class they serve want to outlaw the right of women to abortion for the same reasons they're out to bust the air traffic controllers union, roll back Black rights, and prepare military intervention in Central America.

They are aiming to save their crisis-ridden system at our expense. They are trying to drive down our rights and living standards in order to increase their profit margins.

When abortion was illegal

What was life like for women in this country before abortion was legalized? Why did millions of women seek illegal abortions, despite the dangers and difficulties?

The answers to these questions help explain why women fought so hard for abortion rights and why a majority of people support that right today.

First of all, almost every woman lived in constant fear of unwanted pregnancies, and all that goes with them.

Women organized their whole world around the fact that they might be pregnant much of their lives.

A hard-won job could be lost when you started "showing" and the boss noticed.

Pregnancy could mean the sudden end of a high school or college education.

Providing for too many babies meant impoverishment for many working-class families.

For female teenagers, being pregnant often meant being forced out of school and into a life of welfare and dependency. Dashed hopes in many cases led to severe psychological problems, contributing to a high suicide rate among pregnant teenagers.

Women were forced into unwanted marriages to avoid both the social stigma attached to being an "unwed mother," as well as the financial hardships of a woman trying to support a child on her own.

The constant fear of pregnancy tended to have a depressing effect on women's sexuality.

There's a personal demoralization attached to having no control over how often you are pregnant and how many children you end up with.

The problem of unwanted pregnancies differed, depending on what social class you belonged to. Wealthier women have always been able to afford safe abortions performed in hospitals or clinics by licensed physicians.

Not so for the working woman, the poor woman, the Black or Latino woman, the young woman. For her, legality is the precondition for access to safe abortions.

The attacks on abortion rights are cloaked in pro-

paganda claiming that "abortion is murder."

But a fetus is *not* a human being. There is no question of murder involved.

Abortion saves lives

There are still no 100 percent safe and effective methods of contraception available today. That's why abortion has been a common method of birth control for centuries. Millions occur every year around the world.

Legalized abortion, far from being murder, *saves* thousands of lives annually. It is an elementary human right.

Outlawing abortions doesn't prevent women from seeking them. But it does mean that women are forced into the hands of back-alley, butcher abortionists, where they can suffer mutilation or worse.

One statistic illustrates the scope of this tragedy; in 1969, one year before New York adopted its liberalized abortion laws, approximately 210,000 women entered city hospitals due to abortion complications.

Step toward equality

Of course, legalized abortion cannot solve all the problems that face women.

But the right to choose is the *most fundamental* step toward women being able to achieve full equality.

That's why after women began pouring into the workforce in the last two decades, the question of legalizing abortion became a burning issue for millions.

When women can control their childbearing functions, it allows them to begin to participate more fully in all aspects of social life. The right to choose means qualitatively more freedom and mobility for women.

We've already seen this in the nine years that abortion has been legal. Even though access to it is far from universal, it has meant significant changes in the lives of millions of women.

This change in the scope of women's choices led, just as the ruling class feared it would, to demands for even greater freedom and opportunity, to a fight for full control over our minds and lives as well as our bodies.

Encouraged by the abortion rights victory, women stepped up their struggle for child care, affirmative action, the Equal Rights Amendment, and other rights.

Once you think about what the right to abortion means for women, you can see why the ruling rich and their politicians and clergy don't like it.

Pope John Paul II recently reminded us that the Catholic church hierarchy opposes abortion, birth control, and divorce because women are wives and mothers and should devote themselves full time to their families.

Many of the anti-abortion bills before Congress could also be used to ban the most effective and widely used methods of birth control.

Oppression is profitable

These "pro-life" clergy and legislators have no problem with supporting imperialist foreign policy, which is responsible for the deaths of millions. Their opposition to reproductive rights flows from their opposition to any measures that begin to loosen the bonds of women's oppression.

The second-class status of women is one of the fundamental props of this class-divided, production-for-profit society. Social inequality is the very basis of the system — there are those who own the factories and those who work in them to make the owners rich. The oppression of women is institutionalized social inequality of over half the population.

This is maintained through a thousand different laws and centuries of rigid social conditioning about the "natural" roles of women and men.

This oppression is money in the bank for the owning class.

Women perform unpaid labor in the home, and they are paid less in the workforce than men. This has a depressing effect on the wages of all workers.

Justifications

How is all the discrimination against women in this society justified?

All the "reasons" for it revolve around the fact that women have the capacity to bear children. Therefore, women's main function must be to reproduce and nurse children, and all the things that go along with that.

Women's natural place is in the home with the children, not worrying their "pretty little heads" about the world of work, politics, economics, education, etc.

Women are weak, silly, stupid, and they must be dependent on husbands, brothers, fathers, or boy-friends.

And all this is presented as "eternal" and "natural."

Abortion restrictions are one of the ruling class's most powerful and barbaric means of controlling women and keeping them in their place. They are designed to enforce, against women's will, the ruling class's view of what women should be and do.

These laws are an important underpinning of the inferiority complex that this society imposes upon women. They reinforce the idea that women's fulfillment comes only through motherhood.

The ruling class feels very threatened by women gaining some measure of control over their bodies.

For good reason.

In this society, the majority of people have no control over their lives.

We are controlled — by the bosses, the preachers, the cops, and by "natural disasters" like inflation and recession.

Women gaining control over their bodies poses the question of gaining control over other aspects of our lives, and sets an example for other people as well.

The ruling class must weaken women and drive us back as part of their anti-working-class offensive. They want to lessen women as a potent social and political force.

The right to abortion goes against the grain of this scenario.

That's why the fight to defend abortion rights is the cutting edge of the fight for women's equality today.

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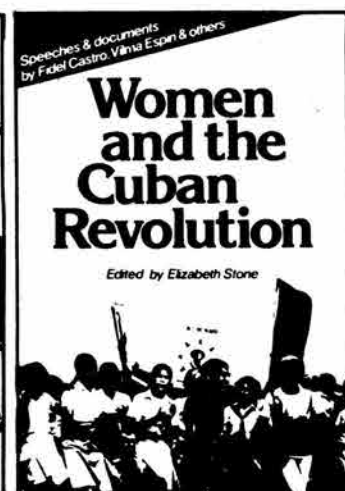
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'Dictatorship'?

Holiday spirit alive in Nicaragua

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA — According to the U.S. media, Nicaragua is once again becoming a totalitarian state. The bright promise of the Sandinista revolution has now faded to a dull, grey dictatorship, not very different from the Somoza tyranny that preceded it.

Image and reality could not be further apart, as a few episodes from daily life here in the pre-Christmas season reveal.

December 8 is celebrated here as *Purísima*, or the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The celebration of this holiday is unique — while other Central American countries note its passing, nowhere else is it a cause for such rejoicing. And rejoicing there was: bands in the

parks, firecrackers going off everywhere, food, drinks, sweets.

It's a combination of Christmas morning, New Year's eve, and Halloween, with kids of various ages trooping from house to house filling their bags with candy and other treats.

Many people built *Purísima* shrines in their homes or outside. One typical Nicaraguan street scene found a dozen or so wheelchair-confined worshippers in front of a shrine, while around the street wandered militia members, children, teenaged couples, and police — all cheerfully oblivious to the fact that they were living under the iron heel of a dictatorship.

As in all religious festivals here, religion and politics are inextricably mixed together. Celebrations that take a reli-

gious theme as a starting point inevitably wind up reflecting popular enthusiasm for the revolution and optimism for the future.

In many barrios, the Sandinista Defense Committees took the lead in organizing the celebrations, while Government House itself built a big shrine in its main exhibition room. The entire country was invited to a *Purísima* open house, and three members of the junta stood around giving candy to children.

"This was the happiest *Purísima* I've ever seen," a woman working at Radio Sandino said.

Then there is the question of human rights, which, according to the U.S. media, are being chipped away, if not simply being dumped all at once.

On December 10, Jaime Bengochea, president of the Chamber of Industry, returned to Nicaragua. Bengochea had been sought by the police since last October, when an order for his arrest along with six other top business leaders was issued.

Four of the seven have already been tried, and three convicted, on charges of economic destabilization.

Bengochea turned himself in to the Nicaraguan embassy in Costa Rica. The Nicaraguan government sent its official plane to San José to pick him up, accompanied by an official of the National Committee for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

In court, Bengochea denied the charges against him, was released into his lawyer's custody, and told to come back in two days. All this after he fled the country to avoid arrest.

Compare this treatment to the operations of the governments of El Salvador or Guatemala, where repression is so fierce that human rights commissions can't even operate, and criticizing the government means a drastic shortening of your life expectancy.

So cherished are human rights in Nicaragua that the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, in a December 6 report to the Organization of American States, heaped praise on the Sandi-

nista government, describing Nicaragua as a "model for the protection and promotion of human rights."

Meanwhile, the Sandinista government has turned some improved land back over to its private owners, at the same time as it continues distributing titles to expropriated land to cooperatives of landless peasants.

On December 7, CONARCA, a special coffee renovation unit of the Ministry of Agricultural Development, turned back to their owners fifteen small and medium-sized coffee plantations that had undergone extensive reworking.

Coffee is one of Nicaragua's chief exports, but suffers from various diseases and from low productivity. CONARCA, with a total budget of 100 million córdobas (10 córdobas equals \$1), was established to upgrade it.

Instead of seizing the technically backward coffee plantations, CONARCA "borrowed" them for eighteen months to do its work. Some 165 more will be turned back to their private owners later this month.

The owners, of course, pay back what CONARCA put into their holdings — but the terms are not exactly drastic. They have ten years, with a two-year grace period, at low interest rates.

Meanwhile, on December 11, more than 1,300 manzanas (one manzana equals 1.73 acres) of confiscated idle land were turned over to peasant cooperatives, which now hold title. The lands come from large holdings which have been uncultivated or undercultivated by their owners.

Minister of Agricultural Development Jaime Wheelock announced at the December 11 ceremony that another 13,000 manzanas were going to be confiscated and distributed as well, receiving a tremendously enthusiastic response from the thousands of peasants gathered there.

If a measure of democracy is turning land over to the people who want to work it, then the Sandinista revolution has created a democracy without equal in the world.



Intercontinental Press/Arnold Weissberg
Nicaraguan Minister of Agricultural Development Jaime Wheelock (left) recently announced another 1,300 manzanas of land (about 2,250 acres) would be turned over to peasant cooperatives.

Militant/Fred Halstead

... protests to hit threat to Central America

Continued from front page

tions against Cuba and Nicaragua over their supposed links to the Salvadoran guerrillas."

The vigorous response throughout the world to the Cuban, Grenadian, Nicaraguan, and Salvadoran appeals for solidarity contributed to averting an immediate U.S. aggression, which the Cubans had feared might come as early as mid-November.

Nevertheless, since there has been no letup in U.S. government propaganda and threats against them, the leaders of the three governments have maintained the state of alert and redoubled their efforts to mount an international protest campaign against U.S. intervention.

Behind the U.S. threats is American imperialism's unbending hostility to the deepening popular revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean, which directly threaten the superprofits that American corporations extract from the region.

So far, everything the U.S. government has tried has been unable to turn back the mounting revolutionary wave.

Since coming to power in 1979, the Grenadian and Nicaraguan revolutionary governments have firmly resisted all U.S. attempts to blackmail or buy them off. As these measures have not succeeded, Washington is resorting to harsher means to stop these governments from putting the interests of the workers and peasants first. It is attempting to destabilize and subvert these governments and, if possible, overthrow them.

In El Salvador, news reports indicate that the FMLN guerrillas are making steady gains. Even U.S. government officials admit that the war is stalemated — and they say openly that a stalemate would eventually lead to a rebel victory.

Side by side with their military advances, the Salvadoran freedom fighters are also making gains in their campaign to isolate the ruling junta internationally. In an important victory on December 16, the United Nations General Assembly approved, by a vote of sixty-eight to twenty-two (with fifty-three abstentions), a resolution calling for "the Salvadoran parties involved" to "arrive at a negotiated political solution." The resolution, sponsored by France and other European allies of Washington, is an implicit recognition of the rebel Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and FMLN, and a rejection of the U.S.-inspired phony "elections" the junta plans for March.

The resolution, which the U.S. government and its Salvadoran clients opposed, also called for suspension of "any type" of military support or arms supplies to El Salvador.

In Guatemala, the situation is becoming equally grim for the military dictatorship. Despite savage repression — some 11,000 Guatemalans are calculated to have been killed by government forces in 1981 — armed resistance to the regime is growing. The freedom fighters appear to be gaining strength, extending the areas of their operations, and dealing heavier blows to the military.

Given this situation, there can be lit-

tle doubt that the threats from Washington are real.

This point was emphasized in mid-December, when top officials of the State and Defense departments testified before congressional committees.

Over the past several weeks, various commentators in the big-business press tried to allay fears about U.S. war threats, noting that these were coming primarily from the State Department, and alleging that the Pentagon was opposed to any military action.

Such myths were undercut in congressional testimony by Thomas Enders and Fred Iklé, top officials of the State and Defense departments, respectively.

Enders repeated the same old State Department lies about Cuban "intervention," as usual without presenting a shred of proof despite repeated challenges by Cuban leaders to do so. He also reiterated the threats that "the costs [to Cuba] of escalating their intervention in the area will be high."

The following day, December 15, Iklé told a congressional subcommittee about "the growing [Cuban] military threat in the Caribbean," describing Cuba as a "crown colony of Communist imperialism." He told the subcommittee that the Pentagon has readied military "contingency plans" for action in Central America and the Caribbean.

So alarming were these official statements that, according to *Washington Post* columnist Mary McGrory, one of the senators at the Iklé hearing, Christopher Dodd, "suspects the administra-

tion might try something martial while Congress is off on recess."

Whatever the timing and options being discussed in the White House and Pentagon, the thrust of U.S. policy is perfectly clear: maintenance of imperialist domination of Central America and the Caribbean by any means necessary, including direct use of American military might.

This reality has to be explained to the American people. While U.S. working people don't want another Vietnam, most are unaware of Reagan's concrete war moves in the Caribbean.

What is needed is the broadest possible campaign to get out the truth to the American people and mobilize their antiwar sentiment in protests against Reagan's threats. Such a campaign must involve forces far broader than those that have already become involved, especially the unions, Black and Latino organizations, and women's rights organizations. Religious groups, peace groups, civil libertarians, and students should be drawn in, too.

The various solidarity committees and other groups that have already become active in sounding the alarm have begun laying the basis for such a broad-based campaign against U.S. intervention. Through the organizing for the January 22 commemorations, these groups can take another step toward mobilizing the broad masses of American people against the danger of a new Vietnam in our hemisphere.

Actions hit war threat in Central America



UAW sub-regional Director Bob Killeen (right), seen here at June 1981 news conference with exiled Salvadoran unionist Tulio Mendoza, was among speakers at recent Twin Cities antiwar action.

By Nelson González

The Reagan administration's preparations to intervene in Central America and the Caribbean have generated protests throughout the country during the past several weeks.

One thousand Minnesotans gathered at city hall in St. Paul December 2 for a rally. The demonstrators were joined by delegates from the District 33 convention of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), which was meeting across the street from the rally.

Mike Cantrill, representing USWA Local 1938, called for continuing protests against Washington's war drive. "We will not lose, we will not back down, we will overcome," he said.

Bill Koenen, speaking for the American Indian Movement, reported that AIM leaders Clyde and Vernon Bellecourt were unable to be present because they were attending a conference in Nicaragua.

Following the rally, the protesters marched through downtown to Assump-

tion Church for a memorial service for the four Maryknoll missionaries killed by government forces in El Salvador one year ago.

Bob Killeen, subregional director of the United Auto Workers in the Twin Cities, urged those attending the service to become involved in the El Salvador Solidarity Committee.

Other speakers included Sister Phyllis O'Toole, friend of the slain Maryknoll missionary Maura Clark; Robert Anderson, Episcopal bishop of Minnesota; and Carla Riehle, El Salvador Solidarity Committee.

On December 7, fifty people attended a rally at Mesabi Community College in Virginia, Minnesota. Mark Wilke, president of Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization Local 383 in Duluth, drew a round of applause when he pointed out that "Reagan offered the controllers other federal jobs, but we don't want to trade our jobs for green uniforms."

Also speaking were Elizabeth Kilanski, vice president of Iron Range National Organization for Women; state Senator Ron Dicklich; Rev. Hal Anderson, Our Saviours Lutheran Church; and Dave Salner, Northern Minnesota Committee on El Salvador.

The Iron Range Labor Assembly, AFL-CIO, and USWA Local 6115 were among the sponsors of the meeting.

A couple of weeks before the meeting, a letter to the editor, signed by a broad range of labor and religious figures, appeared in the *Duluth News-Tribune*, *Mesabi Daily News*, and the *Hibbing Tribune*.

The letter stated, "We the undersigned want to speak out against the Reagan administration's plans to stage a show of force, whether it is aimed at El Salvador, Nicaragua or Cuba. This is a

dangerous course of action that threatens to involve us in a new Vietnam War situation."

Joe Samargia, president of USWA Local 1938, and Roger Klander, president of USWA Local 6115, were among the signers.

A meeting for Ricardo Bracamonte, a representative of the Salvadoran teachers union, drew seventy-five people in Morgantown, West Virginia, November 12. The meeting, sponsored by the Latin American Solidarity Project, heard a message from Steve Webber, International Executive Board member of District 31 of the United Mine Workers. District 31 includes northern West Virginia.

Webber's message stated: "I am of the firm belief and would support the United States of America seeking other alternative means of securing a self-government of El Salvador, as opposed to providing military aid to the same military government that is exercising abuse and murder of all elements of the people of El Salvador."

"I speak as an individual in this and not as this being the official United Mine Workers position. However, I do intend to make a request of our international union to adopt a similar position."

The New Mexico state AFL-CIO, at its recent convention, adopted a resolution calling for an end to all U.S. aid to El Salvador.

In Santa Cruz, California, voters in the municipal election in November approved a measure calling on the federal government "to end all military and economic aid to the government of El Salvador and to withdraw all military personnel from that country."

The vote was 6,896 in favor to 2,817 against.

Ark. Bible trial: science is workers' issue

By Stu Singer

Testimony ended December 17 in the trial in Little Rock challenging the Arkansas law requiring that the Bible myth of creation be taught in the public schools.

Federal District Court Judge William Overton said he will issue a decision before the end of the month.

No matter what his decision, the trial got out scientific views to a wide audience. It probably produced the most publicity about evolution since the Scopes "monkey" trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925.

The Arkansas case was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union representing twenty-three religious leaders. They brought suit against state law 590 passed last March and intended to go into effect with the beginning of school next September.

The "Balanced Treatment for Creation-science and Evolution-science Act" calls for teaching a version of the story of creation from the Bible "equally" with teaching science.

The bill was introduced by State Senator James Holsted, a Democrat, who explained, "God told me to work for this law." It was signed by Governor Frank White who boasted he didn't bother to read it. "I'm a Christian and I believe in the Biblical account of creation," the governor said.

Louisiana adopted a similar law last summer and it is being pushed in at least twenty other states.

Ronald Reagan is one of the supporters of teaching Bible myths as science. This right-wing drive is not limited to the states. A bill was introduced in Congress October 21 to limit funding of the Smithsonian museum until it installs displays about the Bible's views of history, geology, and anthropology.

The right-wingers think they can win popular support by presenting their proposal as both scientific and democratic. They point to an Associated Press/NBC News poll last October in

which 76 percent said they thought both "creation-science and evolution-science" should be taught.

But the way the question is posed on the poll is a set-up. There is no such thing as creation-science. The result of the poll would have been different if it were correctly presented: Should science or superstition be taught in schools?

The right-wingers' equal-time argument only applies to forcing religion into the public schools. They are not for allowing equal time for science in the churches, on their radio and television programs and religious networks, or in the growing number of private, segregated religious schools.

The Arkansas trial is the second court action this year around the issue of teaching science. In California last March there was a challenge to the right of the state to set education guidelines. The case, brought by Kelly Segraves on behalf of his thirteen-year-old son, said the teaching of evolution would undermine his son's religious faith.

The state court decision upheld the right of the state to set guidelines. It also reiterated that those guidelines include the statement of California Board of Education policy passed in 1972 that forbids teaching evolution as an "irrefutable fact."

But the theory of evolution is a fact. It is no more refutable than other scientific facts, like the earth is not flat and revolves around the sun.

The theory of evolution explains how the mechanism of natural selection accounts for the diversity of life forms, their similarities and differences.

Since Charles Darwin's pioneering work over 100 years ago, enormous amounts of information have been found deepening scientific knowledge in every field — from astronomy and geology to understanding genes and chromosomes.

The wealth of new knowledge has reconfirmed and enriched Darwin's findings and basic theories many times over. Scientists have been able to go much further than Darwin. They have

demonstrated, for example, the transformation of organic compounds into amino acids under conditions similar to those on earth billions of years ago. It was this revolutionary change in matter that led to the formation of living cells.

Many right-wingers point to teaching evolution as opening the way for atheism and Marxism. They have a point there.

The theory about evolution of biological species is paralleled by the studies and theories of Darwin's contemporaries Karl Marx and Frederick Engels about human social evolution.

The right wing correctly fears that evolution theory, as well as all scientific thinking, breaks down the reactionary idea that nothing changes. God made the earth, plants, people, and other animals as they are.

Can capitalist society itself fundamentally change? No, say the right-wingers. No, says religion. The capitalist system with its great extremes of wealth and poverty, its periodic wars and economic crises, is fixed, permanent.

Pray for salvation after death. No real change can happen here and now.

The federal judge hearing the Arkansas case indicated during the trial how he is likely to rule. He repeatedly questioned defense witnesses about why the law was necessary. Can't they just teach creationism in the schools without the law?

Testimony from state witnesses proves that they can and are doing just that. Right-wingers are openly threatening teachers who do not teach creationism. The ability of the politicians on school boards to hire and fire hangs over teachers' heads.

So even if the ACLU wins the case in Arkansas, it will only be a step in the fight to defend science.

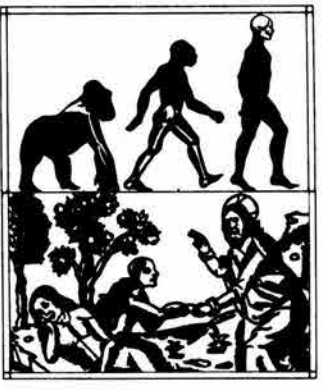
The attack on science is part of the ideological underpinning for attacks on workers, farmers, women, and minorities here and throughout the world. Religion discourages critical thinking.

The weapons needed by the working class and its allies to defend their rights and standard of living include being armed ideologically. It is part of the fight for socialism.

The capitalist crisis jeopardizes all democratic rights. Freedom of speech, press, and association and the right to strike are under attack. Also under attack is the right to separation of church and state; the right to public education that is an education in facts, not superstition.

Defending science, fighting censorship and book burning — these are tasks of the workers and their allies. These are social issues that can only be defended in the long run by the unions, civil rights and women's rights groups.

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'Reds' and the ten days that shook the world

By Harry Ring

I approached *Reds* with a certain apprehension. I just couldn't believe that Hollywood could, or would, make a film that would do justice to John Reed, his book *Ten Days that Shook the World*, or its subject matter — the Russian revolution.

I came away from the movie with the feeling that they had done far better than I had expected. Whatever its shortcomings, artistically, or politically, *Reds* towers over the average commercial film and is definitely worth seeing.

Politically, perhaps the most significant thing about *Reds* is that it presents a powerful refutation of the anticommunist propaganda myth that the Russian revolution was a coup perpetrated behind the backs of the Russian people by a handful of Bolshevik plotters.

Reds offers marvelous street scenes of Petrograd during the days when the Bolsheviks won political power — the ten days that shook the world. We see the indispensable ingredient of authentic revolution — the masses of people intervening decisively in the historical process.

There are the big outdoor meetings where conflicting positions are hotly debated, masses of people marching under red banners and singing the "Internationale."

But there is a good deal more. Film-



Paramount/David Appleby

Diane Keaton as Louise Bryant

goers not already aware of it, will learn how the U.S. government and other imperialist powers sent troops to intervene in the Russian civil war in an unsuccessful attempt to strangle the revolution in its infancy.

They will get a feel, too, of the witch-hunt launched in this country as a counter to the impact here of the Russian revolution. And there are exciting glimpses of the American class struggle of the time.

The film highlights Reed's eventful life. We see an already successful young journalist whose main interest is in writing for the widely read radical magazine, the *Masses*. Edited mainly by Max Eastman, and briefly by Reed, the *Masses* featured political journalism, poetry, fiction, and cartoons by some of the most distinguished writers and artists of the time.

Social journalist

Reed played a key role in putting the national spotlight on the Paterson, New Jersey, silk strike of 1913. He told the story of Pancho Villa's Mexican guerrillas, and reported on the Ludlow, Colorado, mine strike where workers were massacred.

Reds features exciting scenes of Reed as a fighter against World War I, and then as he plunges into the Russian revolution and its aftermath.

And, with all this, his tempestuous relationship with Louise Bryant. That relationship is a major theme of *Reds*.

A resident of Portland, Bryant was a radical intellectual and feminist. She came to New York with Reed to pursue a career as a writer. For a period, she was

in France covering World War I for a news syndicate. She went with Reed to Russia to cover the revolution.

Bryant returned to this country before Reed and wrote and spoke in support of the revolution. (Her book, *Six Red Months in Russia*, pales in comparison to Reed's *Ten Days*.)

She returned to Moscow in 1920, just before Reed's death. (She didn't go to Finland, where Reed had been jailed, as the movie has it.)

After Reed's death, she returned here. She remarried a few years later, had a child, and was divorced. Bryant left politics and died in Paris in 1936.

Reed's life was even shorter. He died in Moscow in 1920. But, as *Reds* conveys, his was more than a full life.

In Petrograd, Reed witnessed the tumultuous days leading to the formation of the revolutionary government. He reported the revolution brilliantly and was won to it totally.

In 1916, Reed's radicalism was primitive enough to lead him to vote for Woodrow Wilson as a means of opposing the war. (Wilson, of course, took the United States into the war.) By 1918, John Reed was a convinced Bolshevik.

Reds captures some of the drama of Reed's return to the United States in 1918 to tell the story of the Russian revolution first hand. On his return, he wrote numerous articles and spoke at many meetings.

Then, after winning back notes and documents confiscated by the U.S. government on his return here, he wrote the classic *Ten Days*.

Lenin wrote a forward to *Ten Days* in which he said, "Unreservedly do I recommend it to the workers of the world. Here is a book which I should like to see published in millions of copies and translated into all languages."

Over the years, many copies have been published here and abroad. Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's companion, translated it into Russian and it was used there as a school text in the pre-Stalin period.

Here, *Ten Days* went through four printings in as many months. Today, it's available from three different publishers. *Reds* will undoubtedly stimulate further sales.

Reed as party builder

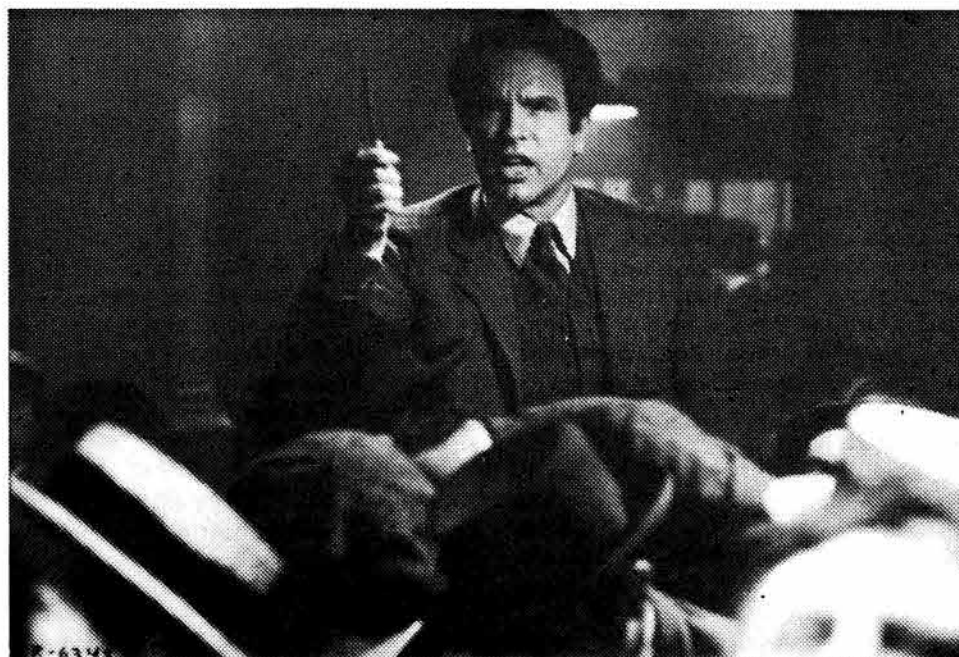
John Reed did more than write an important book. *Reds* recounts — with limited success — the important chapter in Reed's life when he plunged into the work of building a party in this country that would seek to follow the path charted by the Russian revolution.

The story is a complex one.

Reed joined the Socialist Party (SP) and became a leader of its left wing.

By 1918, the controlling leaders of the Socialist Party had degenerated into total reformists whose lip service to socialism could only be regarded as obscene.

Since its inception, there had been a left wing in the Socialist Party that opposed the policies of the leadership. With the enormous impact of the Russian revolution on the workers in this



Paramount/David Appleby

Warren Beatty as John Reed challenges right-wing leaders at 1919 Socialist Party convention. Left wing was bureaucratically expelled even though they had broad membership support.

country, the Socialist Party grew rapidly and the left wing fastest of all.

In 1919, partisans of the Russian Revolution split from the SP, but found themselves divided and formed two parties, the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party. Reed was a leader of the CLP.

Reds then takes us back to Moscow with Reed, where he seeks to win support for his party and its policies. He participated in the first two congresses of the Communist International, often called the Comintern, and was elected to its executive committee.

In the fall of 1920, Reed participated in the Congress of the Peoples of the East, an anti-imperialist gathering held in the Azerbaijani city of Baku. It was there that he contracted the typhus that brought his death later the same year.

Reed was buried in Red Square — the only American so honored.

Criticism has been made by some viewers of the way *Reds* depicts the personal relationship between Reed and Bryant. And, despite the fine acting by Diane Keaton and Warren Beatty, there are, undeniably, some corny moments.

But a more serious criticism of *Reds*, I think, relates to the efforts to deal with a wide range of political developments in which Reed was involved.

For members of the audience not informed about the events, it must be particularly difficult to comprehend the condensed and sometimes simplistic depiction of the split in the Socialist Party and the two communist parties that emerged from the split. This is so even though the film stays quite close to what actually happened.

Similarly with Reed's heated dispute in the Comintern over tactics in the American labor movement.

Zinoviev as the heavy

There are also parts of *Reds* that can be and have been construed as anticommunist.

These mainly revolve around depictions of encounters between Reed and

Gregory Zinoviev. Zinoviev was a leading member of the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International. In the 1930s, he and many others were framed up by Stalin and executed as "Nazi agents."

In one scene, Zinoviev argues with Reed, who wants to return home, assertedly because of a personal commitment he made to Louise Bryant.

Zinoviev argues, in a seemingly heartless way, that Reed is urgently needed in Moscow for the important political work he is doing.

While the actor who plays Zinoviev delivers the lines in a harsh, alienating way, what Zinoviev is portrayed as telling Reed is not unreasonable.

You can always return to your personal responsibilities, Zinoviev says, but never to this moment in history.

Reed does try to go home, making his way through battle lines, and is captured by Finnish troops and jailed for a period in Finland. The movie suggests, despite ample evidence to the contrary, that the Russians tried to prevent his leaving and that he was on his own when captured.

There is even less basis in fact for the scene in which Reed angrily assails Zinoviev for making a change in translation of Reed's speech at the Baku conference. According to the film, where Reed spoke of "class war," Zinoviev changed it to "holy war."

Actually, Reed, along with numerous others of the invited speakers, never got to make his speech at Baku. He did give a very brief greeting, but his speech was simply included in the official proceedings of the conference. Neither his greetings nor his speech (which was published in the December 18 *Militant*) include the phrase "class war" or "holy war."

Zinoviev himself did speak at the Baku conference and did call for a "holy war" — a "holy war" against imperialism.

Where, then, did Beatty and cowriter Trevor Griffiths go wrong on these points?

I think they stumbled, wittingly or unwittingly, into a campaign that has persisted for some sixty years by renegades from communism determined to claim Reed as their own: people who declare that Reed became disillusioned with the revolution and died a trapped dissident.

But the "evidence" that Reed died disillusioned is based almost exclusively on what lawyers would describe as hearsay — sometimes two- and three-times removed. There is not a word in Reed's last writings to confirm this. Quite the opposite.

I think a study of the available record confirms what Hugo Gellert, an early communist, recalls Reed saying to him on his first return from revolutionary Russia. As the final film credits are being shown on the screen, Gellert is heard saying:

"Grand things are ahead, worth living and dying for." He always said that."

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Listen to poppa — The ranks of the religious are being depleted by nuns seeking "impossible" roles in the church and by too much "experimentation," said Cardinal John Cody of Chicago. He's the good father being investigated by the feds for allegedly diverting church dollars to a longtime female friend.

Really? — UCLA researchers found a higher incidence of depression among poor people — particularly Latinos, Blacks, and women — than among the wealthy.

Socialism's 'impractical'? — Officials are pondering if and how to give

away 225 million pounds of cheese, half the surplus being held in government storage to maintain prices. One official said the problem is "incredible," explaining, "You cannot permit a disruption of sales." "Probably," he added, "the cheapest and most practical thing would be to dump it in the ocean."

Know which side butter is on — Some Cincinnati restaurants give cops a 50 percent discount on meals. Employees get 25 percent.

Crime doesn't pay? — "The master bedroom is really an enormous suite that opens onto a terrace. . . . The room is filled with jade and silver ob-

jects. There are two dressing rooms and two baths; Mrs. Nixon's is done in burgundy marble, the former president's in brown leather." — A New York Daily News description of Tricky Dick's fifteen-room suburban cottage.

Always a catch — We were getting a bit bored with those liverwurst sandwiches for lunch and considered calling a New York specialty shop which offers foie gras made from choice goose livers. Only \$200 a pound plain, \$275 with truffles. But the free delivery offer is only good between East 60th and 86th streets, near the mayor's pad.

Law 'n order dep't — A couple were

seated in a movie in Aurora, Colorado, when four cops came in and busted the man. They had, it seems, brought their own popcorn from home. (Merely, they asserted, because it was cheaper and better.) The theater management said the couple had been repeatedly warned that nothing but house corn was permitted inside.

How progressive can you get? — Senate partisans say that while they face a stiff fight they may finally have enough votes to ratify a treaty outlawing genocide. A favorable vote would make the United States the eighty-second nation to approve the pact.

U.S. border guards control revolt of Haitian refugees

By Nelson González

On December 21, 100 U.S. border patrol guards were sent to Fort Allen in Puerto Rico, a former Marine communications base, to help the 500-person security force maintain control in the face of a rebellion by Haitian refugees imprisoned there.

Since August, when the Reagan administration confined 800 refugees to the concentration-camp-like conditions in Fort Allen, one refugee has died and numerous others have become ill.

The refugees are demanding legal representation in order to document violations against them, including forcible separation from their spouses.

Early in December, eleven refugees filed suit against the Immigration and Naturalization Service, citing sixteen violations.

As part of the pattern of intimidation and provocation that has been going on for months, the security forces attempted to erect an additional barbed-wire fence in the camp December 19. In pro-

test, a group of 200 Haitians tore down portions of the fencing. They retreated only when their lawyers arrived on the scene.

There have been significant outpourings of support for the Haitian refugees recently in the United States and Puerto Rico.

On December 12, the largest demonstrations ever held in support of Haitian refugees took place. Five thousand demonstrated in Puerto Rico and 5,000 marched in Washington, D.C.

Forum calls for reunification of Korea

By David Snipper

BERKELEY, Calif. — A forum entitled "Korea since Kwangju" took place here December 11. Speakers stressed the need for reunification of North and South Korea and an end to the military dictatorship in South Korea. Some 50 percent of the audience consisted of Asian families.

The forum began with a historical overview of the events leading up to the May 1980 Kwangju uprising in South Korea that called for the ouster of the Chun Du Hwan government.

The uprising was crushed only when 7,800 Korean troops were ordered into the city by General John Wickham, the commanding general of the 40,000 U.S. troops stationed in the country. Wickham also heads the joint command of some 600,000 South Korean troops.

Taped TV coverage of the uprising, taken by a European journalist, was also shown. The organizing of popular committees and the seizure of government buildings by armed citizens was visible everywhere, as was the fact that the entire Kwangju population of

800,000 supported or participated in the massive outpouring.

The forum was sponsored by the Nauticus Pacific Action Research Center, which focuses on political and economic relations between the United States and Asia. A broad list of endorsers included: Casa El Salvador; Ecumenical Peace Institute-Clergy and Laity Concerned; Guatemala Solidarity Committee; and others.

UMW demands owner resign from W. Va. mine safety board

By Linda May Flint

MORGANTOWN, W. Va. — Three miners were killed and one critically injured in a mine cave-in in Webster County, West Virginia, December 3.

The injured miner, twenty-seven-year-old Donzil Cutlip, is in intensive care here. Doctors have had to amputate both his arms and he is on a kidney dialysis machine. He was trapped under tons of rock for thirteen hours in the cave-in.

It has now come out that the owner of the small, nonunion mine is a member of the West Virginia Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety.

William Post, owner of the Elk River Sewell Company, is one of the industry representatives on the seven-member state board.

The United Mine Workers union is demanding Post's immediate resignation from the board.

FBI, cops harass Puerto Rican activists

An article appearing in the December 4-10 issue of *Claridad*, the newspaper of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, details what appears to be the beginnings of a concerted government attack against supporters of Puerto Rican independence in Puerto Rico.

On November 25, agents of the FBI, together with the Puerto Rican police, visited fifteen members of the Popular Socialist Movement (MSP) and three members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR) and questioned them.

The FBI-cop harassment took place simultaneously between 6 and 7 a.m. throughout the island. Later the same day, police attacked a peaceful student rally at the University of Puerto Rico.

In one incident, twelve agents showed up at the condominium where Luis Angel Torres, a leader of the MSP, and other socialists and independentistas live.

The FBI has threatened these activists with further harassment and with being subpoenaed to testify before a federal grand jury. The FBI attempted to question them about the support work done in the recent strike of electrical workers, the current student strike, and about explosions at military installations on the island a year ago.

In a statement protesting this kind of harassment, both the president and vice-president of the teacher's federation scored the questioning of Nicolás Ortiz, a teacher visited by the FBI in the school where he teaches.

MISSOURI KANSAS CITY

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Letters

Nuclear Power I

On November 3, voters in Washington state passed an initiative which prohibits utilities from using bonds to finance nuclear power plants unless they get voter approval. Like last year's referendum, where people voted three to one to limit the importation of nuclear waste, the proposal passed by a wide margin.

Naturally, the antinuclear movement greeted the vote as a victory. We have not achieved the shutdown of every single nuclear power plant, which is our goal, but we have taken one step forward. It is inspiring to see the capitalists quake.

The *Militant* urged people to vote against the proposal. This put them on the same side as the pronuclear forces. No doubt this was confusing to people who know that the *Militant* is against nuclear power.

Revolutionists have to understand that people come to radical conclusions in all different ways, which is why we have transitional demands. The people in Washington were outraged by the cost of nuclear power, which was estimated at \$30,000 for every household in the state. If their mandate is implemented, there will be five fewer nukes. And if it is not, there will be thousands of people drawn into the larger fight against both nuclear power, and against those who would deny them their mandate. One step is followed by others.

Joyce Stoller
Chicago, Illinois

Nuclear Power II

Dennis Richter's article in your November 6 issue urging a "no" vote on Initiative 394 in Washington state was very disappointing. 394 requires voter approval for financing of Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS) energy projects. It received overwhelming support in the November elections.

The theme of Richter's argument against 394 is that it will not end nuclear power. That is like saying that the right of people to vote on war will not end capitalist wars. 394 is obviously not the answer, and, to give credit to its authors, it was never presented as such.

394 infringes on the prerogatives of the bankers and energy magnates to make energy policy, and they clearly wanted to defeat it. The banks, contractors, and other pronuclear forces raised over \$1 million to urge a "no" vote, making the anti-394 committee the most heavily financed effort around a ballot issue in Washington history. Thus, the Socialist Workers Party called for a "no" vote alongside a highly visible ruling-class campaign calling for the same thing.

The victory of 394 was a setback for WPPSS and the advocates of nuclear energy. Now, where will the SWP stand when the first WPPSS bond issue comes before Washington voters in the not too distant future? On the basis of its excellent record of

opposition to nuclear power, I am convinced that SWP members will be out there calling for no more money to nuclear power and helping to point the way forward for the antinuclear movement.

Bob Bresnahan
Olympia, Washington

Living revolution

We are two old readers of *Intercontinental Press* and the *Militant* in Iran, and we want to congratulate David Frankel on his excellent article on the Iranian Revolution (*Militant*, November 20).

To tell you the truth we were a little worried on whether it is possible for anybody outside Iran to grasp the essence of the situation here, considering all the lies that are fabricated daily by the imperialist mass media to hide the reality of the Iranian revolution.

The revolution is alive and Frankel has succeeded in giving a clear picture of it amid all its complexities and contradictions.

The only other political current outside Iran that has not been made confused by the imperialist news filth and all the worthless talk about "what is the nature of Islam," etc., is the Cuban leadership.

The Interparliamentary delegation from Iran, upon returning to Iran from the Havana Conference (Inter-Parliamentary Union), held a press conference here. The head of the delegation quoted Fidel Castro as having told the Iran delegation, composed mostly of Islamic clergymen: "The thing that the other countries of the Middle East need most is your kind of Islam; you should try harder at exporting it." Any revolutionary Marxist can say hallelujah to that!
H.T. and P.N.
Iran

Int'l solidarity

We looked forward to the *Militant's* coverage of the First International Conference in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, in Mexico City. The article by Nelson González covered it well. Two of us from El Frente Unido Para Derechos Humanos in Pueblo, Colorado, were delegates to the conference; the article brought back to us the tremendous experience of international solidarity.

It was not a conference of workshops or education. Two significant measures were discussed in sophisticated detail, and passed by the delegates. The four-page "Document" condemned support of the present junta, praised recognition of the FMLN-FDR by Mexico and France, and detailed violations of imperialism affecting countries all over the world. It was passed and sent to governments internationally. To follow this "Document" with direct actions, the second order of business was discussion and passage of the "Plan of Action."

This conference created an international network of organizations, coordinating specific actions to demonstrate

support for the revolution in El Salvador, condemn imperialist intervention, and proceed further with the people's struggles in Latin America and all over the world. I can still feel the powerful atmosphere of optimism and solidarity. I can hear the chants, "Nicaragua Venció, El Salvador Vencerá! Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Ireland . . ."
Martha Remple
Pueblo, Colorado

Fitting tribute

On November 21, in Aurora, Minnesota, on the Mesabi Iron Range, a long-time fighter for the working class died. Reuben Plageman was an inspiration to all of us on the Iron Range working to continue the battle that Reuben fought.

Reuben learned of the socialist movement as a child from his father, a member of the early Socialist Party, and a great admirer of Eugene V. Debs. Debs was a hero to Reuben, who lived the rest of his life dedicated to bettering the lot of working people.

Reuben died fighting capitalist injustice. He spent his last years battling the U.S. government. Reuben worked for years as a coal miner in West Virginia in the 1940s and contracted black lung disease. The government denied having any record of Reuben ever working in the mines and refused to pay him one cent of the disability benefits he and his wife Evelyn had coming. Anyone who ever spoke to Reuben knew from his hoarse and raspy voice, always filled with biting hatred of this government, that his lungs were destroyed.

Reuben wanted very badly to travel to Cuba, but wasn't able to because of his failing health. But he always inspired those of us younger and healthier to keep fighting, never to give up; that we were right and history would take care of capitalism.

Reuben was an avid reader of the *Militant*. It would be a fitting tribute to his life if the paper he appreciated so much let everyone know how much his paper appreciates people like him.

Rich Stuart
Virginia, Minnesota

The worst case

On the November 3 ballot, Maine voters were faced with a bond issue that generated wide and heated discussion: a \$15 million item, to be added to \$15 million forked over by Portland taxpayers, to build a shipyard in Portland to be leased at a nominal rate by Bath Iron Works. The rationale was the yard's claim that this expansion would create at least a thousand new jobs.

Many voters, including many shipyard workers, resented being asked to subsidize the largest and most profitable private employer in the state at a time when funds have been cut off for basic social services.

In an expensive last-minute media campaign, William Haggett, the company's president, inadvertently raised

a more fundamental issue than the risks, paybacks, and outlook for U.S. shipbuilding.

To evaluate the risks of this publicly-funded expansion of the shipyard, he invited his audience to consider "the worst case for the industry — disarmament." Many listeners were shocked to hear him state so baldly that issues of peace and even human survival are less important than the military contractors' profits. Presumably, now that the state and city are committed to building these new facilities, we may have to consider the next war in terms of protecting "our investments."

Barbara West
Arrowsic, Maine

Libya

In today's *New York Times* there appeared an article on Libya claiming, among other things, that Qaddafi has "virtually outlawed" private enterprise; provided free housing, education, and medical care, and decreed a minimum wage equivalent to \$500 per month.

According to the article, the gap between rich and poor has narrowed, and Libyans have been treated to a "bonanza of consumer goods." All this from a paper that generally tries to portray Qaddafi as a terrorist lunatic.

Whatever the truth really is, I think we badly need a long analytical article, or series of articles, on what the hell is going on in Libya. I hope we can find space for it sometime soon.

Ed Josephson
Newark, New Jersey

Drug abuse

I would like to express my viewpoint about the kinds of issues the *Militant* can address to the people.

The *Militant* should start addressing the problems of drug abuse that have spread in the Black communities across the United States, and also the white and Latino communities as well.

The newspaper should discuss both the spread of drugs in the United States from an historical perspective as far as political and

economic, and then explain the prevention of drug abuse. Young people must be educated properly on how drug abuse has and is ruining people's lives. Thank you very much.
William Cheeks
Washington, D.C.

As a physicist . . .

I am writing to express my appreciation of the *Militant's* excellent and much-needed coverage of the current grave danger of U.S. military adventures. I would be seriously handicapped if I had to sift through all the capitalist media to learn about this serious situation and be prepared to respond to it.

Many thanks also for the continuing series of articles in *International Socialist Review* in defense of science and materialism. I can only shout, "Right on!" to each straightforward point made against creationism, mysticism, etc. I particularly appreciated the latest article by Cliff Conner, against what he calls the "physics mystics." As a physicist, I have become increasingly disgusted with these quacks.

Although, naturally, I have a few criticisms now and then (principally concerning the *Militant's* stance toward some of the so-called "paranormal" phenomena), your coverage, overall, is extremely satisfying (and much needed on this subject, too), and I look forward to more of the same as I renew my subscription for the coming year.

Eric Hamell
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The greatest truth

As a Marxist I was very happy to observe that you have somewhat changed your opinion of Mitterrand in France (*Militant*, November 6). I never agreed with your earlier assessment of the French elections.

Now I am waiting to see how long it will take you to observe the same faults in the Greek socialist government.

The only thing you get with reformist candidates is more unkept promises. Time is the greatest truth.

R.A. Sims
Worthington, Ohio

New from Pathfinder Imperialism vs. the Iranian Revolution: Which side for working people?

By Janice Lynn & David Frankel



40 pp., \$.95. Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include \$.75 for postage and handling.

THE MILITANT

Union support builds for Jan. 15 King Day march

By Melvin Chappell

NEW YORK — January 15, the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., will be observed by demonstrations and meetings designed to win recognition of the date as a national holiday.

Musician and composer Stevie Wonder has called for a march on Washington that day. It was his initiative last year that brought 100,000 people to Washington on January 15.

This year, in addition to the Washington demonstration, in Atlanta, Coretta Scott King will dedicate the Freedom Hall Complex of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Non-violent Social Change.

Wonder, along with other Black leaders such as Congressmen Walter Fauntroy and John Conyers, will participate in the Atlanta ceremony and a Black leadership meeting there that morning and then fly to Washington for the rally.

At a December 16 Los Angeles news conference, Wonder announced that on January 14 he will participate in the ceremony in Pennsylvania where the fifteenth will be made an official state holiday.

Seventeen states plus the District of Columbia have set January 15 as a holiday. Over two million signatures have been collected on petitions demanding the birthday of the slain civil rights leader be made a national legal holiday.

Dr. Martin Luther King was assassi-

nated April 4, 1968, in Memphis where he was supporting striking city sanitation workers. January 15, 1982, would have been his fifty-third birthday.

The demonstration in Washington has very wide support. In addition to the Congressional Black Caucus, there is the entire spectrum of Black groups from the National Urban League and the NAACP to the National Black United Front and the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP). The action has been endorsed by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers; and the Hospital Workers 1199.

At a news conference in New York December 21, local union endorsements were announced representing hundreds of thousands of workers. They include District 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; District 65 of the United Auto Workers; New York Metropolitan Postal Workers; and Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union, who run the bus and subway system.

The effort to make January 15 a national holiday began the year Dr. King was killed. Congress has refused to act on the bill which has been reintroduced in every session. But January 15 has become a holiday that is taken by

hundreds of thousands of Black workers and others, with or without legal sanction.

The racist opponents of making Dr. King's birthday a holiday have stepped up their repetitions of the slanders against Dr. King and the civil rights movement.

With the gains of the civil rights movement, from voting rights to school desegregation and affirmative action, under attack from the government and the employers and with racist attacks on the rise, a huge turnout January 15 will be a powerful defense of Black rights.

Protest cop terror against Blacks

The Metropolitan Committee Against Government Terrorism has called a rally in New York City January 15 to protest FBI and police terrorism against the Black community.

The demonstration, to be held in Harlem, is in response to the attacks and harassment set off after the Brink's armored-car robbery in Nyack, New York, in October.

The Metropolitan Committee is demanding that charges against Fulani Sunni-Ali (Cynthia Boston) be dropped. The Black activist from Mississippi has been jailed twice even though she has shown conclusive proof that she was in New Orleans when the robbery took place.

She was released from jail the second time December 18 when prosecutors finally dropped their objection to

her attorney, Chokwe Lumumba. The objection, upheld by a federal judge, was that Lumumba shared Ali's political views.

But the campaign against Ali and other Black activists has not stopped. As soon as she was released the second time, she was slapped with a subpoena to appear before a federal grand jury December 30.

The Metropolitan Committee Against Government Terrorism includes the African Peoples Socialist Party, the National Black Independent Political Party, Harlem Fightback, the National Black Human Rights Coalition, the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Workers Party, and the Young Socialist Alliance.

— M.C.

Grenada youth aid Nicaragua literacy drive

By Nan Bailey

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada — Delegates to the historic first congress of the National Youth Organization (NYO) of Grenada have decided to send an internationalist brigade of young teachers to the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

The brigade will collaborate with the Nicaraguan government to bring that country's literacy campaign to the Black and English-speaking population of Nicaragua. Thirty NYO leaders will participate in the year-long project in 1982.

This was one of the central decisions made by 400 delegates meeting here December 12 and 13. The delegates were elected during the last few months from 178 NYO groups and a membership of 8,000 young people from Grenada and her sister island of Carriacou.

The congress followed a year-and-a-half recruitment campaign, which won 7,000 new members to the NYO under the slogan, "Join the NYO and build the revolution."

One NYO leader opened the congress by explaining the framework of the discussions:

"Comrades, this congress is taking place at a very crucial time. This congress is held when imperialism today is very hostile to progressive and revolutionary countries. When the economies in the capitalist and imperialist world are so corrupt, and as a result bring economic pressure on youth and students the world over."

To meet this challenge, congress participants discussed organizing NYO members to help build and defend their country and its revolutionary accomplishments. NYO members have served as volunteer teachers in Grenada's literacy program and joined community work brigades. Participation in projects to help build and strengthen the eco-

nomy will be a special emphasis for the NYO's work in 1982, designated the "year of the economy" by the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

Defense of the country and the participation of more NYO members in the People's Militia was another goal set by the congress.

The NYO also decided to continue to organize a program of sports activities for young people.

The NYO will also devote resources and leadership attention to organizing and building the Young Pioneer movement. The Pioneers, an organization of children aged four to fourteen, is a mass organization for which the NYO has taken special responsibility. Its membership is 8,000.

The Pioneers and NYO are two of several mass organizations that have been on active recruitment drives over the last six months to involve more of the Grenadian population in the process of rebuilding their country.

"I think that in the last six months the building of our mass organizations is perhaps the most significant internal development within our country, and shows the strength which our revolution has achieved in the last six months," explained Minister of Finance Bernard Cord in his keynote address to the congress.

He pointed out that the active membership of the trade-union movement stood at 10,000; of the National Women's Organization, 6,500; and of the combined Pioneers and NYO, 16,000.

Cord outlined some of the latest imperialist propaganda slanders against the Grenadian revolution.

The congress adopted a constitution for the NYO, which outlines the organization's goals and organizational norms. It states, in part:

"The NJM National Youth Organisation — NYO — came into being as a result of the efforts of our Party, the New Jewel — NJM — and the heroic struggles of the youths and students against the Gairy dictatorship.

"Today, the NJM National Youth Organisation is a mass organisation of patriotic youths and students. . . . As a mass organisation the doors of the NYO are open to all patriotic youth and students, all those who genuinely want to make a contribution in building a new society. This is why the NYO has inscribed on its banner these bold words: 'Every NYO Member a Patriotic Youth.' . . .

"The NYO sets itself the task of organising all youth and students to be ac-

tive builders of the new society. Over half of our people are young and therefore there can be no revolution, there can be no new society without the conscious, daily and organised activity of the youth and students."

A central executive committee of thirty-three NYO leaders was elected to coordinate the work of the NYO until the next congress in three years.

International guests at the congress included delegates of youth organizations from Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana, the United States, Guadeloupe, Cuba, Nicaragua, Korea, and a representative of the Continental Organization of Latin American Students (OCLAE — a group with offices in Havana).



Leaders of NYO, Grenada youth organization, at March 1981 celebration of second anniversary of revolution.