

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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From the MLP delegation to the Philippines, part 3:

Another coup attempt, another step towards repression

In October and November a delegation of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the U.S. was in the Philippines. They were there visiting with the revolutionary workers of the Union of Proletarian Revolutionaries of the Philippines (KPRP). Our comrades left Manila days before the latest coup attempt. The following are some of their observations on what was behind the coup.

Other reports from the MLP delegation can be found in the December and January issues of the Workers' Advocate.

When Cory Aquino (and her 60-member entourage) was on her state visit to the U.S., the joke in the Filipino press was that she finds a lot more admirers these days among her rich and powerful American friends than among the Filipinos themselves. No doubt, the bloom is off the Aquino rose.

There was big speculation about whether her government would survive her trip out of the country. The military was put on "red alert". The daily press spread sensational stories. There were fantastic reports of plots by the "reds" to topple the regime.

There was also the fuss around the "march for justice" of the Marcos loyalists. Supporters of the dead dictator had marched from the top of Luzon to Manila to demand the return of his corpse. [Luzon is the largest island in the Philippine archipelago, and it contains Manila, which is the national capital.] This turned into something of an incident when the march reached Manila and was attacked by the police.

The striking thing was that none of this seemed to make even a ripple among the citizens of Manila. There were no yellow ribbons or other signs of Aquino's "peoples' power". Only the military was put on "the highest level of preparedness" to protect the regime.

Meanwhile, it was from within this same military that plans were being set to bomb the Malacanang Palace and seize power. This was the most threatening coup attempt yet. This was partly because it involved a broader section

of the military, including a section of the elite Marines, who had been considered the most professional and loyal of Aquino's forces.

What Do the RAM Boys Want?

The armored vehicles of the rebel troops carried the initials of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement. The so-called "RAM boys" are a grouping of military officers who played a role in deposing Marcos in February 1986. Since that time they have been plotting against the Aquino regime, including the last assault on the Malacanang Palace in August 1987. In that attack they were led by Lt. Col. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan. While in hiding, "Gringo" has been rallying fellow officers to his cause.

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Another coup attempt, another step towards repression

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A number of military and political interests are tied up with the "RAM boys". Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, former defense minister under Marcos (and briefly under Aquino), is close to "Gringo" Honasan. Vice president Salvador Laurel expressed sympathy for the rebels. Both Enrile and Laurel have big political ambitions. There is also festering discontent among military officers, upset over the planned restructuring of the Philippine Constabulary and other military matters.

What they all have in common is the conviction that the Philippines needs a strong man or outright military rule—that only an iron hand can keep the Philippines from sliding into the abyss.

Indeed, it seems that is just where the Philippines is heading. Just visit Manila these days.

"Free Enterprise" Has Created a Hell

Here is the ultimate in American-style "free enterprise". You can find the golden arches and Wendy's, Sylvester Stallone and Batman. Few bothersome government regula-

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tions (and the Aquino government has cut even those). Not much of a public sector (except for the big feeding trough for wealthy politicians and military officers). You can buy your private army, or your private senator—or anything else, if you have the money.

But all the allegedly wonder-working powers of capitalism are pushing the country into a pit.

Basic services are collapsing. Garbage piles up on the streets uncollected. Electric brown-outs get longer and more frequent, shutting off electric power for four or more hours a day. Whole neighborhoods may share one small water faucet. Sometimes there is no water at all. There are too few sewer pipes and too few of those function. Public transport is falling apart and the streets are clogged with traffic, diesel exhaust, and people struggling for hours to get to and from work.

Then there are the squatters. Of the 8 million people of Metro Manila, over 3 million have no permanent shelter. Their tiny shacks cling to filthy river banks, railroad tracks, and roadways.

The only answer that the Aquino government knows for this crisis is to tighten the screws against the workers and poor. Public services are cut and cut again to satisfy the American and other international banks that own the huge foreign debt. Squatters are removed by bulldozers to clear land for high-rises and other potential foreign investments.

The Workers and Poor Resist

The crisis is producing squalor and despair; it is also generating resistance. Since the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship, the urban masses are finding growing strength in organization and struggle.

Workers have been organizing into trade unions and showing their power in a series of successful strikes. The squatters have confronted the police in pitched battles against removals.

In November, there were a series of strikes in textile and food-processing. The light rail train was struck. The teachers were on a national walk out. A general strike of jeepney drivers and other transport workers was also being prepared against the Aquino government's decree of a 34% hike in the price of petroleum products.

Things weren't quiet in the rural provinces either. There was a crisis in the marketing of rice—the principal food of the country. Profiteers were hoarding stockpiles and jacking up prices. But the peasants producing the rice were protesting the low prices they were receiving. The KMP peasant association (influenced by the Maoist-oriented Communist Party of the Philippines) threatened the government with a peasant strike, a refusal to harvest this season's crop.

The southern island of Mindanao was in the grips of the crisis provoked by Aquino's referendum on autonomy for the Muslim areas. The November 19 referendum made everyone angry, especially the Moro National Liberation Front and other Muslim organizations. They boycotted the vote to protest the truncated and limited nature of the autonomy being promised. The anti-Muslim chauvinists got their backs up too. The troops were called out in Mindanao and bombs went off in Manila.

Meanwhile, the guerrillas of the New Peoples Army continue to be a force in the countryside. While the NPA's strength has waned, it still enjoys the support of a section of the peasantry. There are large areas of Luzon, Negros, Mindanao, and other islands that are NPA zones of operation despite the Aquino government's policy of "total war" against the insurgents.

The Military Fist

The "RAM boys" want to march in like white knights in shining armor. They promise to clean up corruption, punish the speculators, boost electric power, and guarantee social peace. And in a new twist, these military men, who owe everything to Pentagon training and funding, are coming out as nationalist crusaders against the U.S. military bases. (This posturing began even before U.S. F-4 fighters were used to put down the latest coup. It is part of their demagogy to seize on the real grievances of the people.)

Underneath their noble rhetoric, however, lies the military fist. The "RAM boys" have one principal aim: to smash the resistance of the workers and peasants. They decry the failure of the government to destroy the NPA; but it is not only the NPA they are after. They want an even more ruthless repression against the strike movement, peasant protests, civil rights activists, and other mass movements.

From this angle, they know that their attempts against Aquino get results. In the wake of the 1987 coup attempt, the rebel ringleaders went unpunished and many of their demands were answered. Aquino purged the remaining reform-talking advisors from her inner circle; boosted the military officers' pay and privileges; and gave the military free rein to attack the revolutionary movement.

Now the defeated rebel troops are celebrating again. They marched smiling back to the barracks, holding high their weapons and flashing victory signs. Arturo Enrile, general of the loyal troops, has promised to treat the rebels "fairly, humanely and justly". Which means, if the past is any guide, the plotters will be left alone to plot and plot again. In the meantime, Aquino will bend over backwards

to regain the trust of the disloyal officers by unleashing a new crackdown against the working people.

Aquino Declares State of Emergency

This crackdown has already begun. On December 6, Aquino declared a "state of national emergency". She promised that this was not a return to the martial law days of the brutal Marcos era; most political liberties are allegedly going to still be respected. Nonetheless, this "state of emergency" is another ominous step.

The situation for working class or peasant organizers and political activists is already grave. They are regularly murdered and disappeared by right-wing vigilante groups and death squads. The Aquino regime (with the blessing of the U.S. State Department) supports these death squads under the banner of "total war" against insurgency.

Arrest, detention and torture of activists are also regular weapons of Aquino's police and military. In the martial law days, an activist was arrested under the martial law decrees against subversion. Today, no laws or decrees are read to the victims. The police simply justify their actions in the name of the security of the regime. With each right-wing plot against the Aquino government, Aquino intensifies the war against left and the working people. The repression escalates as the climate of "emergency" heats up.

At this time, neither the government nor the plotters have been able to mobilize much support among the masses. The workers, the urban squatters, and the plantation laborers are largely indifferent to both sides. It is not seen as their affair, but the affair of the corrupt and wealthy elite who offer nothing but hunger and mistreatment.

After four years of rule, Aquino's promises of democracy for the people sound hollow indeed. The tiny group of big businessmen and plantation owners are the real power. Military and paramilitary repression is growing on a pattern like in El Salvador or Guatemala or other U.S.-made "democracies". Meanwhile, the plots for a new military dictatorship continue.

Freedom in the Philippines will only come by way of revolutionary struggle against the rule of the capitalists and landlords. The workers, peasants, fishermen, and all the exploited need to build such a struggle. They need to build their independent movement, free of illusions in the capitalist liberals and the Aquino regime. Recent events bring home that there is no other way to beat back the growing repression and the plots of the "RAM boys" or other would-be military dictators. ■

Revisionism is dying, but the fight for workers' communism goes on!

The following speech was the first of two at a New Year's meeting in Detroit on January 13. It has been edited for publication.

The 90's are here, and the world is wrapping up the end of one century and heading towards the beginning of a new one.

From all corners of the world, the people of money and their hired mouthpieces—those who have grown fat off the sweat and blood of millions of workers—are crying out: *Communism is dead! We have rid the world of the specter with which this century began*—a century which began with revolutionary workers' parties in dozens of countries, upsurges in the class struggle which led up to the powerful 1917 socialist revolution in Russia, a century which saw the emergence of Leninism and the strongest proletarian international so far.

Something is indeed in its death throes. That we do not deny. It may have borne the name of communism, it may even have been descended from the communist movement which emerged after the Russian Revolution, but labels and lineage alone do not characterize a movement. What's dying isn't the communism which has long been the cherished vision and platform of the revolutionary workers for 150 years, it isn't the communism of Marx and Engels, or of Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

What's dying is revisionism. Which gutted the revolutionary heart out of communism but still paraded itself as such. Which replaced revolution with reformism. Which replaced workers' democracy with bureaucratic tyranny. Which replaced the construction of socialism with state-capitalism. Which replaced equality with privilege.

That's what is dying today. That's the wreckage we see across Eastern Europe.

But something else is also taking place, which is considered insignificant, even irrelevant by the capitalists. Something is also being born. The last decade has also seen the struggle of the forces of workers' communism in several parts of the world. Forces loyal to the working class and its mission of eliminating exploitation. Forces loyal to the cause of building revolutionary communist parties of the working class.

And while the collapse of revisionism does mean new stridency to the age-old cries against communism, it also helps create conditions for an extension of the class struggle, for a better field of action for the forces of workers' communism.

In Eastern Europe itself, the clearing away of revisionist rule and its replacement with Western-style capitalism will inevitably lead to new rounds of workers' struggle, the next time against Western-style capitalism. The search for an

alternative to both these curses will grow. Elsewhere too, the wreckage of Soviet-style revisionism will remove or greatly weaken one of the strongest blockages in the path of class-conscious workers searching out the real communist course.

The moment is pregnant with new potential. This is why our Party has decided to open the new year with an important editorial in the *Workers' Advocate* called **Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism**. In this speech, I wanted to touch on some points which form the background for this document, and on our expectations.

First, a few points on the collapse of revisionism.

We already know quite well what is taking place in Eastern Europe. It's in the news every day, and the *Workers' Advocate* has been analyzing it extensively.

This collapse of state-capitalism in eastern Europe is also playing havoc with Soviet-centered revisionism in the rest of the world.

Take one example. Ten years back, the pro-Soviet revisionists appeared to be riding high. China, which had been associated with the criticism of revisionism, had let all of its revolutionary positions collapse and was in an ardent embrace with U.S. imperialism. Brezhnev was becoming a hero to many activists—from South Africa to the U.S., Soviet revisionism appeared to have a new lease on life.

All that is in shambles. All the state-capitalist societies have been shown to be in economic crisis. Politically, they have lost or are in the process of losing their remaining bases of mass support. Indeed, the masses are more often in the streets against them.

For world revisionism this is a deadly blow. The size, strength, and cohesion that they had as a worldwide trend has had a great deal to do with Soviet and Eastern European "real socialism" appearing as something viable, as something which was connected with the interests of the toilers. There was, as well, financial support, travel privileges, scholarships, from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to the local revisionist parties.

Today all these things are being hit hard.

Moscow itself is putting a dagger at world revisionism as a cohesive current. More than ever before. A few years back, Gorbachev had a meeting in Moscow of revisionist parties from many countries. But they weren't the only ones invited. So were social-democrats. And other reformist parties. The class collaborationist ideas pushed by Gorbachev have meant a renewed drive to merge the revisionist parties with world reformism.

This process is accelerating. Many revisionist parties are giving up the communist label altogether. Italy. Finland.

Iceland. Sweden. Some have even decided to dissolve. Many are looking towards a merger. No more do they see any reason to be organizationally separate from the social-democrats which they have been supporting anyhow.

Even the financial support is drying up. Hungary, for example, used to buy a flood of subscriptions to the British revisionist *Morning Star*, but now it only buys a handful of copies, and those are from the even more rightist *Marxism Today*. The collapse of East Berlin has been especially crucial in cutting back subsidies.

The end result of this process? We will see many revisionist parties dissolve, many merge with social-democrats. Some will remain as major social-democratic groupings where they already function as such.

Meanwhile also worth noting are the attempts at holdouts. There are still some revisionists who claim to be loyal to the older tradition. Many of these had pinned their hopes on a new center emerging in Berlin. The CPUSA, which interestingly is one of the most rightist in its domestic politics, was also part of this. Some are now looking towards Cuba. Even towards Deng Xiaoping's China.

These groups still describe themselves as Leninists. But their existence is tenuous. Nevertheless, there are leftovers from other trends which are grouping around these forces. Some Maoists and ex-Maoists. Some Trotskyists. And many of the pro-Albanian groups. [For example, the Communist Party of Colombia (ML) is praising Castro and the Cubans as staunch "Marxist-Leninists" and "socialists" opposed to the revisionists. And the Communist Part of Japan (Left) was looking towards a broad alliance including Deng Xiaoping's China and various East European forces which it left unnamed—although the rapid collapse of the East European revisionists in the last few months may alter this plan of theirs.] This entire array of forces has been shaken hard. And these latest efforts are merely signs of their desperate crisis. They may survive into the next period, but it will be as representatives of an old, collapsed tradition. Sort of like the adherents of Napoleon Bonaparte after his empire had collapsed.

If that's all there was left around the world, it would be pretty depressing. But it's not.

There are also forces of a different character which have emerged in a number of countries. These are the forces of workers' communism. Ten years ago, as the 80's began, most of these forces didn't even know of one another's existence. But over the last decade, there was a searching out, an attempt by all these forces to make contact with other similar, living, revolutionary forces. We have written about these forces. In Nicaragua, Iran, Europe and Asia.

These forces show certain common features, which have been powerfully reinforced by their histories and practical experience. They are oriented towards the working class. Not just as a concept—not like the RCP, USA, which arbitrarily calls almost anyone it wants to flirt with a "proletarian"—but in fact. They fiercely believe in building

up the class independence of the working class. They have all seen the deep cost of movements trailing behind liberals, reformists, and petty-bourgeois forces of various kinds. They believe in the communist perspective. And they are interested in deepening the critique of revisionism, not reconciling with it.

Each of these forces has traversed different routes to come this far. However, these forces all owe their origins to past struggles against revisionism, and have been especially shaped by the mass movements and revolutionary upsurges of the 60's and 70's. The revolutions in Portugal, Nicaragua, and Iran. They have felt at close hand the results of the bankruptcy of petty bourgeois revolutionary trends, the results of the working class not being independent enough from other forces.

This trend is an objective force in the world. Of course, it is possible that one or another group may not survive through the difficulties of the present day—and one cannot underestimate the continuing difficulties of the current period for revolutionary communist work. But workers' communism is an objective, existing international phenomenon. And it will be added to by other forces.

The source of its growth is the class struggle itself. The collapse of revisionism, the triumph of "free-market" capitalism, do not wipe out the class struggle, but in fact extend it. Because the working class itself has expanded greatly in recent decades. Because revolution is also an objective fact. And these and other factors will continually breed new forces, dissatisfied with existing trends, traditions, and ideas—looking for an alternative that meets the interests and hopes of the exploited majority of humanity.

At the same time, it is also the case that the forces of workers' communism are still weak. These forces are also disparate in many ways. They are stamped with different features and also have various kinds of weaknesses. Especially, different mistaken traditions of the past still weigh on the left forces.

The left forces are especially weak today as a coherent, self-conscious international force. Some ties have already been developed. But the full potential has yet to flower. Thus the workers' communists have to take up the necessary work to build an international movement.

Our Party believes that it's not simply an issue of declaring a new world trend. It's not simply an issue of statements of solidarity with one another. It's also not the case that something organizational can be declared, where no basis yet exists. But immediate and practical steps to international unity must be taken. We believe that, for one thing, the world left forces should carry out an active discussion about the burning issues before their emerging world movement. This is the purpose of *Tasks of Workers' Communism during the Collapse of Revisionism*.

This document is directed both at the existing forces, as well as other activists and circles, yearning for an alternative. We wanted a document which would point to the key common features of the emerging grouping and seek to

interest new forces. And we wished to bring out our own point of view, which is not necessarily shared by others, on a series of issues. After all, if there weren't controversial points, we wouldn't need to issue our own statement but there could already be a joint statement from all or most of the left forces.

It is necessary for all the forces of workers' communism to consciously and perseveringly work to build up a new world movement, in accordance with whatever possibilities are open to them. In our case, ten years back we were abandoned by what we thought were our historic international friends—who ended up pursuing the revisionist road to complete irrelevance. Today we must wholeheartedly take part in constructing a new grouping of the proletarian revolutionaries of the world.

This is what we have been trying to do. Our Party has consistently sought to seek out the live, revolutionary forces of the world left and to bring these forces in touch with one another. We have been bringing the news of the

revolutionary work of these forces to the attention of workers here and revolutionary forces elsewhere. We have been carrying out extensive theoretical work, providing us somewhat greater clarity than before on many issues. As well, we have begun a public discussion of certain differences of views that we have with some of these forces, and so a new style of international discussion—which was more common prior to the corruption and degeneration of the Third International—has been initiated.

Today something must be done to prevent stagnation, to prevent the impetus for workers' communism from being dissipated. For one thing, workers' communism should step forward before the world's activists and militant workers, put forward what it is, and discuss its world tasks at this critical juncture. We hope that others internationally will express their views on our declaration and the tasks needed to develop the trend of workers' communism, and that a new impulse will develop to take up these tasks and strengthen the international bonds of workers' solidarity.■

The class struggle will erupt despite 'the end of history'

Below is the second speech at the New Year's meeting of the MLP-Detroit on January 13. It has been edited for publication.

Comrades, we are here tonight to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of our Party, the Marxist-Leninist Party. And on this anniversary we would like to look at some of the developments of the last ten years and discuss the prospects for the workers' movement in the 1990's.

1980's—the end of history?

If you look at how the rich, how the capitalist class, is summing up the 1980's, you'll find nothing but gloating and arrogance. Indeed, they have even created a new theory which they call the "end of history." According to this theory, the collapse of the Soviet bloc has meant that there is no longer a challenge to capitalism and its so-called liberal democracy. They say that capitalist democracy has won the final victory, that it represents the final form of government, and therefore we have reached the "end of history."

The rich are always trying to do away with the specter of communism that haunts them, and here, with the theory

of the "end of history," they are making another attempt. Let me read to you just one paragraph of this "end of history" as expounded in the latest *Fortune* magazine by a former state department man—Francis Fukuyama. This is what he said:

"Marx asserted that liberal society [that's what Fukuyama calls capitalism, liberal democracy] contained a fundamental and unresolved contradiction, that between capital and labor. This has been the chief accusation against liberalism ever since. But surely," Fukuyama pleads, "the class issue has been successfully resolved in the West. The egalitarianism of modern America represents essentially the attainment of the classless society envisioned by Marx." And he goes on, "We might summarize its contents as liberal democracy in the political sphere combined with easy access to VCRs and stereos in the economic sphere."

Can you imagine, classless society has been achieved with "easy access to VCRs." But Fukuyama should have mentioned a few other things that Americans have all too "easy access" to. Take prisons, for example. Recently, I saw in the press that the United States reached another mile-

stone in the 1980's, there are now one million people in U.S. prisons. Such are the wondrous fruits of that "liberal democracy in the political sphere" that Fukuyama so much praises.

Or Fukuyama could have mentioned the "easy access" to homelessness—there are at least three million homeless; or the "easy access" to unemployment—there are around 15 million unemployed; or the "easy access" to impoverishment—there are some 32 million people below the official poverty line.

In fact, far from the picture of a classless, egalitarian society that Fukuyama paints, the gap between labor and capital in this country has grown steadily throughout the 1980's. If you just look at family wealth—leaving out corporate, monopoly wealth and taking just the income held by families—you find that the top one-fifth of the families holds 44% of all the income. Meanwhile the bottom one-fifth holds under 5% of all income. This is hardly the sign of a "classless, egalitarian" society.

Obviously Marxism-Leninism can't be killed as easily as the capitalists would like. Society is still split into classes, just as Marx said, and the polarization between the classes has actually been growing in the 1980's.

The end of struggle?

Actually, what the capitalists are gloating about in the U.S. is not that they've done away with classes, but that through the eighties they were able to keep the working class down. The united offensive of the capitalists against the working masses, the offensive supported by both the Republicans and the Democrats, did discourage the workers, it did disorganize them, and it did set back the working class movement. But this has not been the "end of history," not the end of the class struggle. Even in the worst of the eighties, workers' resistance broke out here and there. And as the years have gone by, elements have been growing for the outbreak of a wider struggle, for a class-wide battle against the capitalist exploiters.

Now, comrades, in this short talk I cannot go into many questions. I cannot go into the potential for economic crisis (which was shown again by the plunge in the stock market just yesterday), or the growing trade wars, or the instability of the capitalist alliances around the world, or the other factors which threaten to break up the unity of the capitalist class and to provide an opening for the working class to rally its forces. I urge you to look at the January issue of the *Workers' Advocate* which carries a whole series of articles on the eighties and the prospects for the future.

Tonight, I will touch on just two developments in the workers' movement from the eighties—that of the proletarianization of women and the jobs' movement—and what those developments mean for the work of our Party.

The proletarianization of women

The first thing I want to discuss is the proletarianization

of women. Through the 1980's women have continued to pour into the work force. There are now some 55 million women workers, about 45% of all working people, and the numbers keep growing. This growth in the number of women workers has important consequences for the working class struggle.

Lenin once pointed out that: "...the experience of all liberation movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it..." ("Speech at 1st All-Russia Congress of Working Women, Nov. 19, 1918," *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p.181) And further, he stressed, "...There can be no socialist revolution, unless very many working women take a big part in it." (*Ibid.*, p. 180)

And how are women to be drawn into the class struggle? One important factor is the extent to which they are drawn into work. Despite the tremendous suffering and hardship women face in going to work, Lenin emphasized that "the drawing of women...into production is, at bottom, progressive" because, among other things, it destroys their isolation within narrow family life, undermines their economic dependence on men, increases their independence, and stimulates their development. And this is essential for the class struggle.

In the United States in the 1980's, we could see this process. For example, we saw that women were at the center of important strikes, such as at the Watsonville Canneries. And we saw that the few successful organizing drives that took place at work places were most of all among women workers in food processing and clothing plants, in restaurants, among clerical workers, and so forth.

Now our Party has paid attention to organizing women workers. This can be seen in the fact that an important part of our work is in work places where women are concentrated such as in the Postal Service and hospitals. It can also be seen in our defense of women workers, such as at Great Lakes Steel when a union bureaucrat was claiming women didn't belong in the steel industry.

And this is also why our Party has spent a lot of energy in building the movement for abortion rights. Now we've heard some leftists sneer that the pro-choice movement is a middle class, a petty-bourgeois, movement. And to be sure the leaders of NOW (the National Organization for Women) would like to confine this movement to the yuppies, to use it as a springboard for electing Democrats and getting yuppie women into bourgeois positions.

But despite NOW's misleadership of the movement, our Party views the abortion rights struggle from class perspective: We know that banning abortions hurts working class women the most. And we know that the anti-abortion movement is the spearhead for a whole reactionary onslaught against working women, and the working masses in general, on a series of fronts. So we concentrate our agitation for abortion rights in the work places, and focus

our attention on mobilizing working class women and men to join in this struggle. As well, we try to use the pro-choice struggle to build up the working class movement to fight the whole offensive of the capitalists, to open up other struggles for working women—such as for adequate childcare, for national health care, for equal pay, against workfare, for organizing the unorganized, and so forth.

The growth of the number of women workers, and their participation in the class struggle, is an important development in the 1980's. A development our Party wants to pay even more attention to in the coming year. We plan not only to continue to participate in the militant clinic defenses and other pro-choice struggles, but also:

1) to seek out ways to develop this struggle in the work places themselves,

2) to find ways to further draw women out of the work places and into the political mass movement,

and 3) to develop our agitation to spread the struggle from abortion rights to other important issues facing working women.

This is one of the important fronts of struggle the Party will work on in the coming period.

The Gap between Worker and Bureaucrat

Another is the fight for jobs.

The 1980's began with massive layoffs and plant closings. But there was little struggle against this. The sudden attack stunned and disorganized the workers. And further, the union bureaucracy sided with the capitalists and suppressed the attempts of the rank-and-file workers to fight back.

But as the decade moved on, the fact that the union hacks were siding with the capitalists began to open the eyes of the rank-and-file. There is a growing gap between the workers and the union bureaucracy that threatens to break out at some point or another into an open revolt.

The pressure from the rank-and-file led to the emergence of a movement against plant closings at GM by the end of 1986 and running through the contract in the fall of 1987.

In 1988, the movement shifted to Chrysler, with mass demonstrations and other actions breaking out through the signing of the Chrysler contract.

Then in 1989, we saw the gap between the workers and the union bureaucracy continue to grow. At Jefferson assembly, for example, despite enormous attacks by the union leadership, the workers in June carried off their own march for jobs at Chrysler headquarters. And at Great Lakes Steel, rank-and-file workers actually took over the local meeting from the hacks and temporarily defeated a concessions contract. I mention this because the rank-and-file impulse at GLS will be important in the fight for jobs as the auto crisis also drags down the steel industry.

This year, the beginning of the 90s, there is potential for a sharper fight. The economic crisis hitting the auto industry has already spread layoffs and plant closings widely. And this crisis is not some small downturn, but a

worldwide overproduction crisis. Accord to estimates by the Ford Motor Co., there is now, world-wide, excess car and truck capacity of some eight and a half million units. And Chrysler executives say that means at least sixteen more assembly plants will have to be permanently closed in North America. At the same time, the big three auto makers all have contracts coming up this fall, a fact that tends to focus the auto workers struggle even further.

So there is potential for the fight for jobs to grow, but this will be a hard fight.

It is a fight not only against the capitalists, but also against the top union bureaucrats, who have gone so far as threaten to get workers fired or have their benefits cut if they dared to stand and fight independently.

It is a fight not only against the top union bureaucrats, but also against the "loyal opposition" bureaucrats, the local officials or out-of-office hacks, who have tended to dominate the jobs movement so far and who keep dragging the workers away from independent struggle back into the tame channels of the official trade unions.

And to wage such a fight requires more organization than the rank-and-file has so far built. The auto workers have a tradition of wild-cat strikes and other job actions from the 1960's. But these actions only required the loosest kind of network in the plants.

Today such loose networks aren't sufficient for the struggle. On the one hand, the workers are being dispersed by layoffs; and the UAW's job security programs only further fragment the workers. The workers need organization to combat this fragmentation and to be able to act even when laidoff.

As well, new forms of struggle are needed, such as direct confrontations against evictions and car repossessions and actions for extended unemployment relief; and such actions require further organization among the rank-and-file.

As well, the workers' struggles are being at best isolated at just their own plant, when the joint action of workers from numbers of plants is what's needed to fight plant closings; the rank-and-file needs to build organization to link the militants from different plants.

This coming year, the Party plans to work for such organization. Although Jefferson Assembly closes for good next month, the Party still has connections at several auto plants, it has learned a lot about how to fight the union bureaucrats and how to initiate rank and file organization from the struggle at Jefferson Assembly, and the Party will use this experience to work to rally the workers in auto and other industries for a serious battle for jobs.

Organize the working class!

This question of organization is not just an issue in the fight for jobs, it is also an issue in building a movement of the working women, in the contract fight coming this year in the Post Offices, ... [at the work places] ..., in the fight against the mounting racist attacks, and so forth. Whether the working class can build on the elements that have

emerged in the 80's and launch a class-wide struggle against the capitalists depends most of all on whether the workers can find their own voice and get organized.

That is why I want to stress to you tonight the importance of building up the Party itself, the importance of building a revolutionary center dedicated to rallying the workers from every industry for the class struggle.

One of the important victories of the 1980's has been the survival of our Party. The eighties tore up working class organizations. Leftist groups collapsed right and left. Even the official trade unions have lost some two million members. So for a working class organization to survive, that is a victory. And for a revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist workers' organization to survive, that is something we all should be proud of.

Our Party is still quite small. Its strength is still quite limited. Its influence extends only so far. But it is a Party that has learned many new ways to keep itself rooted in the masses, even in a period of ebb like the eighties; a Party that has learned to use even small scale skirmishes to build up networks to distribute revolutionary literature and to organize militant workers; a Party that has strengthened itself by waging a relentless struggle against any trend that tries to emasculate the revolutionary theory of the working class, Marxism-Leninism; a Party that has not only stood up for the working class in this country, but has also reached out and made links with the emerging revolutionary working class communists in a number of countries around the world.

Our Party has survived and built itself through the

eighties because it is not just some sect of do-gooders, not some fly-by-night middle class moralists, but because it is part of an historical trend, the trend of the militant working class seeking revolution and socialism, the trend of the class struggle that cannot be destroyed no matter how many sermons the capitalists preach about the "end of history."

Comrades, I remember that there was another theory back in the 1960's. It was called the "end of ideology." The bourgeoisie preached sermons all over the place that Marxism-Leninism was dead, the working class movement was dead, and we had reached the end of ideology. But all the preaching about the "end of ideology" did not spell the death of Marxism-Leninism. In fact the 60's saw a surge in the masses turning to Marxism-Leninism around world. It saw a renewal of the Marxist-Leninist movement in U.S. Indeed, this is where our Party comes from, from the 60's upsurge in the mass movement and the turn of the activists towards fighting revisionism and taking up Marxism-Leninism. In fact, instead of the "end of ideology" overcoming Marxism-Leninism, Marxism-Leninism overcame the "end of ideology."

Today's sermons about the "end of history" will suffer the same fate. And for our part, we are determined to prevail over all the capitalist theories along with this man-eating capitalist system. Comrades, this new year, this new decade, let us dedicate ourselves to making this happen.

The working class is the force for change!

Build the revolutionary party of the working class! ■

Marxist-Leninist League of Sweden Founded

Last month we learned that, at a conference on the 23rd of September last year, the Communist League of Norrköping (which published **Red Dawn**) dissolved and was replaced by the Marxist-Leninist League of Sweden (Marxist-Leninistiska Förbundet). The documents of the Founding Conference of the MLL of Sweden explain that the Marxist-Leninist League was founded because the organization now has more people outside Norrköping than inside it, because the aim is to build organization on a national scale, and because they have achieved more clarity through studies and discussion about the demarcation between themselves and the policies followed by the leaderships of the Party of Labor of Albania and the Communist Party of Sweden.

We welcome the increased confidence of the Swedish comrades and their bold taking up the task of preparing the grounds for a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party in Sweden. We hope that revolutionary work spreads successfully throughout Sweden.

The Marxist-Leninist League of Sweden can be contacted, and the documents of the Founding Conference can be obtained in English or Swedish, by writing

MLF
Box 190 15
161 19 Bromma
Sweden.

We will be reporting further on the work of the Marxist-Leninist League. We will also be discussing some differences of views we have with them. Last year we published two articles on Soviet history by **Red Dawn** and "A comment on the Swedish comrades' articles: How to approach the study of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union" in the August 10, 1989 issue of the *Supplement*. Although this was quite a long article, the Swedish comrades published it in two issues of **Red Dawn** along with their reply. They will be sending us a English translation of their reply later, so we will be reporting on this in future issues.

As well, the MLF (formerly the CLN) has become influenced by the views of Tony Cliff, the Socialist Workers Party of Britain, and the "International Socialists" tendency, and they have printed various materials from or

about them and expressed a favorable opinion of them. They have, it seems to us, tried to interpret various of the views of Cliff and company in a more reasonable way than their original authors do. But however interpreted, the views of Cliff and IS can only lead one further and further away from the basic ideas of Marxism-Leninism and from the analysis needed for the successful development of communist work.

In our view, Cliff and the "International Socialists" tendency are not a trend that has broken away from trotskyism, despite their disagreement with other trotskyists on whether the Soviet Union is capitalist, but are an established trend of trotskyism. We expressed this view years ago in, for example, the resolutions of our Second Congress. And, in general, the IS tendency doesn't hide its basically trotskyist framework, but simply seeks to distinguish itself from what it regards as "dogmatic trotskyists".

We hold that the trotskyist framework, shared by the IS tendency and other trotskyists, is deeply erroneous and anti-Leninist. Under left phrases, the trotskyists actually put forward a harmful social-democratic policy that tears the heart out of revolutionary work. We think that it is one of the tasks of workers' communism to oppose trotskyism along with other revisionist and social-democratic trends.

In general, the Marxist-Leninist League of Sweden says that the class analysis of Swedish society has been left unfinished. To finish it, it says in its founding documents that it "bases itself upon the *Communist Manifesto*, the first four congresses of the Comintern and the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninist)" as well as a detailed and concrete analysis of Sweden. We are not sure what is being referred to as the ILO (Bolshevik-Leninist), nor whether this listing is supposed to distinguish between different works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin.

In future issues we will be publishing more about the Marxist-Leninist League. And we will also discuss the nature of the IS trend and its views. Below we reprint the programmatic declaration which opens the pamphlet of documents from the founding conference of the Marxist-Leninist League of Sweden.

Programmatic declaration of the Marxist-Leninist League

Workers' power

In capitalist society, the bourgeoisie controls the means of production and all other spheres of society. Thereby it appropriates the values created by the working class. A socialist society can be built only when workers collectively plan production and distribution in accordance with human

needs instead of profit, and in a transitional period gradually eliminate the remnants of capitalist conditions, like e.g. wage labor and commodity production. Only with the victory of socialism, can the material base of the classless, communist society be laid.

The working class is the key in the struggle for socialism. Only the workers' own struggle and organization for

genuine workers' power can put an end to oppression and exploitation.

Revolution—not reformism

The capitalist system can not be reformed away. Exploitation is its very foundation. Therefore, the emancipation of the working class can be achieved only by revolution.

The existing state apparatus—government and bureaucracy, courts, police and military—have the task of serving the collective interests of the bourgeoisie and to uphold the prevailing social order. Thus, this apparatus can not be taken over by the working class and run to serve its interests, but has to be smashed and replaced by a workers' state, based on the revolutionary and democratic organization at the factories and workplaces through workers' councils.

Internationalism

Workers have no fatherland. Since capitalism is a world system, the struggle for socialism has to be world-wide.

Our is a stand of solidarity with workers' struggles everywhere. We support all genuine national liberation movements, but regard the working class as the sole consequent [consistent?] anti-imperialist force in the oppressed nations and, thus, see the revolution there as by necessity a permanent process, without special stages.

There are no socialist countries. Socialism can not be achieved within a single country, and therefore isolated workers' states are not able to survive in the long run, unless the revolution is spread out across the borders. The "socialist" countries are in reality state capitalist. The state bureaucracy there exploits the working class as the employers in our country do. Workers' struggle in these countries

is just as elsewhere and deserves our support.

Freedom and equality

Capitalism splits the toiling masses according to sex, race, nationality and form of employment. The possibility of today carrying out struggle against the various forms of oppression, depends on the unity and strength of the class. However, it is only under socialism, that these inequalities can be definitely uprooted.

A communist party

The struggle for a new society presupposes organization in the form of a genuine communist party by those who want to work actively for the revolution. The activity of the Marxist-Leninist League aims to lay the foundation for the building of such a party. Today we are just a handful, but historical experiences show that class struggle may be sharpened quickly, thereby providing a fertile ground for revolutionary ideas amongst vast parts of the working class. If the party-building is begun only then, then the struggle will end in defeat.

Therefore, it is important for communists and class-conscious workers to actively work within trade unions and other mass organizations, putting forward there a line for how the struggle of today and for socialism is to be carried out. An independent movement has to be organized from below, as an alternative to the autocracy and class collaboration of the union bureaucracy and its counterparts in other mass organizations.

We call for all those who agree with these points to contact the Marxist-Leninist League and join us in the struggle for building a communist, Marxist-Leninist party in Sweden. ■

At Great Lakes Steel in Detroit: Company negligence killed Juan Gomez

The following articles are from the Jan. 8 issue of Detroit Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit. It also contained the article "East European state capitalism collapses, but the fight for workers' socialism goes on" from the January issue of the Workers' Advocate and an announcement for a pro-choice demonstration on Jan. 21.

With the most recent events in Eastern Europe, backward elements at GLS launched an anti-communist-wave. But the Jan. 8 Detroit Workers' Voice punched through it and was very well received.

Rain was falling in the early morning darkness on the last day of Juan Gomez' life. At 6:34 a.m. when he punched in, ice still covered the ground, slippery and wet as he began to make his way through the "gap" into the coke plant. These were the last steps he would take. Minutes later, he was found dying along the tracks, by the next worker to follow him from the clock house. Juan had been struck by a hot metal train.

Juan's death was directly caused by company negligence

For years workers have complained that the walkway into the coke plant is dangerous because they are forced to cross a series of live tracks. Hot metal, coke and coal trains all use these tracks, and at shift change workers must dodge them to get to the parking lot. The company has refused to build an overpass, or even put signal lights for the train traffic. Nor is there adequate lighting at night, leaving the walkway dark. Workers have complained that chunks of spilled coke are left to become tripping hazards. This has become a particular problem since the cutbacks in the work force over the last years have meant fewer laborers to clean up the track.

Another factor is that Juan was struck by a train whose engine is operated by a one-man crew with radio control. Railroad workers have bitterly opposed the one-man crews ever since they were forced on them. Not only have jobs been cut by this, but the workers have repeatedly pointed out the hazards. Many times they have said it is only a matter of time until someone is killed by the practice. In fact, a number of transportation workers have been injured because of the radio-controlled trains. In particular these workers have pointed out that, in the past, having more workers on the crews meant always have a switchman to act as a safety at all crossings. If this had been the case today, Juan might still be alive.

The reason the company has refused to build an overpass or install proper lighting at the "gap" is because these things were too expensive. The company cut the crew size on the hot metal runs and other trains to save money on

labor costs. Either way, Juan's death was the result of the company's insatiable hunger for more profit.

1299 leadership still doing nothing to fight the company

The new leadership at 1299 has been in office for over a year and one half. In that time they have made a lot of noise in unison with the company about safety. But the fact is safety conditions are not improving.

Rather than wage a real fight against unsafe conditions imposed by the company, the union bureaucrats have substituted another empty "cooperative" program. "Safety Awareness For Everyone" (SAFE) is more empty talk to sidestep the real cause of workplace hazards. "SAFE" claims that "accidents" happen because workers and supervision are equally responsible for not being "safety conscious." This is raised to deny corporate responsibility. But every industrial death at GLS over the last 15 years has been the result of the company's cost-cutting profit drive.

The company's profit drive has meant reducing the workforce. This has increased hazards by having fewer workers doing more work. It has meant not having safety persons assigned to maintenance jobs. It has meant reducing railroad crews. The union bureaucrats support the attrition program.

The company's profit drive has meant refusing to spend money to make conditions safe. Elsewhere in this leaflet is an article on the hazards the Pit area workers face, resulting from company refusal for months to spend money to correct a potentially life-threatening hazard.

Hazardous working conditions, injuries and deaths will continue to plague us workers as the company drives for greater profits. We must rely on our own efforts to oppose unsafe conditions. ■

Pit area and argon station workers demand:

Stop the explosions!

Building-shaking explosions. Searing hot metal showering the ground. Windows being knocked out of their frames. Steel plates covering windows for protection. Workers running for cover. Is this Beirut? Is this Panama City during the U.S. invasion?

No, it's just another ordinary shift in the 2 BOP pit area. Since last summer the workers in this area have been under siege. And workers have suffered injuries because of it.

Last summer the company stopped using slab rejects to cool the steel waiting to be sent up to cast. Instead they began using scrap from the yard. But from the beginning the scrap mixtures have had water in them causing severe explosions when it is dumped in the hot steel in the ladles. This problem got particularly bad following the big freeze of a couple weeks ago. And from the beginning the workers have been loudly complaining.

The company stopped using slabs because steel sales have been so great that even the rejects can be sold. Naturally, the company's logic is sell everything, make maximum profit. Even if profit comes at the expense of worker safety.

Injuries are on the rise

The company's response to the workers' complaints was not to solve the problem but instead jacket the argon station with steel plate. This makes the workers feel they were in a war bunker. But this has also meant workers inside are exposed to loud reverberating noise. Workers here now fear ear drum damage, concussion and other injuries. In fact, on Jan. 4 one explosion was so severe the company sent a worker to First Aid fearing he had suffered a concussion. That same explosion knocked the windows out of the pit crane. Windows in both pit cranes and the high up ladle crane have been knocked out due to other

explosions.

Workers' appeals fall on deaf ears

For months these workers have appealed to both the company and union officials to correct the situation. To date, nothing has changed. (For the moment the company is using slabs with #13 crane due to its window. But they've issued a notice that as soon as it's repaired, they will return to scrap.)

Company profits or worker safety

Pit workers have explained that the only reason the company persists in using scrap is because they can make more money selling the slabs. The workers say they were told by management that "they ran out of money" and had no funds to allocate to solving the problem. Management says this while knowing that company profits for the year was close to \$80 million.

The economic crisis in auto is deepening and the potential for the crisis to become generalized throughout industry is increasing. The company is intensifying its profit drive, which means working conditions for us will become more dangerous. We cannot place our hope for safer conditions in the union bureaucrats. We must rely on our own efforts to protect ourselves. ■

Correspondence

Defend the gypsies!

The article in the Nov. 15 Supplement denouncing the mass deportation of gypsies from West Germany was reprinted in the Dec. 9 leaflet of the MLP-Seattle along with a Workers' Advocate article on the upheaval in East Germany. The following letter was received by the MLP-Seattle:

To MLP-Seattle:

On Sunday [Dec. 10], at the march in support of the people of El Salvador, I received a flier handed out by the Marxist-Leninist Party.

I was surprised and glad to see your coverage of the new persecution of the gypsy people (Roma) in West Germany. I am a gypsy—and I thank you. My people are always and everywhere oppressed by the ruling elites—and for the most part totally ignored by even progressive-thinking people and presses.

Once again, I thank you.

Kusthi bok akana mukav tut [roughly speaking, "may good fortune be yours"—ed.].

[Name omitted] ■

A victory against the use of grand juries for political repression

The October 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate reported on a demonstration in Chicago on Sept. 25 against the use of a grand jury to harass political activists. In this particular case, the federal government had to back down. Below are excerpts from a leaflet from the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, and the Emergency Coalition Against Grand Jury Repression:

On Monday, September 25, the federal government backed down at the last minute rather than jail two anti-racist activists who were resisting a grand jury subpoena. This is an update on what happened and a thank you to the many people and organizations in Chicago and around the country who helped with the campaign—our efforts made a difference!

Bob Wells and Henry "Camo" Bortman refused to obey subpoenas served against the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, which demanded that a set of the organization's literature be turned over to the government. The secret grand jury proceeding, in which witnesses have no rights and no lawyer, is a form of compulsory intelligence gathering. Many women and men have spent months and sometimes years in jail rather than collaborate with this

kind of repression. Hard experience has shown that, paradoxically, refusing to answer the first question and accepting the penalty for contempt actually limits the damage a grand jury can do.

After weeks of mobilization and publicity, including demonstrations in three cities, more than a thousand phone calls, telegrams and letters to a federal judge, and the publication of an open letter in the *Guardian* and *Gay Community News* ..., Camo and Bob went to the last hearing prepared to spend up to 18 months in jail for refusing to cooperate. But the US attorney, faced with the weakness of his own non-case, told the judge the government would not enforce the subpoenas "at this time." So two victories were won: first, Camo and Bob's upholding of the principle of non-collaboration with grand juries, and second, the government's decision not to enforce the subpoenas. Political pressure made the difference. ...

There have been many grand juries before, and more may follow. The FBI has already infiltrated and harassed the Central America movement, and the government recently tried to get the Pledge of Resistance to turn over a file of its documents. Who might be next? People who distribute AIDS drugs without FDA approval? The movement defending the right to abortion?

When people refuse to collaborate with political grand juries, or when we exercise our right not to talk to the FBI, we protect our movements against repression. Let's continue to build our resistance.

Again, thanks to all!

Don't talk!

Don't sing!

When the Grand Jury calls,

Do the right thing! ■

From the struggle for women's rights

The following letter was received by the MLP-NY:

November 14, 1989

To whom it may concern:

I attended the rally in DC and felt quite lost and confused by all the different groups spewing their own political ideology, but was inspired by the fact that these groups came together in defense of reproductive freedom. I am by no means a Marxist-Leninist; I do know one Stalinist that I used to work for, that being (...) of the Yippies—a now rather defunct group in New York City.

I am 21 years old, have had 3 abortions, one of which I successfully gave myself in jail during the Atlanta Demo-

cratic (!) Convention last summer. I went to college for 3 years at SUNY Binghamton, where Randy Terry's headquarters is at (....) I have personally wiped dog shit on the windows of his offices. So much for passive feminism.

If at all, I am most interested in working with others in getting rid of their crusade against women. I read your little handout and was moved enough to write to say that there are others out here, who are fed up with the yuppies, pseudo-anarchists and pseudo hippie-types who say "abortion should be legal" and think this is enough.

I am conscious enough, or maybe I'm working class enough, to say that abortion in this country, besides being safe and legal, must be affordable to low-income women, and subsidized by federal, state or local governments. I have a big problem with the women at the rally—they are middle class, white people from 'nice' backgrounds and haven't seen the plight or havoc that Bush's policies are wreaking on the common folk.

Do they not see it or do they not care, I'm unsure. The point is—yes, there is a point to my ramblings—I'd like to correspond with others or maintain a network of people working on this issue.

I disagree with the statement I saw so much at the rally "I'm pro-choice and I vote." I don't feel my elected representatives represent me, a Native American-working class, beautiful, creative and angry young woman.

I agree with your flyer which stated NOW's acceptance of "backwards rhetoric" like population control. Population control seems largely a problem in terms of distribution, of resources, demography and geographic isolation (in the 2nd or so-called 3rd worlds). I have seen film footage in ... class on 3rd world women and children receiving HIV-positive viruses in the name of the rubella vaccine in various parts of central and north western Africa. They share needles to infect women and children so I guess we could call this a racist, eugenic, fascist solution to "the population problem".

I, myself, have been homeless in New York City—I still support the idea of squatting condemned buildings and bringing them up to code—except "the war on drugs" brought the National Guard into my neighborhood on the

lower East Side and SWAT teams cleared out my building in April '89 (this being on 8th Street) and burned it down.

I would very much like to organize working and poor women in my rural community into some sort of communist/anarchist contingent. I strongly believe in self-government and the decentralization of capital.

So let me know if interested parties in my area—oh I do love networking—or send me stuff (I do love stuff). I feel quite isolated living miles and miles from any major city—the closest one being way down in Massachusetts. I also miss but hate cities—you've got to admit, it's a love-hate relationship, parking a pick-up in a city can be horrendous.

My dreams are here in New Hampshire but may spread to Vermont if I ever get enough money to buy land. ...

Please help me feel a part of something turning, I do so want to make a change. My beliefs are confused, but I feel committed to anarcho-feminism. P.S. I definitely agree with what is being said in your flyer entitled *Which way in the fight for women's rights* about women, pregnancy and the war on drugs. Being involved with the yuppies I pose two questions: Why not boycott white powder, bring back herb? And that whole hard drug vs. soft drug argument. And why not bring out the truth to the American public about George Bush and his involvement with Manuel Noriega and John Hull bringing in cocaine to fund the contras? The Christic Institute published a 12-page report on this. This information is great stuff. It could ruin the public image of our president and halt this war on drugs. ... I feel it is a war against users, not dealers, In New York City, for example, I've seen cops smash crack addicts' heads into iron window grills (not to mention 15-year-old girls strung out on crack selling works or themselves at 8:30 in the morning)...

STOP RACISM, STOP FASCISM, STOP WAR, STOP POVERTY, STOP RAPE, INCEST & CHILD ABUSE. How? By doing many of the things you have suggested—housing and jobs—a better quality of life for all—and it begins with each and every one of us in the name of social responsibility.

Peace, love & anarchy ■

