

the freedom socialist

Voice of Revolutionary Feminism

It's back to Berkeley for Victorious Merle Woo

The rematch between the University of California and lecturer Merle Woo, fired by UC-Berkeley for a second time in June 1986, is over—and Woo has shut out the opposition two-to-zip!

Outspoken feminist Woo won her second round with UC in March, when university-employed arbitrator Leo Kanowitz ruled that her firing was "unreasonable."

His ruling directs UC administrators to reinstate Woo as a lecturer on the Berkeley campus with full back pay, benefits, seniority, and other privileges of employment requested by the union. When she returns, Woo will for the first time be covered under the union contract which regulates the working conditions of all lecturers in the UC system. The contract went into effect July 1, 1986—the day after Woo lost her job.

The Kanowitz opinion—and the university's decision not to appeal it—ended a long and bumpy grievance procedure Woo initiated after her second firing. Woo and the University Council-American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT) charged UC with discriminating and retaliating against Woo for suing after her first discharge in 1982. They also taxed the university with violating the settlement agreement which reinstated Woo two years later.

"This is an incredible victory for workers' rights and for free speech," said a jubilant Woo.

"In spite of affirmative action take-backs and federal and state attacks on employee rights, we have twice shown the second-largest employer in California that it cannot arbitrarily fire workers who do not agree with its policies or politics," said Woo. "This victory is so much more significant at a time when rightwing groups like the Nazi skinheads and Operation Rescue are on the offensive. My victory belongs to all the different movements that my case came to represent."

Kanowitz considers. Kanowitz' ruling, which capped three days of testimony given at the November 1988 arbitration hearings, stated that UC acted unreasonably in reinstating Woo to a "dead-end," low-priority job in the Graduate School of Education without informing her that the position was customarily taught by volunteers.

UC had paid Woo from a special two-year, self-terminating fund. It relied upon lack of regular funding for the courses as a reason for denying Woo a review and dismissing her when the period of reinstatement guaranteed by her settlement expired.

"The arbitrator's decision should make it clear to university officials that they cannot violate legal agreements with lecturers," said Roz Spafford, Woo's union representative. "Merle's victory strengthens the contract that covers all of us."

"We have shown that management must be governed by constitutional principles and that free speech for teachers, staff and students does not stop at the schoolhouse gate."

Merle Woo, at the time of her first victory



However, Woo and her supporters were dismayed that the arbitrator refused to conclude that UC's second firing constituted retaliation and ongoing discrimination against Woo, an open lesbian and socialist feminist Asian American.

Kanowitz ruled that UC's actions were unreasonable under the terms of Woo's settlement but did not reflect malice, discrimination, or retaliatory intent. He maintained that UC had acted in good faith toward Woo.

"We are very concerned about Professor Kanowitz' ruling that Merle was wronged as an individual, without considering UC's political motivations for its actions against her," said Nancy Reiko Kato, coordinator of the Merle Woo Defense Committee (MWDC). "Our work at

the hearings had much to do with educating him on the issues as well as proving our case."

Woo, a member of the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women and a renowned poet, was first fired after criticizing the increasing conservatism of tenure-track faculty in UC's Asian American Studies Department. Her 1982 federal and state lawsuits charged the university with discrimination based on race, sex, political ideology, and sexual orientation. When she returned to work in 1984, she continued her radical activism, speaking at campus anti-apartheid rallies and helping to organize AFT lecturers.

From discrimination to vindication. The arbitration victory is espe-

cially sweet because UC has run roughshod over Woo's rights since the grievance was filed in July 1986. The university's own personnel policy requires that the grievance procedure be completed within 90 days. Instead, UC waged a war of attrition against Woo and her union attorney, Bill Carder, by repeatedly delaying the hearings and refusing outright to provide them with documents needed to build the case.

"They stonewalled Merle's access to a timely hearing to avoid a showdown at the arbitration table," stated defense committee member Kathy Seeley. "UC figured its best bet was to avoid the hearings as long as possible, in hopes of derailing the case and starving out the strong public support that has focused attention on its racist and discriminatory employment policies."

Woo and her supporters have been optimistic about the outcome of Kanowitz' ruling since January, when both sides exchanged volleys in the form of written closing arguments.

UC's closing arbitration brief copied the lackadaisical style it used during the hearings, when university attorney Shelley Drake sought to scuttle the issues behind a smokescreen of sarcasm and character assassination. The testimony was often implausible enough to visibly surprise Kanowitz.

The university's brief stated that sometimes Woo appeared to pull facts "right out of thin air." Without providing evidence to counter Woo's claims of discrimination and retaliation, the university hoped to dismiss them as "simply ill-founded." Said the brief, "History indicates that Ms. Woo freely cries discrimination for any misfortune that befalls her."

Quite the contrary. What history indicates is that, in Woo's words, "There's no way UC can fight the thousands of people who support free speech rights and who refuse to tolerate discrimination."

Welcome back, Merle Woo! □

—KATHLEEN McMAHON

Legal assistant Kathleen McMahon is a core member of the Merle Woo Defense Committee and works for reproductive rights in the Bay Area Coalition Against Operation Rescue.

Woo vs. UCB: the history

- In June 1982, Merle Woo, a Marxist feminist and nationally acclaimed writer, was fired from her job as a lecturer in Asian American Studies/Ethnic Studies (AAS) at U.C. Berkeley.

- Woo charged UC with discrimination because of her politics, race, sex, sexuality, and criticism of AAS tenure track faculty. Her supporters included Angela Davis, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, Barbara Smith, Congressman Ron Dellums, Gloria Steinem, Mitsuye Yamada, Kate Millett, Cherríe Moraga, Christine Choy, and San Francisco City Supervisor Harry Britt.

- In February 1984, she won two years reinstatement, a \$48,548 settlement, and \$25,000 in attorney's fees.

- In fall 1984, she returned to UC, teaching in the Graduate School of Education, where she trained tutors of English as a Second Language. She sponsored student-organized classes such as "Violence Against Women" and "Multicultural Lesbian and Gay Studies."

- In June 1986, Woo was fired again, without a review of her teaching. She and her union representative, University Council-American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT), filed a grievance protesting UC's unfair treatment and continuing retaliation based on her first victory.

- In July 1986, UC denied Woo access to the grievance procedure, a right of every lecturer. After a year of public pressure, UC agreed to a hearing in June 1987. A university-appointed hearing officer rejected all of Woo's and UC-AFT's charges.

- Woo, UC-AFT, and the Merle Woo Defense Committee continued the grievance to the final step, a hearing with an outside arbitrator.

- In March 1989, arbitrator Leo Kanowitz judged Woo's firing "unreasonable." He ruled that UC should reinstate her with full back pay, benefits, and seniority. The university's decision not to appeal ended the second round of this precedent-setting free speech case.

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

"Towards the '90s"

The era of smug reaction is dead and gone, and global revolt is skyrocketing. The FSP's political resolution charts the ascending revolutionary conflicts.



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LETTERS

Nazis challenged in Vancouver...

Over the last year, the presence of Nazi skinheads in the streets of Vancouver has become a growing concern. At first the skinheads that we encountered did not seem to possess any clear Nazi ideology or organization. We would sometimes meet them while leafleting on the streets, but there were no conflicts. This, however, is no longer the case. Now the skinheads have been organized and have become extremely aggressive.

The skinheads have been carrying out attacks on visible minorities and political activists, none of which have been covered in the media or attracted police attention.

The skinheads were even so bold as to show up at three left demonstrations to harass participants and distribute Nazi propaganda.

The Whidbey Island demonstration against the skinheads in the U.S. Northwest was important in drawing attention to this problem and raising discussions on how to fight it. Some of us from Vancouver went to Seattle to meet with the Whidbey organizers in the United Front Against Fascism and Freedom Socialist Party, which was very helpful.

After further discussions among local activists and anti-racist organizations, a meeting was called to form a united front coalition to confront the skinheads.

Our first two meetings were extremely successful, in that we gathered over fifty people to organize the Anti-Nazi League. Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the Anti-Nazi

League is the involvement of several individuals who have been personally attacked by the Nazis, which really emphasizes the need to take the skinheads seriously.

We are planning several activities for the future, including an upcoming public meeting and a mass leafleting campaign to reclaim areas where the skinheads hang out.
**Donna and Glenn Ferguson
Vancouver, Canada**

...and nailed in Napa

Thanks to the Freedom Socialist Party's initiative, the "Aryan Woodstock" held March 4 near Napa, California turned into an anti-fascist rising noticed nationwide.

The FSP inspired the building of a broad coalition against the Nazi skinheads, who on the day of the demonstration stood armed but paralyzed atop a hilly fortress while 800 anti-fascists chanted and denounced them on the road below.

FSP knows the history of what makes coalitions succeed. You insisted that the Ad Hoc Coalition Against the Nazi Skinheads, formed in two short weeks, be democratic so that all were heard, from left activists to concerned Napa residents.

As a result, the 150 people from Napa and Vallejo who wanted to protest against fascism linked arms with the San Francisco-based coalition to form a united, militant front against the handful of Nazis who dared to show up.

From your successful organizing

against Nazi skinheads on Whidbey Island near Seattle last December, you knew the importance of choosing a tactical committee to make decisions on the day of the confrontation. Elected were an independent antiwar activist, a Black leader of the Butte County Coalition in Chico, and representatives from Napa Citizens Against Racism, Revolutionary Workers League and FSP. The committee quickly organized the demonstrators to turn and face the dozen Ku Klux Klan members, clad in Klan jackets, who marched toward the anti-fascist rally.

One of the main ingredients of the march, besides the political know-how of the FSP, was the tremendous courage and fortitude of the marchers. Many drove all night from Los Angeles to the northern California countryside! In the cold wind and rain they rallied, undaunted by 500 cops ready to turn on them with semi-automatic weapons, attack dogs and shotguns.

Above all, this march showed that people with different political perspectives can work together if democracy prevails, and if we value our combined strength against common enemies.

I'm afraid we have not seen the last of the Nazi skinheads, but we have begun to see the breadth of our power—and that was what made March 4th so successful.

Thank you, FSP!
**Julie Schmit
Lodi, California**

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs.

Free political prisoner Mark Curtis!

Editor's note: The Freedom Socialist invited the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to submit the article below on Curtis' case. Overturning his unjust conviction and imprisonment is important not only for Curtis, but for all political organizers the government would like to slander and silence.

Mark Curtis was a packing-house worker, employed at the Swift plant in Des Moines, Iowa, until his arrest on March 4, 1988. He was an active member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 431. He attempted to unite packinghouse workers, which included defending Latin American and Asian immigrants, in the face of an employer drive to slash wages, speed up production and impose increasingly dangerous working conditions.

Mark Curtis has also been a political activist and socialist for 11 years. For these activities, he is known by the Des Moines police and FBI.

In the weeks leading up to his arrest, Mark Curtis was involved in protesting the arrest of 17 immigrants in

his plant by the INS. He demonstrated against police racism and helped organize a meeting to celebrate the victory of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in their lawsuit against the FBI. He is also a former leader of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

On the night of March 4, Curtis was framed and charged with second-degree sexual assault. Later that night he was beaten by police who called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds." His cheekbone was shattered; cuts around his eye required 15 stitches. Later he was also charged with burglary.

The authorities have put significant resources into their campaign to frame Curtis. The case came to trial in September 1988. Not a shred of material evidence was presented that Curtis committed any crime. Furthermore, the judge refused to allow the defense to submit testimony about Mark's political activities or to question the background of the arresting officer, Joe Gonzalez. Gonzalez was suspended from the force ten years earlier

for lying and destroying evidence.

Curtis did not have a jury of his peers. There were no Blacks, no farmers and only two workers on his jury.

Curtis' "crime" was being an active unionist in the middle of a national concessions drive by the meatpacking bosses. His "crime" was defending immigrant workers in the middle of a federal immigration raid. His "crime" was marching against police racism and for women's rights and opposing U.S. intervention in Central America.

He is now serving a 25-year sentence in Anamosa State Prison.

An international defense campaign is underway to clear Mark Curtis' name and demand his release. Union members, Black rights leaders, public officials, women's rights and antiwar activists, farmers, workers, students, artists and poets have all recognized that an injury to Curtis is an injury to all of us.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is asking for endorsements, donations and help in circulating the facts in this case. To help, contact Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311, or call (515) 246-1695. □



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Italy conference spurs Trotskyist unity efforts

The European Open Conference, held in Rimini, Italy, from March 16-18 was, as it had aspired to be, a definite step toward "the principled regroupment of political forces identifying with Trotskyism" internationally.

Now the test is to see that this step leads to further, fruitful regroupment efforts, and eventual resolution of the crisis besetting the Trotskyist Fourth International (FI).

Four European organizations sponsored the conference: the Revolutionary Workers Group, which hosted the event; the International Trotskyist Committee; the Trotskyist-Leninist Tendency; and the Internationalist Faction.

Other European groups attending were the Movement for a Revolutionary International; the International Communist League; and the Workers Revolutionary Party. The Revolutionary Workers Party of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) also sent representatives.

U.S. groups included the Freedom Socialist Party; the Workers Socialist League; and the Revolutionary Workers League, the U.S. section of the ITC. The non-Trotskyist League for a Revolutionary Party, which believes the USSR is a capitalist society, sent an observer.

The agenda was wide-ranging, with presentations and discussion on the Fourth International, Soviet glasnost, the Iranian revolution, Poland, Sri Lanka, and South Africa.

Strengths. There are grounds for both optimism and caution in any assessments of prospects for future work among participating organizations.

On the one hand, most were manifestly determined that this conference kick off a sustained effort to rescue Trotskyism from premature burial, which seems increasingly to be the central agenda item of the present FI leadership as constituted in the United Secretariat (USec). Speakers repeatedly invoked the need to hold fast to the ideological foundations of Trotskyism, elaborated in the theory of Permanent Revolution, and on this basis

renew the fight for world revolutionary leadership against the Stalinists and erstwhile Trotskyists.

Discussion was free-wheeling, with substantial agreement on many topics. In the glasnost discussion, all delegates reaffirmed that the Soviet Union remains a degenerated workers state, that political revolution, not reform, is the solution to bureaucratic misrule there, and that Trotskyists must intervene on the side of Soviet workers in pushing glasnost to its revolutionary conclusion. The primary lesson of the Iranian revolution—that those leftists are doomed who underestimate the central importance to socialist revolution of women's, national liberation, and other democratic struggles—was also agreed to by all.

Crucial ingredient. Perhaps the best measure of the conference's seriousness was the democracy that prevailed throughout.

All attending groups were allowed to present their views and debate the issues. Wonderful! Democracy has all too often fallen victim to the organizational onupmanship plaguing past relations among many of the groups present. But democracy was the first condition for getting through the agenda. Comrades knew it. And to help ensure that this conference be a springboard to the future, they respected democracy's protocols.

Fly in the ointment. There is a stumbling block to progress, however—a political disease known as *radical laborism*, the same radical laborism that destroyed the U.S. SWP and threatens destruction of the Fourth International.

Virtually every group that came to Rimini except the FSP subscribes to radical laborite precepts.

What defines the malady? Fixation on the labor aristocracy—the primarily straight white male workers who man heavy industry—as the proletarian vanguard. Pink, white, and no-collar workers—public employees, secretaries, com-

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The Old Man comes home Moscow rally calls for Trotsky's rehabilitation

Not long after Soviet citizens celebrated the 71st anniversary of their spectacular revolution, more than 1000 of them gathered to attend the USSR's first public discussion in 60 years about Leon Trotsky, a key architect of that revolution and of the world's first workers state.

Word-of-mouth advertising drew a mass of people to the National Aeronautical Institute's Palace of Culture in Moscow November 15 to demand that the Soviet regime restore Trotsky's citizenship and Communist Party membership and publish the works of this international leader who was exiled, reviled and assassinated by Joseph Stalin.

Five hundred of the people knocking at the doors squeezed into the 400-seat hall. Swarms of people, young and old, surrounded billboards sporting Trotsky's picture and information about his fight against Stalin.

"People were literally jumping over each other to read the text," said Pierre Broué, director of the French-based Leon Trotsky Institute, who attended the meeting and recounted the event in the January 1989 issue of *Socialist Action*. Broué recently published a massive biography of Trotsky.

The meeting was organized by the Memorial Group, an independent organization which is campaigning for a monument to the victims of Stalin's repression and for Trotsky's rehabilitation.

Speakers refuted Mikhail Gorbachev's current lies about Trotsky, which describe him as a ruthless would-be dictator whose opposition to Stalin was a "power struggle." Speakers and audience mem-

bers included children of the Left Oppositionists of the 1930s who paid for their family connections by spending time in Stalin's camps. They remembered Trotsky as a caring, energetic man committed to the Russian Revolution.

Galina Antonov-Ovseenko, daughter of a Red Army leader executed in 1938, demanded that the Soviet bureaucracy "give us back our history and the truth, the whole truth." One man distributed his phone number and offered to lend his copy of *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky's incisive critique of the Stalinist degeneration. Broué reported that this book and other material by and about Trotsky spread underground like wildfire. The Soviet people's defiant search for the truth is an inspiration to the world Trotskyist movement and a nightmare for the monolithic Soviet bureaucracy.

Attempts to suppress Trotsky's ideas through massive purges and the falsification of history simply postponed their inevitable resurrection. As the Soviet people look for a way out of the blind alley of Stalinism, Trotsky's ideas retain their relevance and appeal.

Trotsky fought for worldwide, permanent revolution. In the 1930s, he led the struggle to replace the Soviet bureaucracy with workers' democracy. In contrast, Gorbachev's policy of perestroika tries to solve the USSR's problems by flirting dangerously with capitalism, while maintaining the top-down rule imposed by Stalin.

The call for Trotskyism is a demand for fulfillment of the Russian Revolution, which Stalin cheated and Trotsky died defending. □



DATELINE AUSTRALIA

From Moscow to Melbourne: Globe-trotting socialist reports on glasnost



Doug Barnes

Melbourne, January 17. Doug Barnes, Seattle Freedom Socialist Party organizer, photojournalist and globe-trotting Trotskyist feminist, arrives relatively unscathed after a long flight from Honolulu.

Just as well! There's a demonstration in the city center and only enough time to drop off bags beforehand. Afterwards, on the way from the demo to a welcome dinner, Doug helps break up an attack by a fascist skinhead on a man wearing a USSR T-shirt. Who said that in Australia the January summer vacation is a quiet time?

That was Day One of an exciting, educational, successful and extremely busy month, as the Australian FSP affiliate hosted its first party visitor from the U.S.

Doug came to Australia as part of his speaking tour about the current shakeup in the Soviet Union, which he visited in May 1988. Why travel halfway around the world to do one forum, we thought. So the ever-intrepid Melbourne branch decided to put on a forum in Sydney, 600 miles away. We drove caravan-style for 16 hours, surviving 100-degree heat and the breakdown of one of our cars to arrive just in time for Doug and me, the Melbourne organizer, to make a scheduled interview for a lesbian and gay show on Sydney public radio.

The Sydney event on the USSR attracted 30 people—unionists, students, feminists, lesbian and gay activists, anarchists, members of Trotskyist organizations.

Doug told them that he believed glasnost was not a

gift from the bureaucratic caste which rules the USSR, but a reaction to immense dissatisfaction and pressure from the Soviet workers. The reforms of perestroika are an attempt to jump start the sluggish economy, he said, but they involve capitalist methods on a wide scale—and that inevitably threatens the socialized nature of the Soviet economy.

Doug concluded that the problem is the Stalinist bureaucracy itself, which isn't going to reform itself out of existence and will only be swept away by a political revolution.

His slide show and political analysis sparked lively debate, particularly about Gorbachev's market reforms and his treatment of national minorities.

The occasion was an enormous success. Though there's no FSP branch in Sydney yet, we sure have a hell of a lot of wonderful supporters who worked incredibly hard. Thanks, comrades!

We had one day to play tourist in Sydney, Australia's largest city, and then we returned to Melbourne. Doug immediately hit the pavement, seeking out the Melbourne Left. But there was time to relax over the weekend of Australia Day, a nationalistic holiday. We trekked off to a mountain campsite for a few days, where our U.S. Trotskyist met Australian wildlife, snapping lots of photos of obliging koalas and kangaroos. We also visited Aboriginal painting sites in the wilder-

ness, and talked.

Then we got back to business. Doug spoke on the Freeway Hall Case, the U.S. labor movement, and organizing against neo-fascists and Operation Rescue, the anti-abortion crusade, at a variety of FSP, Radical Women, and left events. We were inundated with dinner invitations and spent many fabulous evenings engrossed in political discussion.

Of particular importance was Doug's meeting with Aboriginal leader Alf Bamblett. The two compared the state of the Aboriginal and U.S. Native American movements in a freewheeling exchange, the basis for which was support for the rights of both U.S. and Australian native peoples to self-determination.

The Melbourne forum, like the one in Sydney, showed that the Great Soviet Shakeup is shaking up leftists far beyond USSR borders. Forty-four people attended, including trade unionists, a Greek Trotskyist who fought in the anti-fascist resistance in World War II, and the state organizer of the Communist Party. Feminists, Stalinists, anarchists, and members of six different left parties all spoke up passionately about their views of what's going on in the USSR. The possibilities opened up by the reforms—and the dangers—most definitely have the attention of Australian socialists and radicals.

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The momentous Freeway Hall Case

Appeal wins constitutional precedent but no protection for FSP meeting minutes

Defendants out of default pending reconsideration

The Freeway Hall Case defendants have fought for five arduous years to protect the privacy of Freedom Socialist Party minutes. On February 21, their intransigence resulted in a precedent-setting decision from the Washington State Court of Appeals with wide ramifications for the First Amendment rights of other litigants.

The FSP had asked the appeals court to overturn both a court order requiring the party to disclose its meeting minutes and a default judgment levied when the FSP refused to do so. Sixty groups and individuals signed a National Lawyers Guild (NLG) friend-of-the-court brief to back the FSP, explaining how confiscation of the FSP's internal records would constrain their own activities.

In response, the Court of Appeals set out explicit guidelines for protecting the constitutional rights of organizations during the process of gathering evidence before trial. This is a first for Washington state.

Further, the appeals court ordered the King County Superior Court to reconsider Judge Warren Chan's 1987 default judgment, which stripped the FSP and nine individual defendants of their right to a trial and unilaterally awarded \$42,000 to Richard Snedigar, a former member of the party. In 1984, Snedigar sued for return of a \$22,500 donation made to the FSP's eviction fund in 1979.

Ironically, the judges upheld the original order that the FSP turn over its minutes, thus declining to apply their new constitutional standards to the very people who had fought for them!

First, the high spot. The new state precedent is a victory

won by and for radicals, unionists, whistleblowers, and activist organizations. It says that when First Amendment rights are at stake, a person asking for production of evidence must demonstrate its relevance and show that the information sought is unavailable through other avenues. The appeals court spelled out that the judiciary has no business interfering in the internal affairs of political parties.

The guidelines adopted by the state court were developed by the U.S. Supreme Court in response to the NAACP's heroic fight in the 1950s to protect its membership lists from the southern police states. The FSP had urged Washington courts to apply these criteria ever since Snedigar began his fishing expedition for every FSP internal document the courts would let him filch.

The defendants and their supporters have scored their first win in the campaign to not only quash Snedigar's witch-hunt, but to use it as a springboard to increase constitutional protections for all.

Now, the bad news. The appeals court ruled, however, that, according to its new method of evaluating constitutional claims, the FSP had not proved that it *needs* First Amendment protection for its minutes. The judges also denied that the case is political!

They ruled that organizations seeking protection must show how disclosure would injure First Amendment rights, and that the FSP had not done so.

Wrong. The FSP has demonstrated conclusively that releasing the minutes would inhibit internal discussion, and that in fact the free speech rights of *all* organizations would be jeopardized if what their members say in meetings might end up in court at the instigation of a political adversary. Even with their names deleted from the record, people could be identified and then subjected to harassment and reprisals by a boss or political enemies. Supporters and business contacts of a group whose minutes are made public would be likewise imperiled.

The judges ignored these arguments. So, in order to meet the inflated burden of proof of harm the court requires, the FSP would have to hand over the very records it is fighting to protect!

The courts put the socialist defendants in this case in the same no-win situation faced by those accused of witchcraft during the Middle Ages when witches were "tried" by being thrown into a pond. If they didn't drown, it was proof they were witches—and they were then burned at the stake. If they *did* drown, they were declared innocent—but they were dead.

In the modern witchhunt scenario, the Freeway Hall Case defendants are ordered to surrender their minutes. When they don't, it becomes proof they have something to hide. However, if they were to hand over the minutes, their constitutional rights and the FSP's reputation and effectiveness would be destroyed.

At left: One of the many supporters who protested the default ruling against the Freeway Hall Case defendants. Demonstrators picketed Seattle's King County Courthouse on April 24, 1987.

A rose by any other name... The convoluted rebuff of FSP's First Amendment claim is rooted in the court's contention that this is *not a political case*:

This is not a case in which discovery of membership, contributors, or internal organization is sought. It is not a case in which a hostile government agency or legislative committee seeks information regarding the internal affairs of a minority political party. It is not a case in which FSP's politics or organization are at issue.

What a breathtaking disavowal of reality!

Fact: Discovery of membership, contributors, and internal organization *was* sought by Snedigar. At the outset, he won a court order for "all information previously requested and requested in the future." The FSP was forced to mount a full-scale campaign to get discovery limited *at all*.

Fact: If Snedigar and his attorneys, Michelle Pailthorp and Thomas Wampold, aren't "hostile government agents," they might as well be. Their efforts clear the way for government agents to join a group undercover, leave it, sue it, and insist on disclosure of internal records for the purpose of "preparing their case" against it.

Fact: A similar suit against the Democratic or Republican party by an ex-member wouldn't have survived Round One.

Nevertheless, the courts, echoing Snedigar, thus far have held that the Freeway Hall Case is a dispute between private parties over a purely financial matter.

Out of default and into the gag order. Although the Court of Appeals maintained that the FSP should disclose its minutes, it did overturn the default judgment that followed the FSP's refusal to do so—sort of.

Avoiding a yes or no, the court said the default *may be* harsh and inappropriate. They bounced it back to the lower court with instructions to consider lesser sanctions. If the Superior Court chooses to inflict default again, they said, it must justify its decision this time. The appeals court clearly defined what they would accept as a rationale.

However, while the lower court has been given a second chance at the FSP, the appeals court has bound and gagged the party. In a *footnote*, the judges ordered the FSP not to reopen First Amendment issues or "belatedly seek to bolster its showing of constitutional privilege" when the case returns to Superior Court.

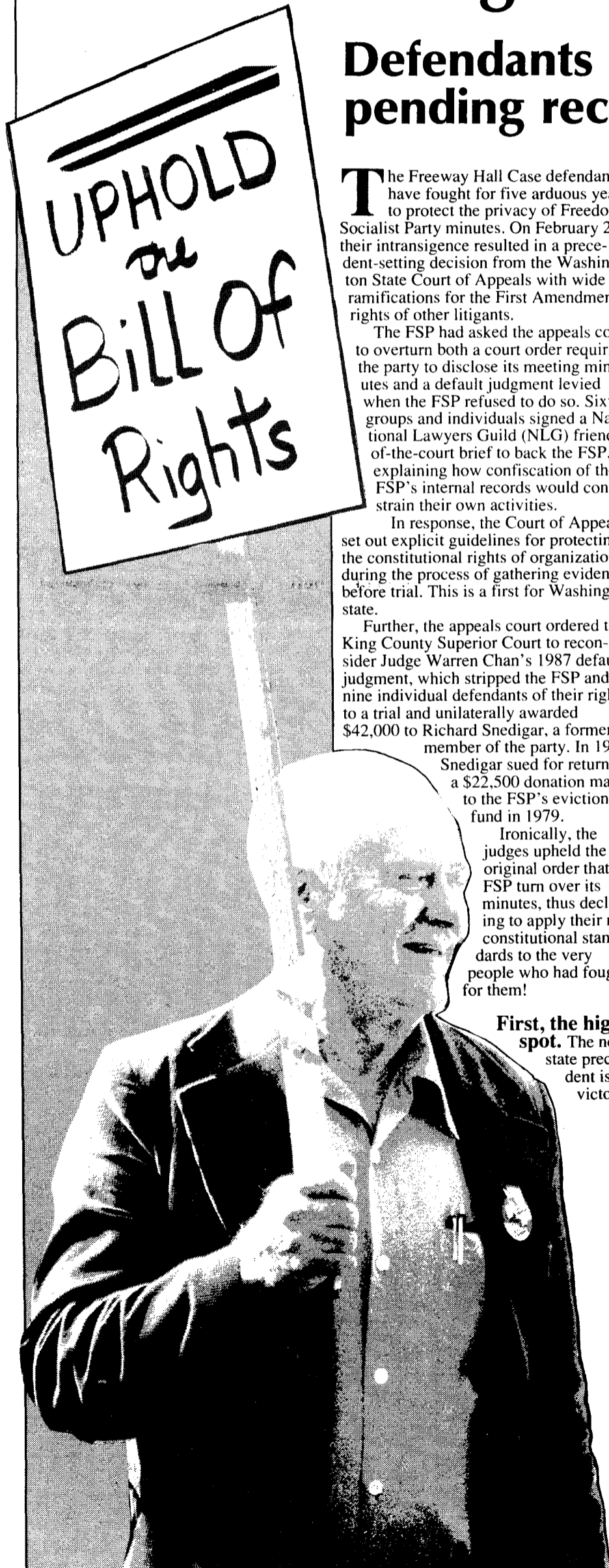
This order sets a Herculean task for FSP defense lawyers Valerie Carlson, Fred Hyde, and Daniel Hoyt Smith. How can they argue against default on the issue of the minutes without discussing *why* the FSP won't surrender its minutes!

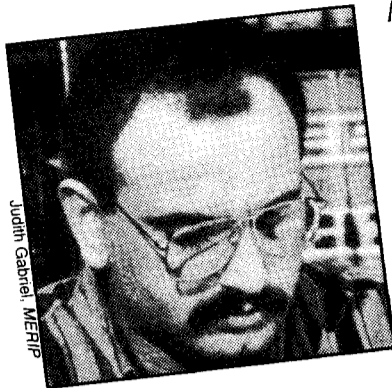
A political veteran testifies. FSP asked the Court of Appeals to reconsider its ruling on the minutes and extend First Amendment protection to the party. At the heart of the party's request was a new affidavit submitted by defendant Clara Fraser, FSP chairperson and founder.

To meet the new standards for establishing the need for First Amendment protection and to prove that the case is political, Fraser drew on her experiences as a lifelong socialist. She sketched an exact, vivid picture of what the minutes' release would mean to her, the FSP, her co-defendants, and the political climate. Wrote Fraser:

I have personally experienced excruciating betrayals by long-time associates who, under pressure, informed to...investigative committees that ran rampant from the late '40s well into the '60s... I personally observed how the fingering of Communist Party members...resulted in panic and a dramatic, lasting rout of the membership. Members left out of fear, anguish, and anger, and the public shunned the party...

to page 6





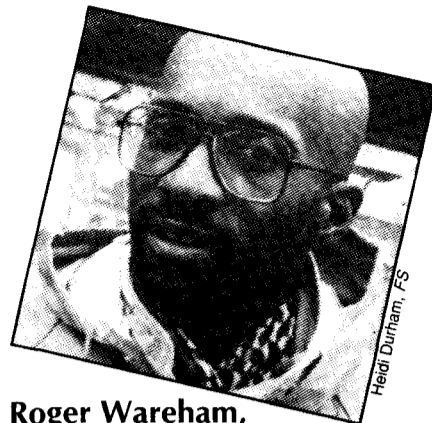
Michel Shehadeh,
Los Angeles,
California
Palestinian defendant in
L.A. Eight case; member
of Committee for Jus-
tice to Stop the McCar-
ran Act Deportation

It's extremely impor-
tant that people and or-
ganizations fight the
government's attempts
to stifle fundamental
rights to freedom of thought
and debate. All of these free speech cases are con-
nected—a victory for one group is a victory for every group, and
a defeat for one group is a defeat for us all.



Jan Carr,
Melbourne,
Australia
for Defend
the Unions
Committee

We in the Defend
the Unions Commit-
tee support the crucial fight of the Freeway Hall Case
defendants. The government used their power here in a simi-
lar way to terrorize the militant Builders Labourers Fed-
eration and attack their right to internal decision-making.
The international movement must fight these attacks at
the jobsites, in the streets and in the courts.



Roger Wareham,
New York City
Project Associate for the Center
for Law and Social Justice; NY 8+
defendant

The decision of the Washington
Court of Appeals disturbs me greatly.
The revocation of the default is out-
weighed by the decision requiring the
FSP to provide organizational minutes.
What importance is it that Washington
State now adheres to the Supreme
Court standard protecting privacy and
free speech rights, if its interpretation
of the standard achieves the same un-
constitutional result? In the political
balance of life, this decision, further
eroding our alleged "Constitutional"
protections, will cost U.S. residents
more than any monetary fine could. It is
one more step on the path costing us our
liberty.



Mitsuye Yamada,
Irvine, California
Poet and author of *Desert
Run: Poems and Stories*

This is not a simple matter between
the Freeway Hall defendants and Rich-
ard Snedigar. The issues strike squarely
at our First Amendment rights. The
Freeway Hall Case Defense Committee
is fighting for all of us, for our rights to
privacy and freedom of expression.

**Rebels, radicals
and reformers
speak out
on the Freeway Hall Case**

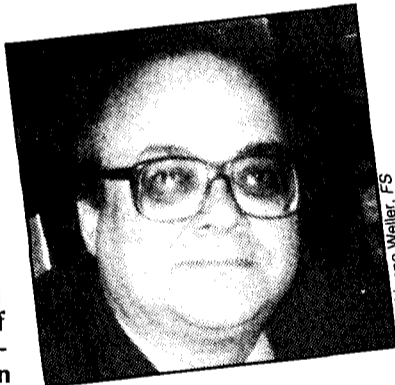
**The Freedom Socialist Party's fight to keep its records
private has won the endorsements of more than 500
organizations and individuals. They span the globe and their
occupations and activities cover just as wide a range, from
four players on the Seattle Seahawks football team to
unions, feminists, indigenous peoples, and radicals in
Ireland, Australia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and Japan.
On this page, seven endorsers sound off about the case.**



Ramona Bennett,
Tacoma, Washington
Past chairperson of the Puyallup Tribe;
advocate for the rights of the oppressed

I was threatened with contempt when I refused to tell a Senate committee the names of more than 1500 people
who participated in the successful 1976 tribal occupation of Cushman Hospital (Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic
Center). I firmly believe that leaders of an organization do not have the **right** to give out names of members, mail-
ing lists, minutes, etc. It is up to the individual members whether they want anyone else to have access to this in-
formation. The leader of an organization has no right to make this decision for them, regardless of what threats the
government, courts or individuals may make.

**Robert L.
Findley,**
Portland,
Oregon
Secretary-
Treasurer
and Legisla-
tive Director
of American
Federation of
Musicians Lo-
cal 99, Oregon



I want the Washington State Supreme Court to
accept the Freeway Hall Case appeal because consti-
tutional rights are at stake. Labor and activist groups
have come together to support this case because the
Freedom Socialist Party has not received fair treat-
ment in the courts, and if everyone is not treated
equally under the law, anyone of us could be next.
Snedigar appears to be playing the victim when in
reality he's attacking fundamental issues that affect
the freedom of everyone.

Affiliations of endorsers are listed for identification only.



Glenn Ferguson,
Vancouver, Canada
Revolutionary socialist; member of National
Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians

In Canada, like the U.S., trade unions, peace groups, and pro-choice and
solidarity organizations have been the victims of harassment by the state. Spies
and provocateurs have been uncovered; mailing lists and minutes have been
seized. These activities create an atmosphere of intimidation and attempt to
weaken political organizations. The same thing will result if the courts refuse
to uphold constitutional rights in the Freeway Hall Case. The privacy of min-
utes and membership lists must be guaranteed in order to protect the right to
organize freely for a world worth living in.

Civil liberties affirmed in two key cases

Hyde beats Layne

Not everybody hears from their state
Court of Appeals twice in a month, like
Seattle attorney Fred Hyde did early this
year. But not everybody is a target in two
harassment lawsuits at once.

On February 21, the Washington ap-
peals court lifted Hyde and his co-defen-
dants in the Freeway Hall Case out of de-
fault, but didn't acknowledge their right
to protect the privacy of Freedom Social-
ist Party minutes.

On March 13, the court ruled that a
lower court was right to toss out a mer-
itless suit brought against Hyde by a
rightwing employer, Thomas Layne. In
both cases, two members of the presiding
three-judge panels were the same.

As an administrative law judge for the
state, Hyde had raised Layne's hackles by
ruling that Layne discriminated against a
transgendered employee. Layne charged
socialist Hyde with the crime of bias

against bosses, and sued the state for neg-
ligence in permitting Hyde to hear unem-
ployment compensation disputes!

The judge who dismissed Layne's
case ruled that Hyde's politics and advoca-
cacy of employee rights do not strip him
of judicial immunity from suits brought
by people unhappy with his decisions.

The Court of Appeals agreed. Citing a
previous ruling, they wrote: "A judge...
should not have to fear that unsatisfied
litigants may hound him with litigation
charging malice or corruption. Imposing
such a burden on judges would contribute
not to principled and fearless decision-
making but to intimidation."

Clara Fraser filed an affidavit in the
Freeway Hall Case with the Court of Ap-
peals a week after their *Layne v. Hyde*
ruling. In it she drew the parallel that, just
as immunity is necessary to guarantee
that judges can make decisions free from
coercion, "the same kind of protection is
essential to preserve the democratic po-

litical process in small, private, voluntary
political organizations." □

L.A. Eight win a round

The persistence and boldness of the
Los Angeles Eight and their many sup-
porters paid off on December 22, 1988,
when a federal district court judge ruled
that sections of the McCarthy-era McCar-
ran-Walter Act are unconstitutional.

In January 1987, the government had
targeted seven Palestinians and a Kenyan
woman for deportation under the Act and
rounded them up, claiming they were
linked to a group belonging to the Pales-
tinian Liberation Organization.

After a first set of charges were
thrown out, the INS charged two defen-
dants under another provision, affiliation
with an organization which "advocates
the destruction of property." It instituted
deportation proceedings against the other

six on visa technicalities.

Joined by the American Friends
Service Committee, American-Arab
Anti-Discrimination Committee, and
other organizations, the Eight challenged
the McCarran-Walter Act in a suit against
the government.

Judge Stephen Wilson, a Reagan ap-
pointee, ruled that **all** immigrants, "legal"
or not, have First Amendment rights and
cannot be deported for exercising them.
He wrote that "the First Amendment pre-
supposes that right conclusions are more
likely to be gathered out of a multitude of
tongues, than through any kind of au-
thoritative selection."

This historic victory does not end the
case, however. The government is ap-
pealing, and deportation hearings for six
of the eight began in May. Donations to
their defense fund can be sent to Commit-
tee for Justice to Stop the McCarran Act
Deportation, P.O. Box 4631, Los Ange-
les, CA 90051. □

China's torturous path toward socialist democracy

What new explosions will devastate China after the slaughter of dissidents in Tiananmen Square? Untold hundreds, perhaps thousands, were massacred, and incalculable outrage smolders in the streets of Beijing, Shanghai, and all Chinese cities. Outrage and incredulity: the people did not believe it would come to this.

Desperate government hardliners had hoped to disembowel with one bloody stroke the unconquerable workers' democracy movement. But the bureaucrats have slit their own throats. Students and workers—on campuses and in offices, factories, ministries, and homes—will regroup to retake Tiananmen Square in a day, or a month, or a year from now. They will win every last demand. History has spit on Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng, and their henchmen.

Aftershock. Headlines trumpet waves of arrests taking place; the masses have been quieted—for now. But Deng and Co. have not yet fully secured control.

The Communist Party is split from bottom to top. Throughout the protests leading up to the massacre, fierce internecine struggles racked the ruling Politburo. Hardliners Deng and Premier Li appeared in control one minute, and liberals led by CP chief Zhao Ziyang seemed ascendant the next. Banners of Communist Youth and other party organizations were prominent during the upsurge.

The bloodletting signalled resumption of control by Deng and Co., but for how long? Party leaders didn't appear until June 8 to take responsibility for the bloodbath. Obviously, the battle within the party had redoubled behind the scenes; who knows what forms it may take in coming weeks?

Likewise divided is the army, reflecting the cleavage in party leadership. The 38th Army, stationed in Beijing, refused to fire on the protesters and the government had to call in the 27th Army from Mongolia. Fighting was reported between units in western Beijing after the massacre, and the spectre of greater intra-army conflicts hangs over the country.

It is widely agreed that the officer corps is horrified at the shootings. And if the officers are aghast at the bloodletting, what thoughts must be roiling now among the soldiers?

Reform or revolution? China's democracy movement arose en masse in April. It demanded free speech, an unfet-



Andy Hernandez, Newsweek

tered press, an end to bureaucratic corruption, and reversal of the enormous economic inequalities engendered by Deng's unleashing of a capitalist market co-economy. The mass protest was a **reform** movement: students and workers expected their demands to be won under CP leadership and the hardliners removed.

After the massacre widespread talk of revolution erupted among Western observers. Many journalists assume that capitalist counter-revolution is on the agenda, but the chance is remote even now. Then there are Trotskyists who, even before the crackdown, maintained that China was ripe for **political** revolution, i.e., armed overthrow of the government by the workers and soldiers and establishment of workers' democracy.

These Trotskyists were glib in their advocacy of armed warfare in China; they were jumping the gun then and, we believe, are still doing so.

Political revolution will become a necessity in China **when and if the conservatives are able to cement control of the party and army, carry through a mass purge of all CP, worker, and intellectual dissidents, and establish an ironclad police dictatorship.**

That hasn't happened yet. True, the scope for reform narrowed drastically after the 27th Army opened fire on the students. But continued conflict inside the party and army, and boiling mass fury, may yet enable dissidents to regroup and knock out the hardliners.

A tale of two bureaucracies.

Trotsky called for political revolution in the Soviet Union—but only after the Sta-

linists had cemented power, slaughtered all political opposition (and 10 million peasants), and consolidated a **monolithic** police/bureaucratic regime, **incapable** of reform, whose horrendous repression at home and detente with imperialism meant capitalist restoration if not overturned.

Trotsky called for political revolution only after Stalin accomplished what Deng has not yet been able to do.

Yes, the Chinese leadership is anti-democratic and callously anti-revolutionary in its foreign policy. But there the similarity with the Soviets ends, hardliners notwithstanding. Since no one faction has been able to consolidate control, the bureaucrats heretofore have had to be responsive in some measure to popular will, and the people have utilized divisions within the bureaucracy to win demands, via strikes, demonstrations, and public debate and criticism of the regime.

If the hardliners cement control now, the only way forward for the democracy movement will be political revolution. But as of now, decisive sectors of the party and army may still be won for workers' democracy, even though there is not much time left.

China's insurgent masses must keep the heat on.

What next? Unity among workers, students, disaffected soldiers, and pro-democratic CP cadre is the first requirement of the struggle today. Their central demand needs to be complete ouster of the hardliners and putting them on trial for the Beijing massacre.

This trial, riveting the attention of the world, would embrace and illuminate all the issues of democracy, economic equal-

ity, and bureaucratic corruption that gave rise to the upheaval, and would hasten fulfillment of the people's goals.

Demand for trials, coupled with insistence that the National Peoples Congress take up the issue when it meets in June, would galvanize the democratizers inside the CP and army.

And a general strike by workers and students today would lend vast weight to all the demands.

Critical to the success of the endeavor is continued independent self-organizing of the masses begun during the protests. What is needed now are soviet-style bodies, i.e., elected representative councils drawn from sectors of the working class—ministry workers, media employees and artists, workers from different industries—and from army units, farmer cooperatives, campuses, etc. These councils are crucial to attaining CP democratization and a new relationship between the party and organized masses—one in which the party will work with the councils from the local to the topmost governmental level. At the top, in an all-China Council of Soviets, the party will propose and debate policy, openly and democratically, to draw the members of the soviet into the process of self-rulership and management of social and economic life.

The party will remain the guardian of the revolution, reserving to itself the right to smash any attempted capitalist counter-revolution. So long as China is materially weak and subject to imperialist pressure, the advance to self-rulership is extremely tenuous, and the party's guardianship is indispensable to revolutionary survival. In the past China's leaders have identified national survival with bureaucratic self-interest; but within the framework of open decision-making, in soviets and the party, party authoritarianism tends toward zero.

Democratization of the CP is admittedly an optimistic scenario. And it is contingent on one last factor: the democratizers must come to grips with the bedrock cause of bureaucratism—China's poverty as compared with, and caused by, the capitalist West. China must fulfill its mission realistically, via extension of the socialist revolution abroad.

Only the spread and deepening of **world** revolution can consummate the union of political democracy and economic development sought by the brave proletarians of the workers' states. □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

...Hall Case

from page 4

It is precisely to protect people and organizations from all of these harms that confidentiality and mutual protectiveness are rock bottom precepts for any group that is outspoken, dissident, and controversial. Breaking that bond of trust among the politically powerless is a shattering, even fatal act—the most destructive act, short of outright murder, that one can commit against a vulnerable organization.

Fraser enumerated specifically ways in which FSP members and supporters could be identified and the organization and its friends harmed through the release of the disputed sets of minutes.

Upward, ever upward. The appeals court was unswayed. On April 28, it refused to accept Fraser's affidavit as evidence, without explanation. On May 9, it

rejected FSP's motion for reconsideration, just as tersely.

The next step is an appeal to the Washington State Supreme Court. But from now on, the courts have complete discretion as to whether or not they will even take up the party's appeals. **Never has strong, visible solidarity with the FSP's stand been more crucial.**

And it is materializing. The legal team won formidable help from Leonard Boudin, acclaimed constitutional law attorney and General Counsel for the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, who joined them in the state Supreme Court appeal. On June 2, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) international union decided to sign on to the NLG friend-of-the-court brief.

The Freeway Hall Case Defense Committee is also mobilized to meet the challenge. From lunchtime speaking gigs on college campuses to evening strategy sessions and weekend lit tables, they're raising consciousness and funds. They've mailed the first case newsletter to supporters worldwide.

In March, Fraser delivered a rousing keynote address. "A Call to Activism: Reviving the Tradition of the Rebel Law-

yer," at the National Women and the Law Conference in California. Other defendants and supporters have spoken on the case at forums and conference workshops across the U.S. and in Australia.

New endorsements continue to arrive. Among the most recent are those of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Mexico City); Esteban Volkov, Trotsky's grandson and curator of the Leon Trotsky Museum (Coyoacan, Mexico); Roberto Ortaliz, Secretary General

of Kilusang Mayo Uno (Manila, Philippines); linguist and writer Noam Chomsky (Lexington, Massachusetts); and International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 (San Francisco).

Snedigar and his little group of Serious McCarthyites will never succeed in forcing the FSP to cooperate in its own ruin and sell out the rights of others. We didn't come this far to turn back now! □

—ANDREA BAUER

Yes, I can help!

- Add my (our) name to the list of case endorsers.
- Add my name to the mailing list and keep me posted.
- Contact me to help with defense committee work.
- Enclosed is \$_____ to help the FSP defend First Amendment rights. (Make checks payable to the Freeway Hall Case Defense Fund.)

Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Mail to: Karrie Peterson, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA, 98118. Phone: (206) 722-2453.

Sure, I'll donate!

Part 1

DRUGS AND DEATH SQUADS - THE CIA CONNECTION

I imagine you're a CIA operative in the early 1960s—E. Howard Hunt perhaps. You're a star in the spook trade, a real growth industry. With luck, you can prosper in the years ahead.

You and your colleagues are charged with organizing the covert aspect of U.S. capital's drive to maintain and extend the American Empire. And successful empire requires the subjugation of the world's peoples, markets, resources, and investment arenas. Profits must flourish or America, Inc. will die.

You do the dirty work. You bribe amenable leaders and recruit mercenaries to overthrow unfriendly governments. Your work has enabled the empire to spread like leukemia in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

You can point with pride to past successes, such as the 1953 overthrow of elected Iranian premier Mohammad Mosaddegh and the subsequent installation of the hated Shah Reza Pahlavi. Then, a year later, you engineered the brisk removal of the social democrat Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala. There will undoubtedly be future triumphs. Still, you've got your problems.

To begin with, your job is a tricky one, condemned as it is by world legal and moral opinion and officially disavowed (though privately extolled) by your mandarin employers in Washington, D.C. And despite your best efforts, and the near-global chill of '50s reaction, the world stubbornly refuses to roll over and play dead for the U.S. colossus. When kicked it snarls, even louder today than yesterday. Africa is shuffling off the last of the old colonial rulers, and the anti-imperialist Patrice Lumumba now speaks for the continent. Southern Asia is threatening to burst the Western encirclement that stretches from the Middle East to Hong Kong. In Cuba—a mere 90 miles from Florida's Gold Coast—an upstart named Castro has bounced the mobsters out of Havana, expropriated U.S.-owned sugar mills, and lit a fuse to smoldering Latin America.

Behind them all stand the Russians, of course, H-bomb and all.

This is the stuff nightmares are made of. Worse yet, winds of unwelcome change are stirring in the heartland: increasingly unquiet civil rights rabble, peaceniks, and commies, always commies to contend with.

If the commies ever have their way in the Land of the Free, your dreams of power and gold are history.

What to do about the commies? Time to step up the covert wars in defense of the American Way!

But war is expensive. Congress, mindful of the charades a democracy must play, is coy with the purse strings. Private monied interests are generous, but there is so much work to be done!

Ah, never fear. There is a gold mine waiting for someone with the good sense to tap it. Illegal drugs! Heroin, cocaine—bliss for sale, and at high prices: because these most delicious of commodities are officially banned, they are perhaps the most profitable substances, gram for gram, on the world market today.

Hmmm... If you and your friends could control the supply...you could lavishly grease the guns of clandestine wars without suffering the hassle of appropriations hearings, and without the nosy public looking over your shoulder.

Present at the creation. Actually, the CIA was never really a stranger to the

narcotics underworld.

In 1947 and '48, U.S. agents financed and helped organize Corsican mobsters battling French communists for control of Marseilles. After the communists were routed, the Corsicans established a heroin pipeline into the U.S. as spoils of war.

The CIA was also tight with Kuomintang generals who'd ruled northern Burma, Thailand, and Laos since Mao booted them out of China in 1949. These generals, with Taiwan's blessing, controlled the opium trade in the Golden Triangle, where Burma, Thailand, and Laos converge. American secret agents, staunch allies of Chiang Kai-shek, got a piece of the action.

When the wars for global domination intensified in the '60s, the CIA went big-time into the drug trade, buying into or wresting control of major networks and establishing new ones from Panama to Pakistan. Narco-dollars financed the recruitment of mercenary armies and the spread of illicit arms to rightwing strike forces worldwide. The money facilitated coups, counterrevolutions, and "destabilizations" of governments hostile to White House goals. It also was essential in crystallizing repressive military/police regimes (along with their inevitable death squads) from one end of Latin America to the other.

Nouveau riche drug lords put generals and cops on their payrolls, and in some countries came to vie for outright control of the government.

That's not all. Dope played a major role in the debilitation and "depoliticization" of the turbulent U.S. social movements in the late '60s and '70s. Then it served to facilitate the ongoing "pacification" of the ghettos, barrios, and American youth in general. Not pretty, perhaps. But the pacifiers figured that, with austerity chewing at the future of millions, better that untold numbers rot in drug-sugared limbo than contemplate the dismantling of the capitalist misery factory.

By the middle of the '80s, the drug scourge took its place alongside AIDS as a banner-headline horror story. Anti-drug hysteria mushroomed and the government whipped up an all-out War Against Dope. What better excuse to justify sending anti-insurgency armies into Bolivia, and at the same time erase the First Amendment at home?

Government officials do exist, of course, who are actually, genuinely, hell-bent to knock out the drug trade. Who in their right mind wants to manage a stinking Necropolis, after all?

But the efforts of these straight-arrow narcs are worth only a snigger up the sleeve to the pushers on the government payroll. Just Say No indeed. There's a war going on for control of the earth, and without the drug trade—and the death squads it pays for—the American Empire is done for.

The Cuban connection. A dealer can't deal without product access and a worked-out distribution network. No problem here for the CIA.

Castro's coming to power in 1959 sealed an alliance between the agency and Santo Trafficante, Jr., once the de facto overlord of Fulgencio Batista's Cuba, and the premier U.S. importer of Marseilles heroin. The CIA enlisted Trafficante's help in several attempts to assassinate or overthrow Castro.

The change of regime in Cuba bequeathed the CIA a ready-made army: thousands of rightwing Cuban exiles—formerly pimps, pushers, police and pa-

trones under Batista—now capos and soldiers in Trafficante's Florida mob.

These are the cadres the agency sent against Castro at the Bay of Pigs and in subsequent operations financed and armed via massive dope-for-munitions deals.

The arms came from such firms as Interarmco, founded by former CIA agent Samuel Cummings. Cozy? You bet.

After the Bay of Pigs, the CIA placed exiles throughout the Western Hemisphere as key personnel for coups and destabilization efforts in Honduras, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico.

Especially chilling is the collusion of the CIA and Cuban exiles with the Chilean secret police after Salvador Allende's overthrow. Out of it came the 1975 murder of Chilean Christian Democrat leader Bernardo Leighton in Rome and the 1976 assassination of diplomat Orlando Letelier in Washington, D.C. Also following, predictably, was the takeover of Chile's cocaine distribution network by Augusto Pinochet's right-hand man, General Manuel Contreras.

The CIA put the exiles to work in the U.S. as well, where they penetrated the very highest levels of government. Under Richard Nixon, E. Howard Hunt secured

that landowning patrones used DEA helicopters and U.S. guns, rockets, and napalm in a war of extermination against revolutionary peasants. Major dope dealers prospered untouched, though smaller independent dealers were rounded up, tortured, and killed.

Colombia passed a law in 1978 declaring the military and police "exempt from any legal responsibility for their actions against violence and drug trafficking." Later that year, at DEA's instigation, President Julio César Turbay gave the military the power to arrest anyone it considered subversive without observing constitutional guarantees. During the next two years, more than 60,000 people were arrested by the military. Amnesty International documented massive cases of "prolonged incarceration without trial, torture...and political assassination," especially of Indian and labor leaders.

Meanwhile, Colombian cocaine exports shot up over \$3 billion by 1979, surpassing coffee as Colombia's number one cash crop. Many of Colombia's politicians and top cops (all U.S.-trained) were among those making the fattest profits. Colombian dope kings paid out hundreds of millions of dollars yearly in bribes—and still had enough left over to fund the elections of 15 to 20 percent of

When the wars for global domination heated up in the '60s, the CIA went big-time into the drug trade. Dope financed rightwing Latin American regimes, helped decimate U.S. revolt in the '60s and '70s, and facilitated ongoing "pacification" of the ghettos.

them key positions in a succession of "anti-drug" agencies used by the administration for undercover operations against domestic political opponents. The most notorious of these, ODALE (Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement), specialized in a no-knock, door-smashing reign of terror, earning the nickname "American Gestapo."

Myles Ambrose, the head of ODALE, resigned in disgrace in 1973 after he was discovered hobnobbing with indicted dope-and-gunrunner Richmond Harper at Harper's Texas ranch.

And all the while, the CIA's own godfather, Trafficante, was flooding the U.S. with top-grade China White heroin.

Blitzkrieg below the border. Beginning in 1973, CIA operatives and exiled Cubans fanned out across Latin America as agents of the newly created Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Officially, they worked with host governments in "eradicating the drug trade." But in reality, their job was to funnel U.S. arms, torture expertise, "development aid," and drug profits to rightwing armies, police, and death squads for their war on insurgent workers and peasants.

Operation Condor was launched in Mexico in 1976 under the pretext of providing U.S. military equipment and training to Mexican narcotics agents supervised by DEA. Later disclosures revealed

the Colombian Congress.

U.S. and host country propaganda typically fingered *leftists* as the drug smugglers. In a classic 1974 TV appearance with U.S. ambassador Robert Hill to promote the U.S./Argentine "anti-drug" war, Argentina's Social Minister and Anticommunist Alliance death squad leader José López Rega declared that "guerrillas are the main users of drugs... Therefore, the anti-drug campaign will automatically be an anti-guerrilla campaign as well."

One year later, an Argentine military intelligence report identified López Rega as a ringleader of—guess what?—an enormous network supplying cocaine to the U.S.

Globe-trotting villains. In the '60s and '70s, drugrunning and counterinsurgency kept the CIA as busy as flies on a side of bad beef, and not only in Latin America. At that time, Southeast Asia was the hottest spot on earth for covert operations. The CIA ran some dandies there: the secret war against Laotian communists, the Operation Phoenix program of terror and assassination, and the marketing of heroin to GIs in Saigon.

The careers of some of the period's key U.S. figures active in Southeast Asia will help to illustrate the continuity between the Vietnam war-era operations

EDITORIAL

George Bush: our CIA man in the White House

Ronald Reagan's eight-year romp as president is finally over. What a party it was for Big Business and freeloading politicians who ate, drank and raped the country while Ronnie clowned in public with corny one-liners.

Now, guess who's getting the bill?

Bingo.

And guess who's coming to collect?

George Bush, the Repo Man.

Mind you, Bush dreads the political consequences of renegeing on his major campaign promise of no tax hikes. But slowly, reluctantly, with practiced anguish in his voice, George Bush, the man who cares, will be forced—against his will, of course—to ask for increased taxes, further cuts in social services and education. For behind the insipid exterior, with its designer glasses and affected compassion, lies a monster.

Whereas Reagan was a nightmare, Bush can terrify you while you're wide awake. Even more than his predecessor, Bush personifies "the banality of evil."

Consider the following:

- Bush was CIA chief during Ford's administration. This is no modest administrative job. Bush was in *charge* of dope traffic, international arms deals, torture and death squads.

George was CEO of Global Murder, Inc.

- On a 1981 trip to the Philippines, Vice President Bush toasted despot Ferdinand Marcos: "We love your adherence to democratic principles."

- Also as vice president, Bush met at least three times with Felix Rodriguez, former CIA operative and veteran of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. Donald Gregg, Bush's national security adviser, sent Rodriguez to El Salvador in 1985 to coordinate the gunrunning to the contras. But Bush denies knowing anything about it; the subject just never came up.

- During his 1988 campaign, Bush utilized the National Coalition of American Nationalities to win the ethnic vote. By "ethnic," he did *not* mean Blacks and Jews. At least seven members of the coalition reportedly resigned when exposed as Nazi collaborators, anti-Semites or apologists of fascism.

- As president, Bush continues to seek "humanitarian" aid to the contras. And he continues to send arms to the rightwing guerrillas in Afghanistan, despite the Soviet withdrawal, and covert military aid to UNITA forces trying to overthrow Angola's legal government—undermining a ceasefire that Angola recently wrested from South Africa.

- Bush maintains a staunch opposition to abortion rights and urges right-to-lifers to keep up the good work.

- His program for labor calls for "a thousand points of light"—volunteers who will work without pay.

- Bush proposes issuing \$50 billion in bonds to postpone the crisis of the corrupt savings-and-loan institutions. The interest debt will be staggering for taxpayers—and their children's children. Bush's general financial strategy will be this kind of deferred payment scheme.

- Bush backs the proposal of Jack Kemp, his Housing and Urban Development Secretary, to create "urban enterprise zones," with business taxes low and minimum-wage requirements waived in order to attract capital investment. As a legislator, Kemp voted consistently to gut the budget of the agency he now supervises.

- The new president's other appointments are equally obscene. His failed bid to install John Tower as secretary of defense exposed Tower elbow-deep in the defense contracts cookie jar, though headline-makers focused instead on Tower's salaciousness and insobriety. Bush's *next* choice, hard-line hawk, rightwinger, and contra cheerleader Dick Cheney, was approved without a hitch.

Make no mistake, Bush is deadly. The interests he represents and protects can only be secured at the expense of working people.

He'll try to strip us of every means we've got to defend ourselves, from the Bill of Rights to our union contracts.

Forget about reading his lips. Keep your eyes on your wallet and your civil rights. □

RADICAL WOMEN COLUMN

The abortion wars: court clashes and street skirmishes

On April 9, six hundred thousand marchers for abortion rights in Washington, D.C. showed that the escalating war over women's reproductive rights is revitalizing feminist activism. The U.S. pro-choice movement is stronger than at any time since 1973.

Along with the new upsurge comes an old debate, a crucial one, over "respectable" liberalism vs. militant radicalism. This dispute must be resolved in order for feminists to defeat the reactionaries, who are targeting the right to abortion on two fronts.

One battlefield is in the courts, through challenges to *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. The other is in the streets, through barricades of abortion clinics spearheaded by the apocalyptic anti-choice group Operation Rescue (OR).

The Justice Department is pushing the Supreme Court to overturn the *Roe* ruling when it reviews a Missouri law which declares that "the life of each human being begins at conception." The high court began hearing arguments on the law, which would ban public funding for abortions or abortion counseling, in April.

Leading up to the legal showdown have been months of violent assaults by OR on clinics from coast to coast. Feminists are meeting this onslaught with heroic, creative clinic defense work.

View from the frontline. I was there, along with other representatives from Radical Women (RW) and the Freedom Socialist Party, when OR hit Los Angeles on February 11 and March 25. Both times hundreds of women and men of all ages—students, leftists, and lesbian/gay activists—mobilized at dozens of clinics. Linked to other clinics and central command by car phones, we stood ready to confront the rightwingers wherever they might strike.

On February 11, OR attacked two L.A. clinics within a block of each other. When we learned their location, we rushed there in droves.

Police stood by while OR illegally blocked clinic access for five hours. Then, escorted into the clinic by cops, OR agreed to leave after being shown records proving there were no abortions that day!

This violation of patients' right to privacy is an abomination. Next, if not stopped, the anti-abortionists will be halting abortions at the operating table!

How to stop them? Here's how *not* to—by conciliating with OR and the police while exhorting demonstrators to avoid any confrontation with OR. This was the



Sixty pro-choice demonstrators turned out last October 29 to defend LA's Clinica Eva, long a rightwing target.

route some pro-abortion liberals took that day.

Fearing militant confrontation—and feminist radicalism—far more than they fear the ultraright, these liberals wanted to keep abortion rights defenders "lawful." Never mind that the cops, who supposedly embody the law, were providing illegal support to the OR fanatics. The law is presently on the side of abortion rights. But not for long if liberals railroad the movement into "nice," unobjectionable actions only.

Turnaround. Outraged by what happened on February 11, feminists turned the L.A. movement to broader, more militant organizing to prepare for OR's three-day siege in March. Under pressure from experienced clinic defenders, the L.A. Coalition to Keep Abortion Safe and Legal opened itself to criticism and democratic discussion about the best way to beat back OR.

The coalition includes Planned Parenthood, NOW,

RW, Fund for a Feminist Majority, California Abortion Rights Action League, Fired Up for Choice, ACLU, ACT UP, Democratic Socialists of America, and many other groups and individuals. It debated its differences, paving the way for a genuine united front. We recognized the need for unity, but agreed that a wide range of tactics for fighting OR was open to coalition members. To ready for OR's siege, some members organized rallies and press conferences; others met with city officials to pressure the police to arrest OR; some planned for clinic defense; and some infiltrated OR's meetings.

The results were powerful. We mobilized thousands in our cause, mounted a tremendous media campaign, and persuaded the police to do their job. Chains of immovable, chanting demonstrators with linked arms kept targeted clinics open, and hundreds of OR reactionaries, including leader Randall Terry, were hauled off to jail.

Calling all militants. Women weren't handed legal abortion in response to polite requests. *Radicals*, many of them poor and Black, won it through dramatic, bold militancy in the late '60s and early '70s. They spoke out for abortion at a time when it wasn't a topic discussed in public, and *they were willing to break the law* in order to win abortion reforms.

The historic April 9 march to defend *Roe v. Wade*—the biggest women's rights march ever—must be followed by sit-ins, starting at the Supreme Court, and continued combative defense of abortion clinics. We must keep insisting that the police remove OR from clinic doors so that staff and clients can enter. If the police won't do it, then we must get the women in ourselves.

This is what it will take to convince the court that *we will not go back* to the days of back-alley abortions.

Women know that the loss of reproductive rights means economic and social servitude. This is just as true for young women, who are turning out in heartening numbers to fight for a right they have never lived without. The march on Washington and nationwide offensive against OR prove that we have the power to keep abortion legal and accessible through a sustained, broad, militant, multi-issue movement against the ultraright. □

—MARY ANN CURTIS

Mary Ann Curtis, organizer for Los Angeles Radical Women, has been active in the Clinica Eva Defense Committee for four years.

VOICES OF COLOR COLUMN

“Mississippi Burning”: a celluloid sellout

I sat in the theater, stunned and incredulous. Watching the movie *Mississippi Burning*, I found myself burning up at this sickening caricature of the 1960s civil rights movement.

The film is based on an actual event, the racist murders of three brave young activists—Mickey Schwerner, James Chaney and Andy Goodman—in Philadelphia, Mississippi. But the movie rewrites history. The real heroes of the Freedom Summer of 1964 were these youths and their comrades. The heroes of *Mississippi Burning* are the white FBI agents who come to town looking for their bodies.

The film accurately shows that the governor, mayor, sheriff and local police, all members or sympathizers of the Ku Klux Klan, conspired to murder the civil rights workers and hide their bodies, and that the silence of the white community gave them the green light.

Organized racist terror is powerfully portrayed. But the casting of Blacks as minor characters and passive victims, who are only saved by the intervention of noble emissaries of the “great white father” in Washington, D.C., is a vicious and bigoted lie. Not only does such a premise ignore the prolonged, intransigent mass movement which alone changed Mississippi—and the rest of the South—permanently. It completely falsifies the role of the feds, which was always a major part of the problem.

In the picture, Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe star as sensitive federal agents who serve justice. In life, the federal government was only dragged into the case by a tremendous public outcry. The FBI finally responded with a ludicrous media event, in which hundreds of white agents and sailors converged on the town searching for the bodies. The theater audience laughed, but it really happened.

The movie fashions a triumphant ending out of the discovery of the bodies and the convictions won on charges of violating the victims’ civil rights. It leaves out the vile true conclusion—none of the assassins who were sentenced served more than five years of jail time.

The state of Mississippi was not about to bring criminal charges against the killers. To bring the southern police states to heel, the U.S. government would have had to launch a new Reconstruction, as was done after the Civil War. This would have had revolutionary consequences North and South. So the federal charges of civil rights violations under the Fourteenth Amendment were Washington’s wholly inadequate substitute for justice.

Method behind the amnesia. As I left the theater, I asked myself, why produce such a warped picture? And why now?

Hollywood could have inspired and educated a generation born after the height of the civil rights movement and untutored in this proud chapter of U.S.—and world—history. Instead, the propagandists packaged a sanitized image of the FBI as friend and savior of social movements.

FBI and other government agents in the ‘60s were openly hostile, infiltrating and destabilizing organizations, orchestrating acts of terrorism in order to justify witchhunts. The FBI hoped to dis-



Freedom riders: true heroes of the civil rights movement.

credit Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and even drive him to suicide, by spreading rumors that he was a communist and adulterer.

Today, they are often more sophisticated. They pose as good guys, advising the naive to trust the government, adopt non-violence as a principle, and avoid direct confrontation with Nazis and rightwing anti-abortionists. They use their influence with liberals to persuade the movement to tie its own hands.

The makers of *Mississippi Burning* got the message, and they’re delivering it to us. Obediently, they show us that faith in the federal government, not mass action, produces social and political change.

Truth and consequences. History will not be rewritten so easily. The civil rights struggle accomplished a world of change for all of us, no matter what our color or sex. The movement’s true story is told in works like *Three Lives for Mississippi*, William Bradford Huie’s account of the Philadelphia murders.

Reading Huie’s book, I was struck by the dedication of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney. They were three martyrs, two Jewish and one Black, among thousands of Black and white women and men who were the backbone of the civil rights movement, building such organizations as SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), and COFO (Council of Federated Organizations).

The time will come soon when such spirited youth will rise again to fulfill the potential of the civil rights movement. We have not yet gained either economic equality or full democratic rights, which will only come with workers’ control of society. In a system ruled by profits, the re-emergence of KKK and fascist ambitions is inevitable.

Building a new, revolutionary Freedom Now movement is the way to make sure that Schwerner, Chaney, Goodman and the hundreds of others who were beaten, killed, or lynched did not fight in vain.

We remember the real truth of their fight. And we will carry it on! □

—YOLANDA ALANIZ

Yolanda Alaniz coordinates the Freedom Socialist Party’s Comrades of Color Caucus. Caucus members in FSP branches across the country alternate authorship of the Voices of Color column each issue.



Clara Fraser

A touch of Class

MY MAMA TOLD ME there were certain words you didn’t use because they weren’t nice.

My daddy went even further—you couldn’t even say “Shut up!” around him. That was garbage-can language.

Not until the ‘60s did Americans get to say the forbidden “F” and “S” words. Speech was so exuberantly free in that liberationist epoch that we could even talk in public about oppression, exploitation, imperialism, and—take a deep breath—capitalism.

Everybody today prattles about the unmentionables of yesterday: abortion, prostitution, masturbation, oral, anal, name it. The AIDS epidemic has at least vanquished Puritanism in everyday conversation; safe sex is definitely in.

BUT I’LL TELL YOU what’s still out, what is still not nice, annoying, gauche. I’ll tell you which two words rarely fail to elicit groans, snores, befuddlement, glazed expressions, or ruffled feathers from most people: “Working Class.”

Trade union bureaucrats, and workers climbing the career ladder to Business Agenthood, are loath to use the phrase.

Gorbachev never refers to it. He’s too absorbed in peaceful co-investment with ruling classes.

Upwardly mobile professional ladies and gentlemen of all colors and sexual preferences tend to squirm and glare when they hear the offending term. The greed generation considers it a 19th Century vestigial hangover, an appendix slated for surgery because nowadays, of course, everybody is middle-class.

Cultural nationalists airily dismiss the concept: it’s irrelevant and immaterial to their agenda, which relies solely on group worship of traditional folkways and/or skin color. True delights like soul food or blintzes or guacamole or sashimi become the political cement of a small sector of some ethnic groups, and class be damned.

Some leaders of Native American nations get really nasty about proletarian power. Russell Means, formerly of the American Indian Movement and presently of the Libertarian Party, views class and socialism as artificial constructs devised by Karl Marx and interesting only to “white Europeans.”

The Greens (whole earth anarchists) say that class exists all right, but it’s obsolete; capitalism and socialism are really the same thing because both deal with who shall own and control production. They claim we shouldn’t produce at all because production is hazardous to health and environment.

Some lesbians and gay men can be absurd, too—white gays who genuflect on the establishment altar and hate Reds of whatever sexual persuasion, and separatist lesbians who scorn all males except their bosses.

AND THEN WE COME to feminists. What do they think about radical politics and labor solidarity and workingclass-principled personal behavior? Well, here it seems some fresh breezes are blowing. For instance, feminists around the country have started inviting yours truly to explore this formerly no-no topic.

I recently spoke on socialist feminism to a conference on Women and Power at the University of Washington in Seattle. My remarks on the connections of race, sex and class elicited interest, some agreement, and some vehement opposition.

On March 31, in Oakland, California, I was the keynote speaker before 1000 women at the 20th National Conference on Women and the Law. My talk was “A Call to Activism: Reviving the Tradition of the Rebel Lawyer.” I was honored to be introduced by Merle Woo, a sister in class struggle. Freeway Hall Case attorney Valerie Carlson and Bay Area socialist feminists Nancy Kato and Roanne Hindin also espoused a radical class viewpoint in their workshop speeches. Again, a mixed reaction, but at least our presence was noted!

On April 6, I addressed a national conference at the University of Iowa attended by 2000. The subject was “Parallels and Intersections: Racism and Other Forms of Oppression.” My lecture was on “Oppressions: The Capitalist Connection and the Socialist Solution.” Nancy Kato also hit on the issue with a fine talk on the revolutionary feminist approach to race and class.

April 18 found me at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, where the Women’s Resource Center invited me to talk on “Using the Power of Class to Combat Racism and Sexism.” I think they liked me in Lincoln.

Yes, indeed, the single-issueism of post-Vietnam War days is happily dead. Feminists today are considering alliances—radical multi-racial coalitions of lesbians and straights to confront injustice. The attention paid to female workers and trade unionists is still not enough, but openness to a dynamic feminism wedded to a class-based internationalism is surging.

Most thrilling to me was the swift emergence of a Socialist Caucus in Iowa, composed of women and men, people of color and uncolor, gays and not-gays, from various countries.

WE SAID THE BAD WORDS out loud, over and over: working class, working class, working class, WORKING CLASS! We demanded that respect be paid to this decisive class that alone creates unity out of diversity and separates the fighters from those who do the bosses’ dirty work.

As Linda Ellerbee, the columnist and television anchor, said to a *USA Today* interviewer, “Just because it’s a rat race doesn’t mean it’s OK to be a rat.”

This here mama done told you. □



...CIA & Drugs

from page 7

and later affairs like the Iran/contra dope-for-arms deal. This rogues' gallery will also further illuminate how CIA drugrunning is the financial linchpin of global para-fascist networks and a crucial component of imperialist existence.

First up for examination is Theodore Shackley. A young CIA up-and-comer, Shackley was brought in from Berlin after the Bay of Pigs fiasco to head the agency's Miami station, JM/Wave, which fought the secret war against Cuba from 1961 to 1965. It was Shackley who oversaw the deployment of Cuban exiles throughout Latin America in the mid-'60s, and who left behind a highly trained force of 6000 thugs, drugrunners, and rightwing fanatics when he was shipped off to Southeast Asia in 1966.

While based in Vientiane, Laos, Shackley organized the opium-growing Meo (Hmong) tribesmen for a war on communism. Capitalizing on the CIA's 20-year friendship with the Golden Triangle's Nationalist Chinese generals, he rapidly turned Vientiane into the center of the Southeast Asian heroin trade.

Interestingly, one of the men involved in the Laotian war was a young Marine fire-eater named Oliver North.

Shackley left Laos to run the CIA station in Saigon, where the heroin traffic flowed like the Mekong River (thanks to the cooperation of Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky). After Shackley arrived, high-quality heroin from Laotian labs flooded Vietnam and turned an estimated 15 percent of the U.S. GIs there into addicts.

Alarmed army and U.S. narcotics ~~to~~ ~~down~~ ~~the~~ ~~heroin~~ ~~labs~~. But the U.S. embassy in Saigon—where future CIA director William Colby was second-in-command—hushed up and otherwise impeded investigations.

The U.S. heroin market mushroomed, naturally, when addicted GIs returned home.

It is useful to recall that Santo Trafficante, Shackley's partner in crime from the Miami days, had traveled to Southeast Asia in 1968 and successfully concluded a deal with the dope mavens there for exclusive U.S. import rights. Also notewor-

thy is the fact that one of the chemicals necessary to the production of China White was shipped in from Taiwan, where the government held a godfatherly interest in Golden Triangle opium production.

Another point of interest: two of Shackley's Saigon crew were Bay of Pigs veteran Felix Rodriguez and CIA warhorse Donald Gregg. Nearly twenty years later, Gregg and Rodriguez would surface in congressional testimony as key players in the Iran/contra scheme. As Vice President George Bush's national security adviser, Gregg sent Rodriguez to El Salvador to oversee the shipment of arms to the contras. Rodriguez also laid down the pipeline through which Colombian cocaine kings sluiced \$10 million to the contras.

Bush, an ex-CIA chief, has admitted meeting with Rodriguez personally three times, but he claims he knew nothing of Rodriguez' role!

Old spooks never die. Shackley was back in the Western Hemisphere as chief of its covert CIA operations in time to ramrod Allende's overthrow in 1973.

that is, given a new cover. He went to work as a consultant for the Stanford Technology weapons brokerage firm. In 1984, he was the American first approached by the Iranian government about cutting a direct arms deal with the U.S. government. His contact was former SAVAK agent Manucher Ghorbanifar, an Iranian munitions dealer and Ollie North's political confidant and arms supplier for the Iran/contra project.

Even the names remain the same. Shackley's odyssey through the spook underworld provides a singularly useful map to the path that led from the Bay of Pigs to the Iran/contra mess. A glance at the careers of two other Laotian war bigwigs—retired U.S. Army Major General John Singlaub and retired Air Force Major General Richard Secord—will help fill in the topography.

Singlaub was the army's operations chief in Laos, Shackley's military counterpart there. Secord, one of Singlaub's air-wing commanders, worked closely with Shackley, undoubtedly overseeing the transport of heroin.

In 1978, Singlaub, long a far-right luminary, helped organize the remnants of Somoza's army into an anti-Sandinista fighting force. Picked by Oliver North of the National Security Council to head up private contra fundraising efforts in 1984, he tapped reactionaries in Taiwan, South Korea, and Latin America for millions.

Secord became the top U.S. Air Force official in Iran in the mid-'70s, and by 1979 had advanced to the position of top Pentagon weapons broker. In 1986, he again joined his good friend Shackley, this time on the payroll of the private arms merchants at Stanford Technology.

It wasn't hard for the Iranians and contras to guess where to go for the guns.

Red-hating agents of Empire. The ideological tie binding all these high-level arms smugglers and dope dealers together, of course, is anti-communism.

John Singlaub is head of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), the world's premier neo-fascist lobby. WACL's membership ranges from U.S. reactionaries, Taiwanese drug magnates, and Latin American death squad leaders to Afghani mujahideen and unreconstructed old-line Nazis scattered in exile throughout Europe and the Americas.

WACL is the most sophisticated po-

litical expression to date of fascism's global agenda and methods, and is the mask under which the face of U.S. ambition increasingly shows itself. WACL's history vividly reveals the fascist essence of empire—and pinpoints the source of the Empire's addiction to drugrunning.

Founded in Taiwan in 1967 by CIA and Taiwanese intelligence personnel, WACL has roots in the old China Lobby, which urged the unleashing of Chiang Kai-shek against revolutionary China in the '50s. The Lobby's leading lights—E. Howard Hunt and William Pawley to name two—were instrumental in stitching together the CIA's Cuban exile and Kuomintang networks.

Hunt and Pawley in fact embody the convergence of these networks: Hunt was a special agent in the CIA's precursor, the OSS, in South China, where the Americans forged bonds with Chinese officials trading in opium and gold. He went on to aid in the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala and helped establish the Latin American branch of WACL. Pawley, once a lobbyist and arms-runner for Taiwan, also owned the Havana bus system during the days of Batista. He was involved with Hunt in the dispatching of Arbenz, and accompanied Trafficante on a gunboat raid against Castro.

China Lobby/WACL bigwigs and their associates—Hunt, Pawley, Secord, Singlaub, Shackley, et al.—lodged themselves tightly in the postwar U.S. intelligence, military, government, and business establishments. They were the drumbeaters and spear-carriers for stepped-up anti-Castro warfare and the Vietnam war. They were responsible for coups, counterrevolutions, and the formation of death squads from Mexico to Brazil; CIA/DEA "anti-drug" torture and counterinsurgency; the Chilean slaughter; support for the Shah and rightwing Afghani "freedom fighters"; and the contra war.

Everywhere you look the red-hating generals and spies were there. And everywhere, drugrunning financed their opium dreams of Empire. □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

The concluding installment of this two-part look at the CIA's drug network will examine its devastating social and economic impact in Latin America, Asia, and especially the U.S. It will also detail the progressive militarization of the Drug War at home and abroad. Lastly, it will offer a plan of action for fighting and eradicating the drug-dealing CIA warlords.



He popped up in Teheran in the mid-'70s, just as the Shah's CIA-trained secret police, SAVAK, were pumping up Iranian heroin production. This was an important undertaking. Who knew how long the Golden Triangle network would last after the fall of Saigon?

In 1979, after Senate investigations into covert activities, Shackley resigned from the CIA—or was "sheep-dipped,"

ting denouement in 1982 with the SWP's formal abandonment of Trotskyism.

The same essential laborism is eroding the FI. Witness its "turn to heavy industry" and banning of women's caucuses in 1978; its expressly pessimistic refusal to enunciate revolutionary strategies for workers' revolution in the advanced capitalist countries; its open disavowal of Trotskyism in the Central American revolutions. It's all very SWP-like—which explains USec's refusal to battle that party as an alien, Stalinist organism inside the FI.

Telling omissions. The Rimini conference was convened to address the crisis of Trotskyism. But the crisis, born of radical laborism, was there in Rimini, and has not yet been satisfactorily dealt with.

Laborism was most apparent in the discussion of the Fourth International: most groups attributed the downfall of the FI to the original sin of Pabloism—the precept originating with FI leader Michel Pablo in the late 1940s that, because of postwar capitalist "stabilization" and the spread of Stalinism, Trotskyists should forget about revolution and dissolve inside Communist Parties as Stalinism's "left wing." The FI today under USec, they said, is a Pabloite affair in Trotskyist guise.

That's fine as far as it goes. Pabloism is abominable, and USec is certainly pursuing Pabloite policies. But what underlies Pabloism? What has allowed it to fester inside the FI? Could it be that old laborite magic—the belief that class struggle must be put on hold until "the guys" in heavy industry decide to act—

that has the FI spellbound? No one except the FSP addressed this possibility, or responded to its assessment that this possibility is fact.

Sexism. Laborism ran deep in Rimini—and deepest in the realm of sexual politics.

Few seemed to think it anomalous that FSP delegate and National Secretary Guerry Hoddersen was the only woman leader—and one of only two women, both from the U.S.—to speak. Few thought it amiss that the GOR rank-and-filers who did the exhausting work of translating and typing were exclusively women. Nor did anyone except Hoddersen express appreciation for that work and its importance.

Feminists have fought such traditional "oversights" for decades. How can Trotskyists be blind to the corrosive effects such sexism has on our own movement? And if our movement remains infected by these primitive male chauvinist politics, our prospects for changing the world are nil.

Summing up. Rimini was a beginning, a seed planted that has yet to take root. But it *can* take root!

When Edmund Samarakkody, 82-year-old leader of the Sri Lankan RWP, concluded his report on the bloody civil war raging in his country with the words, "And now comrades, I ask for your advice," we in the FSP were deeply moved. Here was a vision of what a revived Trotskyist international could be—a place for revolutionaries to learn from each other, to combine their knowledge and experience to help one another.

Comrade Samarakkody taught by example. His willingness to listen as well as advise, his revolutionary optimism, his unshakable commitment to Permanent Revolution will be the hallmarks of any successful regroupment of Trotskyists. His example will provide the nourishment, we hope, for the European Coordinating Committee formed on the last day of the conference. □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

...Int'l Trotskyists

from page 3

puter operators, farmworkers, etc., mostly women, people of color, and immigrants—are seen as the back-up battalions, if that.

Radical laborism issues from an undialectical disregard for changed socio-economic reality under postwar capitalism—the relative decline of old-line industries, and the explosive growth of communications, services, and government bureaucracies—which has invested the "rearguard" with as great a strategic importance to revolution as workers at "the point of production" ever had.

What causes this refusal among supposed dialecticians to recognize manifest change? **Sexism, racism, homophobia, national chauvinism**—bourgeois "isms" imbibed by far too many leftists.

The love affair with labor's aristocrats—privileged, conservatized workers in heavy industry—caused the SWP to grow cynical regarding the revolutionary potential of *all* workers, especially U.S. workers, in the late '50s and '60s. Contempt for Marxism naturally ensued; also, inevitably, opportunism—the unholy desire to get rich quick, by hook or crook, in the social movements. Hence, the SWP's loving embrace of reformists, cultural nationalists, and petty bourgeois revolutionists, at home and abroad.

The entire ugly process came to a fit-

Greetings from Sri Lanka

Dear Comrades,

Thank you for the contribution you made towards the travel expenses of the Revolutionary Workers' Party delegates for the Rimini conference.

It was indeed very good that we were able to meet with your delegates at this conference. Your intervention in the discussions was relevant and interesting. We think your two docu-

ments, "The Great Soviet Shake-Up" and "testing the Limits of Glasnost," are good.

We are studying your document "On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State." We shall send our comments.

Fraternally yours,
Edmund Samarakkody
for RWP Political Committee,
Sri Lanka

MARXIST CLASSICS

Salient excerpts from
the Old Man's writings

Trotsky on Fascism

Lessons for our time

At the moment that the "normal" police and military resources of the bourgeois dictatorship, together with their parliamentary screens, no longer suffice to hold society in a state of equilibrium—the turn of the fascist regime arrives. Through the fascist agency, capitalism sets in motion the masses of the crazed petty bourgeoisie and the bands of declassed and demoralized lumpenproletariat—all the countless human beings whom finance capital itself has brought to desperation and frenzy.

From fascism the bourgeoisie demands a thorough job; once it has resorted to methods of civil war, it insists on having peace for a period of years. And the fascist agency, by utilizing the petty bourgeoisie as a battering ram, by overwhelming all obstacles in its path, does a thorough job. After fascism is victorious, finance capital directly and immediately gathers into its hands... the entire state apparatus together with the army, the municipalities, the universities, the schools, the press, the trade unions... When a state turns fascist...it means first of all for the most part that the workers' organizations are annihilated; that the proletariat is reduced to an amorphous state; and that a system of administration is created which penetrates deeply into the masses and which serves to frustrate the independent crystallization of the proletariat. Therein precisely is the gist of fascism.

—"What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat," 1932

The bonfires which burn the impious literature of Marxism light up brilliantly the class nature of National Socialism... (T)he big bourgeoisie, even those who supported Hitler with money, did not consider his party theirs... Political art consisted in fusing the petty bourgeoisie into oneness through its common hostility to the proletariat. What must be done to improve things? First of all, throttle those...underneath. Impotent before big capital, the petty bourgeoisie hopes in the future to regain its social dignity through the ruin of the workers.

...The program with which National Socialism came to power... Recollections of the "happy" days of free competition, and hazy evocations of the stability of class society; hopes for the regeneration of the colonial empire...and animal fear of equality in the person of a worker in a cap and without a collar; the frenzy of nationalism and the fear of world creditors...all the refuse of international political thought has gone to fill up the spiritual treasury of the new Germanic Messianism.

...But fascism in power is least of all the rule of the petty bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it is the most ruthless dictatorship of monopoly capital... Such slogans as state control of trusts and the elimination of unearned income were thrown overboard immediately upon the assumption of power...

The dependence upon international bankers...is not eased an iota.

—"What Is National Socialism?" 1933

To evolution, materialist thought, and rationalism...is counterposed...national idealism as the source of heroic inspiration...

(T)he nation is given the support of the race...

The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority.

—"What Is National Socialism?" 1933

In every discussion of political topics the question invariably arises: Shall we succeed in creating a strong party for the moment when the crisis comes? Might not fascism anticipate us? Isn't a fascist stage of develop-

ment inevitable? The successes of fascism easily make people lose all perspective, lead them to forget the actual conditions which made the strengthening and victory of fascism possible. Yet a clear understanding of these conditions is of especial importance to the workers of the United States. *We may set it down as a historical law: fascism was able to conquer only in those countries where the conservative labor parties prevented the proletariat from utilizing the revolutionary situation and seizing power.* In Germany two revolutionary situations were involved: 1918-1919 and 1923-1924. Even in 1929 a direct struggle for power on the part of the proletariat was still possible. In all these three cases the social democracy and the Comintern [the Stalinists] criminally and viciously disrupted the conquest of power and thereby placed society at an impasse. Only under these conditions and in this situation did the stormy rise of fascism and its gaining of power prove possible.

...It is quite self-evident that the radicalization of the (U.S.) working class...has passed through only its initial phases, almost exclusively in the sphere of the trade union movement (the CIO).

The prewar period, and then the war itself, may temporarily interrupt this process of radicalization, especially if a considerable number of workers are absorbed into the war industry. But this interruption of the process of radicalization cannot be of a long duration. The second stage of radicalization will assume a more sharply expressive character. The problem of forming an independent labor party will be put on the order of the day. Our transitional de-

When a state turns fascist, it means first of all that the workers' organizations are annihilated; the proletariat is reduced to an amorphous state; and a system of administration is created which serves to frustrate the independent crystallization of the proletariat.

mands will gain great popularity... No occupation is more completely unworthy than that of speculating whether or not we shall succeed in creating a powerful revolutionary leader-party. Ahead lies a favorable perspective, providing all the justification for revolutionary activism. It is necessary to utilize the opportunities which are opening up and to build the revolutionary party.

—"Last Article," *Fourth International*, 1940 □

...Anti-Nazi

from page 12

Big stakes. Hasn't history demonstrated amply enough, in Germany and Italy, that fascism can only triumph if the Left and progressive movements are unwilling to join forces?

The united front principle is simple: march separately, but strike together. Unity won't be built in a day, but the time to start is now. Old animosities among U.S. leftists die hard, however. Then there's the history of bureaucratic maneuvering and power plays by too many groups aiming at political control of whatever coalition they're in. These tactics don't work in a united front, where power must be shared and intelligent cooperation fostered.

It's time to get rid of the age-old hatreds and bureaucratic habits. The fascists are currently building their own united front, of misogynists, race-haters, homophobes, anti-Semites, xeno-

United Front Against Fascism Principles of Unity

■ The United Front Against Fascism (UFAF) is a broad-based coalition of groups and individuals united in opposition to racism and bigotry, and the organized groups that promote them. Ideologies including racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, hatred of lesbian and gay people, white supremacist nationalism and anti-labor attitudes are the breeding ground and staple of fascist movements. We believe that all oppressed and working people have a stake in the fight to stamp out these ideologies and movements.

■ Regardless of our diverse political affiliations and views, all members of UFAF understand that solidarity and unity in action are the best means to advance the struggle against neo-Nazi and fascist movements.

■ UFAF is a direct action organization. We are in favor of large and disciplined counter-demonstrations against the neo-Nazis and fascists whenever and wherever they meet. We

seek to support and cooperate with the activities of other human rights organizations in a broad range of anti-Nazi actions. We believe in the necessity for public education about the fascist threat. We believe that all victims of fascist violence have the right to defend themselves.

■ UFAF is democratic in its internal structure and functioning and strives at all times to ensure fair representation of all its members in its policy-making bodies. UFAF supports and promotes the leadership of women, people of color, lesbians and gays and all victims of neo-Nazi hatred. Organizations and individuals in UFAF treat each other with mutual respect, goodwill and consideration. We seek to maximize our agreements. Differences are discussed openly and frankly. Unprincipled tactics such as behind-the-scenes manipulations and personal attacks have no place in UFAF because they undermine our ability to build a united front.

phobes, warmongers, and other reactionaries. Unity among fascism's intended victims, if it is put together in time, can stop this rabble cold. □

—LUMA NICHOL

Unionist Luma Nichol is one of the founders of UFAF and a student of the history of fascism.

...Australia

from page 3

In fact, the restructuring has created an ideological crisis within Australia's Left. The leadership of the Socialist Party, traditional proponents of Kremlin policies, support Gorbachev. But rank-and-filers Doug spoke with weren't so sure. Their concerns are our concerns: Gorbachev's decreased aid to international revolutions, his refusal to recognize the rights of national minorities, his scapegoating of working women for family breakups and rampant alcoholism, and the threat of capitalist restoration posed by his market reforms.

We made the most of every minute of Doug's visit, and just hours before his plane was due to leave we were still meeting, discussing, evaluating and planning. Thank you, Doug, for your leadership, enthusiasm and energy! The Melbourne branch of the FSP will never be the same. We have grown in political maturity as a result of the tour, and our many good supporters got to see in a concrete way what our international revolutionary feminist organization can do! □

—ALISON THORNE

An international socialist feminist organization
in the front lines of the fight against racism,
sexism, anti-gay bigotry, and labor exploitation.

Radical Women

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Los Angeles: 1918 W. 7th St., #204,
Los Angeles, CA 90057. 213-413-1350.

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EDITORIAL

Time to unite against Nazis!

Truly, last December's Whidbey Island anti-Nazi skinhead rally in Washington state was the start of something big. That rally was put together in five days after the media broke the story that white supremacists planned to meet on the island to commemorate racist killer Robert Mathews, slain by the FBI two years ago. Organized by the United Front Against Fascism (UFAF), an instant coalition of gays, feminists, radicals, people of color, unionists and young people, the rally brought over 400 counter-demonstrators to Whidbey to confront the Nazi skinheads. They showed the world that diverse social forces could unite to challenge and demoralize would-be storm troopers wherever and whenever they assemble.

Telecast from London to Osaka, Japan, the Whidbey demo effectively dissipated the pall of fear associated with direct challenges to fascists ever since gun-toting Nazis and Klansmen massacred five Communist Workers Party members in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1979. Democracy and discipline were the keys to success. The UFAF's policy of militant confrontation was arrived at through open discussion and debate before the demo, and carried out by the willingness of protesters to abide by the majority's decisions.

Taking it to the fascists. Since Whidbey, anti-Nazi protest has mushroomed all over the western U.S. In January, demonstrations were held in Eugene, Oregon and at Evergreen State College near Olympia, Washington to protest Nazi and Ku Klux Klan activities in those locales. Outrage against the courtroom acquittal of a self-confessed teenage cross-burner in Washington's Kitsap County rallied 500 people, and resulted in the conviction of a second youth.

In March, 1000 angry demonstrators put dampers on a ballyhooed "Aryan Woodstock" festival in Napa County, California. And in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 1200 marched on April 22 to protest U.S. fuhrer Richard Butler's Nazi skinhead convention celebrating Hitler's 100th birthday. After the Napa march, Butler called off a rally in downtown Coeur d'Alene, citing the fear of catching AIDS from anti-Nazi gays!

In May a Christian Identity (CI) conference in Glendale, California was halted early after protesters announced plans to demonstrate. The CI group, a gaggle of well-known Nazis and Klansmen, had met undisturbed in Glendale for years.

Meanwhile, in Vancouver, Canada, a group of socialists and militants formed the Anti-Nazi League to combat growing fascist violence, which includes the

firebombing of a League member's home. Impressed with the success of the Whidbey demo, and dedicated to building a united front, they adopted the Principles of Unity drawn up by UFAF in April. (Please see page 11.)

Naysayers. Despite the Whidbey success, UFAF has endured brickbats from naysayers. Some liberals and near-liberal leftists say that UFAF's confrontive policies "provoke violence." Ultra-leftists say, on the other hand, that UFAF's refusal to *initiate* conflict at Whidbey was a capitulation to fear and liberal pacifism, instead of a tactical decision.

Accusations come from both quarters that UFAF is undemocratic in its policy-making because neither side convinced the UFAF majority of its position!

What's a new coalition to do? UFAF can't simultaneously have provoked violence and succumbed to liberal pacifism! It did go to Whidbey intending to stand up to racist murder, put the kibosh on the Nazis' attempt to develop a martyr's ritual, and show ordinary people that the fascists can be *demoralized* by direct mass action. And it worked!

It is now a matter of utmost urgency that anti-fascists work out long-range Nazi-fighting strategies and build a united front to implement them. Simple enough. Yet the super-critics find all sorts of excuses not to participate. So what is their alternative? Reinventing the wheel by building new coalitions every time there's a new outrage? Go-it-alone spontaneity? Hardly the answer to a movement that dreams of becoming millions-strong and goose-stepping its way to power.

to page 11



Doug Barnes, FS



David Mung, Impact Visuals



Doug Barnes, FS

Taking it to the Nazis (clockwise from top right): Whidbey Island, Washington state; Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; and Napa County, California.

the freedom socialist

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CHINA EXPLODES



DRUGS AND DEATH SQUADS:



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TOWARDS the '90s: Approaching the Final Conflict

by Guerry Hoddersen and Clara Fraser



PART 1

"Towards the '90s" is a dynamic analysis of the recent progress and current prospects for the world class struggle. Written on behalf of the National Committee of the Freedom Socialist Party, its assessment and optimistic conclusions were endorsed by the party's September, 1988 National Convention.

I. OVERVIEW

In the last quarter of the 20th century, the capitalist world confronts the greatest calamity of its entire history.

Racked by irreconcilable economic and political antagonisms, imperialism is careening wildly out of control. The six year period from 1982 to 1988 is disfigured by chronic epidemics of insoluble wars, economic degeneration, social polarizations, unrelieved famines, universal expectation of nuclear holocaust, and political scandals eclipsing each other in shock value.

Vast human misery, infinitely protracted. Yet this condition has bred non-stop resistance, rebellion and revolt.

The epoch of wars and revolutions—65 years of it!—will reach its apex and resolution in this century. The malignant profit system is rapidly running out of time, and is serving as its own best gravedigger.

"Crisis and Opportunity" revisited

At our 1982 convention, the Freedom Socialist Party adopted a trenchant political resolution entitled **The Precarious '80s: Crisis and Opportunity**.

This document comprehensively analyzed the nature and scope of the global crisis, and diagnosed the patient—capitalism—as terminal.

Tracing the global class struggle since the 1917 Russian Revolution, **Crisis and Opportunity** conclusively demonstrated that the world revolution is advancing and shows no sign of turning back, giving up, or selling out. The illusion of endless social stability is clung to only by Reaganites, yuppies, and other Americans with blinders on; the majority of the planet takes for granted the global reality of irreconcilable conflict and social upheaval.

Summing up the forward march of humanity, the resolution declared, "The revolutionary tempo of the 20th century has not been smooth and predictable. But overall the working class has made staggering advances while the bourgeoisie has steadily retreated."

In the past five and a half years, economic decline in the West, the Wall Street crash and specter of worldwide depression, new and ancient wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions on four continents, cold war hyperbole raised to hysteria and "disinformation" intrigues, and pervasive betrayals by mass leaders who have become the political police of the bourgeoisie (the middle caste)—all these developments confirm the correctness of the general line of the 1982 Political Resolution.

Humanity is still on the march, and world capitalism is still "poised on the edge of an economic and political precipice."

But not everything is the same. Important changes have transpired—changes of degree, to be sure, changes that are quantitative rather than qualitative, but vital changes nevertheless.

1987-88 is a time of aggravated peril for capitalism and a time of enhanced promise for revolutionaries who have the will, desire, need, character, and capacity for combat, as well as some good luck.

Economic disaster

The bourgeoisie itself recognizes that world economics are in dire straits as compared to six years ago.

Reagan's much-touted economic recovery is falling apart, and with it all hope for a worldwide recovery. Instead of prosperity being just around the corner, "the specter of a devastating depression comparable to 1929-33" increasingly haunts our planet.

The sharp decline experienced by world capitalism has seriously deepened the competition among imperialist

countries, engendering bitter trade wars and retaliation, and catastrophically accelerating the impoverishment of the poorest countries.

Recessions and high unemployment in imperialist countries drastically reduced the major markets for many heavily indebted Third World nations, driving them deeper and deeper into debt. In turn, the measures imposed on these debtor countries by the gargantuan imperialist banks—wage cuts, devaluation of their currencies, cutbacks in government spending—sharply reduced their ability to pay for goods from imperialist countries. But at least partial repayment of these astronomical debts is necessary to prevent massive international bank failures.

In the U.S., mounting public and private debt signals great danger ahead should the economy take another plunge, as in 1980-82. A new recession, even a relatively mild one, could throw heavily indebted corporations, farmers and consumers into a wave of bankruptcies unparalleled since the '30s, and could trigger another crash on Wall Street, where speculation has reached an all-time high. A recession would also sharply increase the federal deficit—already at \$2 trillion—and send shock waves throughout the capitalist world.

To stave off recession, and to crush world revolution, the Reagan administration vastly increased government spending on arms. Only the massive military budget keeps the U.S. economy afloat and, with it, the world economy. But this bloated and counter-productive budget provoked the October 19th meltdown on Wall Street and is perpetuating huge problems for the future—inflation and unemployment on a hitherto unimaginable scale.

Reagan's supply-side magic is becoming a house of horrors, and the glow that is trickling down is radioactive. The economy is verily sick unto death.

Global struggle zooms

Crisis and Opportunity rings true in its assertion that "the global class struggle—the broad battle of the world working class and its allies

against domestic tyranny and global imperialism—is at an unparalleled height."

What is different is the quickened pace and the multiplied battlefronts.

As the permanent revolution weaves its inexorable pattern in the fabric of world politics, imperialism faces soaring new challenges to its hegemony.

Demands for economic and political democracy, for ending the debt squeeze imposed by international bankers, and for overthrowing the juntas have sparked

a rejuvenation of the Latin American labor movement. The people are increasingly intolerant of exploitation and oppression, and riots and general strikes are spreading.

Continuing revolutions in South Africa, the Philippines, South Korea, and

Central America threaten to yank even more markets, natural resources and investment fields from the imperialist grasp and inspire revolts elsewhere.

The Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua defies U.S. "manifest destiny" in the western hemisphere. The old license to rape and loot and dictate with impunity has been revoked by outraged world opinion, especially after the tragicomic opera in Grenada in 1983, the anti-terrorist terror rained down on helpless Libya in '86, and the

shock of the Irangate/contra scam in December, '86.

Civil wars and anti-imperialist hatred in the Middle East create yet another cauldron of conflict. U.S. battleships are never far away—yet the Palestinians never stop fighting.

Workers in the developed countries are also increasingly discontented over declining living standards, high unemployment, and government austerity measures, and anxiety is rife in the wake of the panic on Wall Street. Strikes in Europe, and anger in Australia over Labor Party union-busting, portend more and greater trouble for imperialism right on its home turf.

Finally, in the workers states, Stalinist and bureaucratic regimes confront a heavy challenge to their autocratic rule as the winds of political revolution and demands for reforms—glasnost!—pick up speed.

Chinese students demonstrate for socialist democracy.

Dedication

To the shining memory of poet Karen Brodine, Freedom Socialist Party National Committeewoman and San Francisco Branch organizer, who died in 1987 at the age of 40.

*Movement into dance
Language into poetry
Thought into action.
You showed us*

Change is transformation

—Tamara Turner

The epoch of wars and revolutions—65 years of it!—will reach its apex and resolution in this century. The malignant profit system is rapidly running out of time, and is serving as its own best gravedigger.

Poland's Solidarity, driven underground in 1981 by the Jaruzelski government, calls strikes and carries on heated internal debate over program.

Even the entrenched, super-privileged bureaucratic caste of the Soviet Union is undergoing something of a shake-up, initiated by the Gorbachev regime. This top-down thaw is a significant concession to the Russian masses who chafe under the inefficiency, backwardness, shortages, duplicity, intellec-

tual constraints, police state culture, and stupidity of the mismanaged, tyrannical Soviet system. Russia is demanding change!

Permanent, continuing revolution in the workers states serves to further weaken the anti-revolutionary, Stalinist, and semi-Stalinist governmental props on which imperialism relies so desperately for its counter-revolutionary wheeling, dealing, and invading.

Bourgeois counter-offensive

As the tempo of world revolution quickens, so does the viciousness of the right wing.

The orgy of U.S. military spending, and the growling, blundering, primitive anti-Marxism of Reagan, expressed especially at the Reykjavik conference and in the folly of the arms-hostages-Contra triangle of Irangate, demonstrate the real needs and fears of the bourgeoisie.

Holding the line against the Evil Empire is the justification for installing Cruise missiles in Europe, developing Star Wars deterrent hardware, arming the contra mercenaries, propping up the Botha regime in South Africa, pumping \$300 billion a year into the domestic military machine, laundering dirty dollars in a long trail from Iran to Honduras, and dispatching warships to the Persian Gulf.

Detente with the Soviet Union continues to erode, as predicted in **Crisis and Opportunity**. Detente is only dusted off for public display when the White House staff needs to counteract their boss' Rambo image with a slight aura of "the man of peace," or when Gorbachev's promises outshine Reagan in the PR department and excite the world press.

There is no detente with Soviet-friendly Cuba, Nicaragua or Angola, nor with Khadafy in Libya. These lands are treated with the utter contempt and hostility reserved for former colonies. Even Japan, our trusty ally, now comes in for resentment and criticism.

Only China has escaped the deep-freeze treatment. One billion potential consumers, Chinese hatred of the USSR, and the Chinese bureaucracy's openness to trading with—and investment by—capitalism have made the bourgeoisie "soft" on Chinese communism ever since the Nixon/Kissinger-engineered thaw.

Reagan's answer to liberals, who hoped that capitalism would find a road to peaceful co-existence with workers

states, is a war of nerves with the Russians, and open warfare against leftwing national liberation struggles. That particular pipe dream of the liberals evaporates as capitalism, compelled to find new markets or die, and driven by the corollary need to overthrow actual or potential workers states, fires up the old propaganda machine for holy war against communism at home and abroad.

The home front: Irangate, polarization, and the vacuum of leadership

The U.S. bourgeoisie is stepping up its requisite war on labor and the super-oppressed. Radicals especially catch the flak—from bosses, courts, police, the

right wing, politicians, and the media.

The imperatives of capitalism in the precarious '80s mandate soaring unemployment, a reduced standard of living, intolerable working conditions, rollbacks in civil rights and civil liberties, government red-baiting, a super-costly war machine, and military intervention around the globe. These conditions are the high price of sustaining a degenerating system.

But North American workers and oppressed groups are not at all inclined to pay this price passively or to swallow whole a program to destroy them and the rest of the world. They evince remarkable resistance to the ideological offensive emanating from the fonts of popular culture, from the religious right, from shabby politicians of both parties, and from a media corps running amok with snooperism and an obsession with personal morality (the only morality left to expose in a cynical world).

Opposition to Washington's war drive and military build-up is high and mounting. Even people who support a "strong" America don't want war—nuclear or otherwise. Quick advocates are OK, but advocates of beefing up the military certainly don't want to pay for it with cuts in *their* standard of living.

Anger and resentment among workers over management takebacks, irrational and onerous work rules, erosion of anti-discrimination protection, and drug testing are growing, exploding in sometimes surprising strikes, job actions, and lawsuits. (This anger is increasingly directed at union officials who capitulate to the bosses without a fight!)

Instead of terrifying everyone into submission, rightwing hostility to women, people of color, lesbians/gays, radicals, and labor engenders new desires for solidarity and cooperation. Snowballing support for the party's Freeway Hall case is one indication of this phenomenon.

The ruling class drumbeat of super-nationalism is answered by an intransigent *internationalism* among supporters of the Sandinista revolution, of South African Blacks, of refugees from political repression.

And virtually everybody is still up in arms regarding the Irangate Triangle (the Teheran to Washington to Honduras triple play). Like the mysterious Bermuda Triangle, all sorts of people get lost in it.

Goodbye, President Teflon, and hullo Ronnie Discredited! How the mighty have fallen after the financial crash, how tarnished is the Golden Boy! Ronnie's automated optimism reign is over, his imperial presidency diminished into lameduck ceremonial posturing and ever more incomprehensible syntax and doublespeak.

While 76 trombones serenaded him on his birthday last February, the thrill is gone, along with his credibility and vaunted integrity. He's a sneak and a liar

and a fool and a hypocrite and a purveyor of chicanery stamped from the same tired and flawed mold that gave us every chief executive we've ever known. And how that new perception clears the air and sweeps away political cobwebs!

American influence abroad is seriously eroded, especially since Black Monday on the Street. Political conservatism at home has been dealt a shattering blow. The contra-aid program is in dire jeopardy. War with Iran is hardly popular. Trickle-down economics, school prayer, social service starve-outs, naval flotillas to exotic—and bomb-strewn—ports of call, and Star Wars gadgetry fixations all stand in mounting disrepute as Reagan's aura sputters, dims, and finally flickers out.

Watergate engendered cynicism, and contempt for Nixon. Irangate has sparked outrage, fury, glee, relief—and disgust—with the whole enchilada, the whole system. Watergate helped radicals; Irangate saved us; the Wall Street crack-up legitimized us! Workers are listening to us, and our influence will spread as they adjust their thinking; millions already have learned that the alternative to Reagan's basement-boy commandos is not the Democratic Party!

Millions of workers are ready to move left.

This period of heightened tensions is producing a mounting left/right polarization. Strong currents run in both directions simultaneously, creating a ceaseless whirlpool as each side tries to out-theorize, outbluff, outorganize, outmobilize, and outlast the other.

While it often seems that the right

has the upper hand, boasting formidable support—in Congress, the White House, the Pentagon, the media, the churches, and courts—the appearance of control is deceptive.

True, the number and size of protest mobs is down as compared to a few years ago, but consciousness, interest, concern, and speaking up and out are considerably elevated. The high level of debates and letters in the media, as well as the broad span of public forums and symposia, is extraordinary.

Demonstrations have dwindled because the media ignores or underplays them as they did the gigantic October March on Washington for Lesbian/Gay Rights. But teach-ins, i.e., propaganda and agitation, are at an all-time high for what is considered a conservative period. Americans are pragmatists; they march not only on principle but to achieve results, to win, and when marching will once again be paid attention to, march they will.

Countless coalitions, ad hoc committees, and educational and pressure groups energetically oppose every facet of the reactionary agenda. Virtually any group which issues a call for help gets it—to defend abortion clinics, support strikers and whistle-blowers and refugees, resist nukes, demonstrate against Central American policy, fight McCarthyism and racism and sexism in the courts and neofascists in the streets, defy apartheid, expose pollution and rape of the environment, stop yet another anti-gay initiative, whatever.

Educational activities and protests around a multitude of issues abound.

Coalitions come and go with bewildering rapidity, to be disinterred and re-formed as events warrant.

The narcissism and passivity of the relatively affluent '70s and the early '80s are being replaced by a burgeoning awareness that there is no place for detachment and disengagement in a system going haywire. Mass action and protest are coming back into vogue.

What is urgently called for today is a *multi-issue united front against reaction*, a militant and anti-capitalist version of the "Rainbow" coalition that is prepared to take on simultaneously the entire hornets' nest of afflictions. Thousands of activists and independents sense or know this, and push for it.

But the middle class leadership of every reform and mass movement—reformists, careerists, "moderates," bureaucrats, phony radicals—still holds sway. With trembling fingers to their lips, and hot hands clutching their wallets, they warn their groups to quiet down. They counsel single-issueism, mousy pacifism, resignation, fatalism, weary negativism, and reliance on new or recycled broken-down Democrats to save us. They have blistering contempt for the masses and infinite respect for bosses, officials, and cops.

As the polarization continues, however, so does the radicalization. The influence of the treacherous leadership is inevitably eroding, as predicted in *Crisis and Opportunity*, because they are patently unequal to the tasks of defending labor's rights, defeating the right wing, or stopping the war drive or the racists or the

to next page



Credits, clockwise from top left: John Sturrock, Network; Stan Sierakowski, Southern Africa; credit unknown; Doug Barnes, FS; Patrick Rivera, Gamma/Liaison; and Peter Turnley, Newsweek.

exists or anybody else except their own ranks.

The deepening crisis of capitalism guarantees that the latent fury and power of the masses will surge forth and overcome the middle caste, that obstacle in the path of producing real leadership and viable struggles.

The road ahead

A change in the political climate of the imperialist countries will transpire swiftly.

The change will be triggered by developments in Central America or the Mideast, or by fallout from the Wall

Street debacle, or a collapse of the world banking system, or depression, or war, or massive unemployment and inflation, or an even higher incidence of political scandals—or any combination of factors.

When the climate does change, progressive social movements will eagerly seek a more radical leadership and program from among the contending parties of the Left, and *the middle caste compromisers will have to move leftwards or be overrun.*

The FSP aspires to leadership in this coming mass radicalization—a big order for a small party, but an achievement that is not beyond our grasp.

We already have the basics: correct program, energetic interventionism, a

rich body of experience, flexibility in tactics along with principled politics, adherence to democratic centralism, and a cadre of talented, knowledgeable, determined, and devoted comrades.

Even now, despite the episodic ebb of the giant-sized mass movements, we always find a great deal to do, because more and more people want to fight and are gratified to discover us leading struggles against reaction, struggles they can happily join.

On abortion clinic picket lines, on campus, in unions, in the antiwar movement, in electoral, legislative and courtroom battles against the right wing and the so-called liberals, we teach those who fight alongside us how to build a broad

united front against capitalist reaction.

And we hone our leadership skills by means of serious on-the-job organizing, by theoretical education in our party classrooms, and by organizational/administrative training in the party and in the movements.

Developing ourselves for the present and for the future, we are an intrinsic and decisive part of the unceasing, universal struggle to carve a new society out of the rubble of the discredited, dysfunctional, ridiculous, and hateful old one.

The road ahead is not always clear—but it is always clearly *there*. And if we don't find road signs, we know how to paint and install them.

The future is ours to make.

II. WORLD CAPITALISM: NEW TREMORS IN A HOUSE OF CARDS

When Reagan took office in 1984, the U.S. had just pulled out of the '80-82 depression, the worst since the '30s. Unemployment was still high, but falling. Inflation appeared under control. An oil boom excited the Southwest and Alaska. And the entrepreneurial whiz kids from the computer world promised displaced workers from the smokestack industries jobs in high tech.

The worst seemed to be over, especially with Reagan's campaign slogan, "Morning in America," ringing in workers' ears.

But not everyone was smelling bacon or invited to brunch at the White House, not the millions who were homeless and waiting in food lines. Pockets of very high unemployment among urban Blacks and in the industrial Midwest stubbornly persisted. And a noisy right wing with a fascist-like agenda infested the country.

Reagan, the consummate actor for the melodramas of Wall Street's dream-makers, had used the temporary economic comeback to resell to an anxious electorate the chimera of a peaceful but strong, prosperous, and productive America. The majority of the 49% of the electorate which bothered to vote bought it. They wanted to believe in the future.

Three short years later, in 1987, the dream was over as the economy lurched toward another recession/depression and the bourgeoisie prepared for overt war in Central America and the Persian Gulf.

In the twilight of capitalism, periods of peace and recovery become briefer and briefer, and dawn never breaks, except on TV at signoff time.

Post-World War II boom goes bust

At the end of World War II, the U.S. economy boomed.

War production had saved the economy from its depressionary tailspin, and the vast destruction wrought by the war in Europe and Asia knocked out America's chief foreign competitors, leaving the U.S. as the unchallenged kingpin of imperialism.

The rebuilding of war-ravished Britain, Europe, and Japan opened enormous new areas of investment abroad. Domestic business thrived as industries retooled for peacetime production and rushed to meet consumer demands.

This recovery from the depths of the '30s depression lasted about 20 years. Then, with consumer demands met, opportunities for investment diminished, once housing and industry were rebuilt overseas. Revolutionary upheavals around the globe further reduced investment areas.

Arms production for the Korean War, however, kept the economy relatively buoyant. And the Vietnam war did the same—at first. Eventually deficit spending by the government, especially

for Vietnam, caused runaway inflation.

Periodic recessions occurred even during the relatively affluent '50s and '60s, but they were mild compared to those which rocked the U.S. since 1970. The plunges taken by the economy in 1970-71, 1974-75 and 1980-82 have been the worst since the Great Depression of 1929. And each recession has left the economy weaker than the previous one.

These recessions were not limited to the U.S. but were experienced by all the imperialist countries and had a worldwide impact because they sharply reduced the largest markets for the goods of developing nations. High unemployment, low industrial production, and high interest rates in the U.S. and Europe translate into recession or depression in countries dependent upon imperialist markets to purchase their exports and imperialist banks to extend them credit.

The '70-71, '74-75, and '80-82 recessions are part of an overall decline in the capitalist economies of the West which has marked the period since the glory years that followed upon World War II. Although temporary recoveries occurred after each recession, and not all imperialist countries experienced the recessions to the same degree (Japan, West Germany, etc. even expanded), two main features of this decline emerged: the rise of longterm structural unemployment and the persistence of inflation.

The result is a sharp decline in the standard of living of most workers of the world.

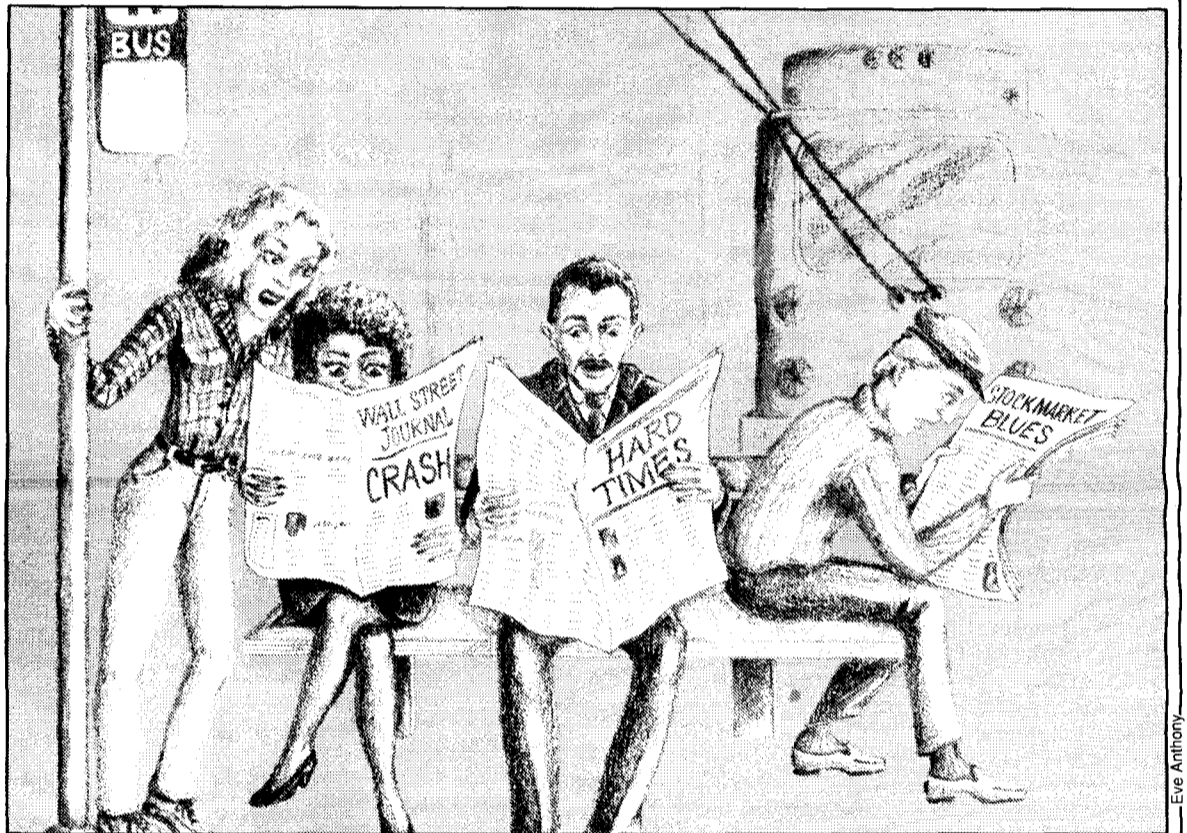
Unemployment soars

Unemployment in the imperialist countries rose from 10 million in the early 1970s to 30 million in 1982 and will likely rise to 40 million by the end of the decade.

France today has an unemployment rate of 10%, Britain's rate is 13%, and in West Germany, one of the strongest economies in Western Europe, unemployment is 9%.

In the U.S., the *official* unemployment rate hovers above 7% but is actually more than 10% when involuntary part-time workers and workers too discouraged to seek jobs are counted.

A few years ago these levels of unemployment would have been considered a depression, not a recovery! How far the health of the western economies has fallen since the years after the Second



World War when much lower rates were the norm!

Spiraling inflation

Inflation is the other paramount problem plaguing capitalism. Inflation is the debasement or depreciation of money, which is reflected in high prices. It is caused by government deficit spending, primarily military production, and by excessive expansion of credit to consumers and industries.

This deficit spending increases the volume of money in circulation out of proportion to the actual store of salable goods, and this false ratio devalues money and drives up prices.

Since military goods are produced to be destroyed, not exchanged, matters grow even worse.

As *Crisis and Opportunity* showed, the problem facing capitalism is how to induce economic expansion without fueling inflation. Making credit easily available is necessary to spur greater investment and expansion, but it also creates inflation. "But without credit," the resolution stated, "there ensue underconsumption, overproduction and unemployment. Whether credit is expanded or curtailed, crisis looms."

The rate of inflation has risen and fallen since the early '70s in response to government deficit spending and to monetary policies that alternately loosen or tighten credit. But the only way to temporarily reduce inflation is to create a recession and throw millions out of work; high unemployment translates into a lower rate of inflation by cutting consumer spending, and hence the volume of money in circulation, which helps to hold down prices.

But the engine of inflation—deficit spending on military production by the

federal government—swells with each passing year. What held rising prices in check in 1987 were high unemployment, wage cuts, the precipitous fall of oil prices, and fierce competition among imperialists for dwindling markets.

"The rekindling of inflation has a kind of inevitability about it," wrote James Annable, chief economist for the First National Bank of Chicago, in the *New York Times* in summer 1986. "Its seeds were planted by...the sharp increase in the federal deficit."

Recessions to the rescue

Twice in the last 17 years, the bourgeoisie has deliberately provoked a recession to try and curb inflation.

In 1970-71, the Nixon administration tried to curtail the spiraling inflation brought on by the explosion of government spending for the Vietnam war. By restricting credit, cutting government spending, and running a massive budget deficit, Nixon hoped the ensuing unemployment and economic downward turn would cause a triple result: a reduction in wage gains won by organized labor, strengthening of U.S. corporations in relation to European and Japanese competitors, and restoration of the trade surplus so that the U.S. would export more goods than it imported.

Two million workers were thrown out of jobs practically overnight. Yet the effect on inflation was negligible—the recession was too "mild" to hold inflation in check.

In 1974-75, rising oil prices—resulting from Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) price-setting policies on the world oil market—brought on another recession in the U.S.

In order to cushion its effects, the



Federal Reserve System¹ pumped money into circulation through the expansion of credit. Without this stratagem, the economy would have been plunged into a depression as industry and consumers stopped buying other goods in order to pay for oil.

However, too many dollars chasing too few goods generates inflation. And the central banking system's loose credit policies caused the inflation rate to run at 15% by 1979. So once again a recession was engineered.

The supply of money into the economy was sharply reduced by the Federal Reserve System and economic expansion restricted. Interest rates soared to 20%, forcing a rush of farm and business bankruptcies.

Inflation dropped sharply and unemployment rose to record highs as business cut back on production, and management unleashed another war on labor.

With typical candor, David Stockman, Reagan's irrepressible budget director, told the U.S. Chamber of Commerce:

High interest rates, unacceptable levels of current unemployment, lost output, financial strains and rising bankruptcies in the economy—none of these are pleasant facts of life. But they are all a piece of the same cloth. They are all part of the cure, not the problem. They will help end the curse of inflation once and for all.

Stockman's prediction was wrong—inflation continues at low levels today. But he revealed the draconian measures the bourgeoisie is willing to take to fight the losing battle against inflation, and permanent, high unemployment is one of these measures.

No way out

The 1982-86 upturn is over. On that grim day in October, 1987 when the stock exchange went hysterical, the helplessness of capitalism was graphically exposed. Everything had been tried.

In an effort to bolster the flagging economy, the Federal Reserve System had again made credit easier to get by reducing interest rates.

But inflationary pressures, which were masked, threatened to explode again.

The bourgeoisie faced a harrowing choice: letting inflation rage, as it did between 1974-79, to cushion the effects of the next recession, or trying to control inflation through tight money and credit policies which could bankrupt already heavily-indebted industries and cause a catastrophic reduction in world trade.

It was a balancing act without a safety net, and false moves were inevitable given the deep contradictions within capitalism itself.

U.S. capitalism: cause and effect of global woes

No country is an island in the world capitalist economy. All countries are dependent on investment in and trade with other countries to sell their commodities and to secure the finished products and raw materials they need to meet the domestic demands of consumers, industry and the state. (Imperialist countries also seek lucrative fields of investment for their capital.)

Capitalism is a unified, international system in which the component parts are becoming increasingly integrated and interdependent. Local economies produce for an international market, and money, technology and industry are moved globally and swiftly to take advantage of cheap labor, availability of raw

materials, and superior products—all of which can furnish a high return on investments.

Crisis and Opportunity aptly compared capitalism to a house of cards in which "every portion bears the weight of some parts and leans on others."

In this house of cards, the American economy is still key; it carries the greatest weight. The concentration and amount of wealth and capital in the U.S. are

In the capitalist house of cards, the U.S. economy is still key; it carries the most weight. The U.S. remains the largest producer and largest market for goods, and tremors in the American colossus send shock waves throughout international capitalism.

greater here than anywhere else.

The U.S. is the single largest **market** for consumer goods and raw materials in the world.

The U.S. is still the largest **producer** of goods, despite the fact that industry is only operating at 78% capacity, and West Germany and Japan export more industrial goods than the U.S.²

Gargantuan U.S. **banks** like Citicorp, Bank of America, and Chase Manhattan dominate world finance. The finance capital concentrated on Wall Street is the greatest aggregation of wealth and stock ownership in the world.

The **federal government** is also the largest governmental lender of money to other governments, and the financial solvency and ability to secure credit of developing countries often depend on the whims of American bankers and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which the U.S. dominates.

Because of the massive \$2 trillion federal deficit, the U.S. government is also the largest single borrower of money. The interest rates that the government offers to lenders help set the interest rates for the whole world. Its massive borrowing on the international financial markets—now at \$30 billion a month—has kept interest rates relatively high worldwide, crowding out other borrowers and swelling the debt service payments of Third World nations which must pay high interest rates on new money borrowed to pay back old loans obtained at lower rates.

Tremors in this American colossus—runaway inflation, recession, bank failures, corporate bankruptcies, stock market jitters and collapses, strikes, and mass movements against government policies—send shudders and repercussions throughout international capitalism.

But despite the vast wealth and military power of the U.S., it too is dependent on the overall health of the world system. And today the system is in deep trouble.

Japanese and West German industry—the subject of stunning post-World War II success stories—are not doing so well. Unemployment in West Germany was 9% in 1986, and Japanese exports have been hurt by the rising value of the yen and trade barriers which have sprouted in Europe and the U.S.

The situation for Britain—one of Western Europe's economic basket cases—is getting worse. Industrial production remains severely depressed and manufacturing production is sinking below the 1985 level.

In the Middle East, the fall of oil prices has sharply reduced areas of capital investment and trade for western industrialists. OPEC countries have been forced to tighten their belts.

The soaring economic expansion of South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which began in the early '80s, is slowing down (according to *Business Week* and other financial publications) because of the sluggishness of their western trading partners.

And Third World countries which were the fastest growing market for U.S. exports a decade ago are drying up under

the tightening austerity vise of the bankers.

Under intense pressure from the bankers and their collection agent, the International Monetary Fund, Third World countries are forced to close their domestic markets to imports, and accelerate their exports to industrialized nations, in order to get the money to repay their massive debts. But high unemployment in developed countries has reduced the international market for the goods of the Third World. And repaying their debts drains off their capital and prevents them from investing in technology and industrial development, which would expand the markets for American exports.

So what is good for the bankers, in this case, is bad for business.

In the house of cards, U.S. capitalism's troubles are both a cause and an effect of the constricting world economy. The Wall Street bust spread quickly to the rest of the world stock exchanges, and a fullscale depression in the U.S. would spell disaster for the planet.

State of the U.S. economy

In the fifth year of the Reagan "recovery," signs of health in the economy are disappearing.

U.S. industry is operating at far below capacity. The Gross National Product (GNP) is diminishing.³ In August 1986, it reached its lowest level since the 1982-83 upturn and was much below the rosy Reagan administration forecast for the year.

The downward turn of the economy over the last six months is reflected in almost every sector: lumber, mining and heavy industrial production; manufacture and production of consumer goods; maritime/shipping. The troubled farm belt is still withering under agricultural trade balances which ran in the red during 1986 for the first time since the '50s. The Southwest oil boom is going bust with the rapid decline in world oil prices.

And the pace of bank failures in 1986 exceeded 1985's all-time high; six banks in the Southwest, and the second biggest bank failure in U.S. history, First Oklahoma Bank and Trust Company, were all casualties of the '86 oil bust.

Added to this distress is the U.S. balance of trade (the difference between exports and imports), which is running an enormous deficit, partly because a strong dollar throughout most of 1987 made American goods very expensive in relation to foreign competitors. The attempt to increase productivity by holding down wages and eroding working conditions, begun in the late '70s, has done nothing to increase the salability of U.S. exports. And government efforts to devalue the dollar in relation to other currencies have had only a mildly salutary effect.

The U.S. trade deficit, combined with the massive government deficit, turned the U.S. into a debtor nation in 1986. **For the first time in history, the U.S. owes more to foreign creditors than they do to the U.S.**

The only sectors of the economy showing any growth are military-related.

The domestic debt bomb

A new downward turn in the econ-

omy is doubly dangerous because the U.S. enters this recession weighted down with domestic debt—the hangover of the corporate mania for mergers, takeovers, stock buybacks, and leveraged buyouts,⁴ the explosion of consumer credit, farm indebtedness which approaches Third World levels, and government spending sprees for military expenses.

It is instructive to examine these four debt areas.

Corporate debt

As unsalable commodities stack up, U.S. industries are not interested in increasing production by investing in new technology and research, buying new equipment or modernizing plants. Instead they are engaged in a cannibalistic orgy of takeovers, mergers and buyouts.

These takeovers (or their opposite, staving off unwanted buyers) are often paid for with borrowed money, and while they make bankers, investors, and stockholders wealthy, they have vastly increased the debt levels of the nation's corporations. In turn, the corporate barons use the takeovers and buyouts to bust unions, unilaterally cancel contracts, lay off workers, lower wages and make their workers foot the bill for their greed. Also, the bosses often close plants to consolidate resources, or they sell off portions of the company's assets (buildings, equipment, land) to retire some of the debt accumulated in the takeover, which throws more workers onto the streets.

Accumulating a high proportion of debt in an uncertain economy is risky. If profits take a plunge, corporations find themselves in the same position as Third World countries: they must borrow more money to meet the interest payments on old debts and hope for an economic upsurge.

That's why "debt management" is becoming as big an agenda item in corporate boardrooms as at meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Consumer debt

In 1985, the level of household indebtedness relative to disposable income reached a postwar high in the U.S. and is still climbing.

Some economists blame this rise on free-spending baby boomers and their "cultural revolution" attitude toward credit. This is socio-babble; the truth is not nearly so trendy.

Households have become increasingly dependent on credit simply to maintain their standard of living **in the face of falling wages**. People have been taking on more credit not to acquire **more**, but because they need to avoid spending less as their real income declines. And the banks and lending institutions are only too happy to accommodate.

In 1986, 15 banks wrote off one billion dollars of bad credit card debt, but no one in government or business is suggesting making credit harder to get, because consumer spending, largely on credit, is believed to have kept the economy afloat last year.

Farm debt

Family farms make up one-third of all farms and produce half of all sales of agricultural products.

One-third of these family farms (or 229,000) suffer serious financial problems. Roughly 90,000 have debts equaling 70-100% of their assets. The total debt of family farms in the U.S. which are insolvent or approaching insolvency equals 98 billion dollars.

This is comparable to Mexico's entire debt burden.

Family farmers in the U.S. have more in common with Third World countries than the astronomical size of their debts.

to next page

The corporate barons use takeovers and buyouts to bust unions, cancel contracts, lay off workers, lower wages and make their workers foot the bill for their greed.

They are victims of the same bank practices which have enslaved the Third World with the golden chains of debt.

In the 1970s, U.S. banks were bursting with petrodollars from oil producing countries, and they targeted American farmers and Third World countries for aggressive lending campaigns. Farmers were encouraged to "get big or get out" by commercial banks and government credit agencies, so farmers borrowed heavily, buying land and expensive equipment.

The U.S. government—through the Farm Credit System and the Commodity Credit Corporation—encouraged this policy because it was engaged in implementing a "food-as-a-weapon" strategy in the Third World. By increasing grain production in the U.S., and selling it at low, state-subsidized prices, federal officials were eliminating competing producers in other countries, leaving the U.S. in firm control of the world's food supply.

At the time farmers took out these loans, they appeared safe. High land values created by the government-sponsored agricultural boom combined with relatively low (but variable) interest rates made the loans a good deal. But as interest rates climbed, farmers' debt load increased, land values dropped, and the banks began to call in loans and initiate foreclosures. Failed farms drove down the price of land and the vicious cycle of farm failures accelerated in tempo.

Failed farms mean failed banks. Today agricultural banks, primarily in the Midwest, are failing at ten times the average rate for the last 30 years.

This very vulnerable sector of the economy is barely hanging on during relatively "good times." A further downward turn could be catastrophic for them, could set off a chain of bank failures similar to that anticipated by the much more publicized Third World debt crisis.

fense and half from domestic programs. However, if the president and Congress cannot agree where the cuts should be made, automatic cuts will go into effect.

Gramm-Rudman comes with an escape clause. If the economy slows down too far, Congress is mandated to consider suspending the legislation. If Congress can't agree, the deficit ceiling remains in effect.

In short, Gramm-Rudman injures poor and working people by making them continue to pay for the military budget through cuts in domestic programs even if the economy keeps growing. If the economy contracts, Gramm-Rudman could plunge the country into a recession by cutting federal spending. Faced with this choice, Congress would probably suspend the law. In which case, Gramm-Rudman does nothing to alleviate the deficit!

Can the deficit grow endlessly? Not without igniting an inflationary cycle of unheard-of proportions.

Presently, foreign investors, primarily the Japanese, are buying government bonds because they have the capital to underwrite the deficit. But they are only willing to do this because the U.S. still looks like a safe place for bond investment. A mass antiwar movement or a strike wave against wage concessions and austerity or more panic on Wall Street could change that estimation rapidly.

Ultimately, Congress will probably raise taxes or slash social programs even further to reduce the deficit, even though neither is good for the economy because

unless the Labor Department starts telling the truth!

For those with jobs, life is anything but a bed of roses. Workers' real wages (adjusted for inflation) are at a 1970 level today, or \$800 below their 1973 peak. Just between 1978-86, workers watched their average weekly real wage plummet 10%. For retail trades workers, the drop has been 19%!

Cuts in wages and fringe benefits, two-tier wage scales, the increase in involuntary part-time jobs, and the shift from high-paying, unionized jobs in manufacturing and heavy industry to low-paying, non-union jobs in the service and retail sectors all contribute to the most dramatic decline in the standard of living since the '30s.

For the poorest of the poor, the situation is grim. 1978 was the last year in which economic inequality declined in the U.S. Since then the income gulf between the richest families and the poorest has been widening. Reagan's tax cuts for the rich and social service cuts for the poor resulted in a \$25 billion gain in disposable income for the richest one-fifth of families, and a \$7 billion loss for the poorest.

The U.S. is also fast becoming a society in which many workers (mostly women) provide services—legal, financial, technical, clerical, food, educational, health and exercise, arts and entertainment—for those who can afford them. While jobs in manufacturing and heavy industry have declined, creation of new jobs in the service sector is booming.

Of the 25 million new jobs created since 1970, 88% or 22 million are in the service industry.

This shift away from an economy based on goods production began after World War II, but has increased dramatically since the mid-'60s, when women entered the labor force in large numbers.

Even those manufacturing jobs which are growing, as in the high-tech sector, are not expanding at a rate high enough to make up for jobs lost in other areas of manufacture. And the high-tech revolution heralded with such fanfare a few years ago is bottoming out.

The only sectors of this industry which are growing are those linked to military spending and construction; the military build-up is creating new jobs making missiles, aircraft, communication equipment, and ammunition.

The shift to a service-based economy, and the shift away from closing the poverty gap to widening it, have their greatest impact on women workers and poor women of all races who are concentrated on the bottom rung of America's two-tier society.

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Raging bull on Wall Street gives way to panic

Bourgeois economists have traditionally viewed a bull market—one in which stock prices are rising—as signaling good times ahead for the economy.

This bit of conventional wisdom is open to considerable skepticism since both the 1929 and 1987 crashes occurred during a bull market.

In 1988, skepticism is entirely justified.

From 1982 until doomsday October, 1987, stock prices *doubled*. But this had as much to do with speculation, low interest rates, and relatively low inflation as with confidence in the economy.

The major players on today's stock market are large financial institutions—banks, insurance companies, pension funds. In the mid-'80s, these investors switched from high-interest money market accounts to playing the stock market, because interest rates and inflation rates fell, and corporate profits rose due to the war on labor.

At the same time, corporations became big stock market players. Rather than building new plants and hiring more workers—especially when many

industries were operating at 20% under capacity—corporate investors found it more profitable to buy up the financial assets (stock) of existing companies.

This switch drove up the prices of stock inasmuch as other investors were drawn into the market by the allure of steadily rising gains. And a speculative cycle was begun, fueled by the tidal wave of corporate mergers, rumors of which catapulted stock prices of the target companies even higher.

The dangers inherent in this situation were many. In a bull market, investors bet that other investors will keep on betting and keep prices high; the continued price surge of stocks depends on confidence that prices will continue to climb. But anything that sounds bad for the market and ruptures confidence can cause the stock market to drop precipitously, as it did several times in 1986. Finally, one of these nosedives turned into a panic.

The possibility of panic was inherent in a situation where the mammoth investors—financial institutions and corporations which make up 75% of the market players—could switch large blocks of funds almost *instantaneously*. With a few strokes on computer keys, investors can place massive buy and sell orders for millions of dollars worth of stocks in hundreds of companies simultaneously, causing steep fluctuations in the stock market.

Then came the deluge. The Dow-Jones industrial average was 475 points lower than its August high, and the stocks of the 5000 companies traded on Wall Street lost \$490 billion to a trillion in value.

A mere "correction" or shaking out? Even Newsweek called it an "economic heart attack" and everybody knew the crash was inevitable.

There are no magic safety nets which will prevent a market from dropping precipitously, bankrupting small investors, corporations, and pension funds, and tossing the economy into a depressionary tailspin. There is no safe harbor under capitalism.

Third World debt bomb

It is common parlance to talk about the threat of an international credit and banking crisis—and the collapse of immense banks—as the "Third World debt bomb," as though it's a problem of the Third World's making.

In fact, Third World countries, which contain two-thirds of the world's population, carry only one-tenth of the total private and public debt of the capitalist world. The "debt bomb" was actually assembled by imperialist banks, and it tells a surprisingly simple story of greed-engendered crisis.

The story began with a political revolt against imperialism by the Arab states. In the mid-'70s, OPEC countries did the impossible: they reduced oil production and raised oil prices in order to have a greater say in world affairs.

As the petrodollars flowed from non-oil producing countries into the OPEC countries, the latter placed the dollars in Western banks which invested them primarily in the Third World, especially Latin America and Southeast Asia.

Pinstriped bankers fanned out across the continents, aggressively selling money to capital-hungry developing nations, on whom they forced exorbitant interest rates. This money was to be invested in industry which would increase the production of goods for exports. The loans were to be repaid out of the resulting profits. It was to be a capitalist success story.

But something went wrong. Corrupt dictators, military governments, and even a few bourgeois democratic leaders stole a quarter of the money lent them. The stolen cash was placed in Western banks for safekeeping, just in case revolution at home required a quick getaway à la Marcos. The banks skimmed off huge fees for arranging these deals, further diminishing the amount available for investment. And another portion was used by Third World governments to run the state and keep their military and police forces armed to the teeth.

The U.S. and Britain responded to the Arab political challenge by develop-

Cuts in wages and benefits, two-tier wage scales, the increase in part-time jobs, and the shift from high-paying, unionized jobs in industry to low-paying, non-union service jobs contribute to the most dramatic decline in the standard of living since the '30s.

Federal debt

The granddaddy of all debtors in the U.S. economy is the federal government.

The main sources of the federal debt are the Reagan administration's military spending spree, which rose **\$330 billion** in real growth between 1980-85 over what it had been previously, and the 1981 tax cut which resulted in \$100 billion a year in lost revenue to the government. Reagan used the resulting crisis to slash social service programs.

Reagan's war materials/tax cut program amounts to a vast transfer of wealth from poor and working people to banks, defense contractors, corporations, and the rich via tax loopholes and cuts, cuts in social services, and interest payments on the federal deficit.

The government must pay interest on its debt just like anyone else. As the debt mounts, so does the amount of the budget which goes for debt service. That means that a fantastic portion of the taxes that working people pay goes directly to the banks and investors holding U.S. Treasury bonds. The debt service payments on the federal deficit are more than \$200 billion a year. And they are making the wealthiest 10% of families, and holders of U.S. Treasury bonds and the bankers even wealthier.

A recessionary economy means a smaller tax base and greater expenditures in unemployment benefits. (The 1980-82 recession played a significant role in ballooning the federal deficit.) So future economic slumps will only compound the problem.

And the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction bill will do nothing to alleviate it. Passed by Congress in 1986, it is another bit of administration wizardry which cynically foists onto the needy the burdens of an economic system resting increasingly on war production.

Gramm-Rudman mandates budget cuts to lower the deficit to zero by 1991. Half of these cuts are to come from de-

they reduce the amount of disposable income consumers have to spend.

But Congress has shown no willingness to reduce the bloated "defense" budget. In 1985, Congress defeated a minuscule 5% cut.

The rising tide of world revolution dictates the economic policy of the bourgeoisie—guns, not butter, and not even too much margarine. The same economic pressures which create political revolt in the Third World force the bankrupting of American workers in order to pay for the counter-revolutionary hardware—like starwars gadgetry—that keeps electronics, manufacturing and the industrial sector (shipyards and aircraft, steel, rubber) in business.

Rich and poor

Capitalist economic degeneration does not hit all levels of society in the same way.

The banks are still fabulously rich and getting richer all the time from debt service payments that bankrupt credit card holders, Third World nations and the federal government.

Corporations operating at 78% capacity still show huge profits.

And the salaries of physicians, Wall Street investment bankers, corporate executives, and lawyers are all rising.

But for the millions who lost heavily in the stock market crash and for the vast majority of Americans, the standard of living is worse than it was 10 to 15 years ago.

Eight to 12 million unemployed or underemployed American workers know this. Their numbers are higher at the end of Reagan's recovery than during the depths of any recession of the '50s and '60s.

And the government policy of systematically undercounting their ranks has reached such scandalous proportions that metropolitan mayors are complaining they cannot provide services for them

ing the Alaskan and North Sea oil fields. And the price of oil declined just as recession in the industrialized countries further shrunk the export market for the Third World.

Sky-high interest rates on mammoth loans found Third World governments—especially in Latin America—unable to meet the payments on either principal or interest. The IMF stepped in.

Composed of representatives of 144 countries, the IMF allocates voting power according to the amount of money each country contributes. It is dominated by five imperialist countries, led by the U.S.

Before the banks agree to renegotiate payments on loans or extend more credit, a financially troubled debtor nation must agree to meet certain IMF-imposed conditions. These "stabilization programs" set economic conditions favorable to the imperialist banks and multinational corporations operating in the underdeveloped country; the programs are designed to reduce government expenses by forcing cuts in social services and food support programs, and to increase exports by lowering wages and working conditions and depreciating their currencies.

If the IMF gives the credit OK, the banks loan more money to cover past due debt service payments, and the Fund makes direct loans to the governments. These loans usually pass directly to the banks. In this way, both the super-exploited workers of the Third World, and workers in the imperialist countries, whose taxes are used to keep the IMF in business, pay directly and indirectly to enrich the banks.

At first, IMF stabilization programs seemed to work, especially with the ruthless dictatorships in Latin America which enforce their social policies with torture, repression and terror. But the debts continued to swell and the stabilization programs were vastly unpopular.

Anti-IMF riots, strikes and resistance spread. Some governments were toppled, as in the Philippines and Haiti, and others, unable to control the economic and social crises arising out of the situation, were replaced by more popularly-supported regimes.

Still the debts mounted. Nervous bankers held emergency meetings with representatives of the IMF and various debtor nations on rescheduling payments which were long overdue.

The problem was and is that banks cannot foreclose on countries and sell off their assets to recover their losses as they do with farmers, businesses or homeowners. And the banks have loaned much more money than they have the assets to cover. Furthermore, since banking is secretive, competitive and totally unregulated on an international scale, no one knew exactly how overextended the imperialist banks were, or how many banks were involved, until the situation began to unravel and the threat of at least a partial international banking collapse loomed.

The crisis has not been resolved.

Rescheduling debt payments only delays default by preserving the legal fiction that the debts can be repaid. They cannot. The banks hope to build up their reserves in the meantime to cover future defaults. But this will be exceptionally hard to do if banks are confronted with simultaneous bankruptcies by large corporations and by farmers in the industrialized nations, caused by a new recession.

The banks, of course, count on the imperialist governments to bail them out through huge infusions of new funds into the IMF. But the mounting federal deficit in the U.S. makes this harder and harder to do. So the possibility of an international credit crisis is imminent.

Bank collapses on this huge scale could trigger a new panic in Western countries. Thus, the Third World debt

bomb could ignite a fire in the imperialist countries, something the bourgeoisie wants to avoid at all costs. But permanent revolution—the dynamic of global interdependency—is the paramount social law that prevails here. The USA will pay through its nose for its colonialism.

Japan: not a workers' paradise

The myth of "Japan, Inc.,"—an entire country run like an efficient corporation—is widely promoted in the U.S. as some sort of panacea for our economic woes. But a closer look at Japanese history and present day realities reveals who paid for Japan's economic success and the stresses that are likely to end it.

The post-World War II Japanese industrial boom was the result of applying a simple formula: Mix modern production with low wages to get super-profits. In the post-war period, Japanese capitalists smashed a militant and radical labor movement led by the Japanese Communist Party. For

this task, they enlisted the eager assistance of the U.S. Occupation Command, which launched a "Red Purge" and rehabilitated fascist war-time politicians.

The post-war history of the Japanese labor movement clearly shows that Japanese workers are anything but the subservient children of racist U.S. management mythology. In 1946-47, there was a massive strike wave which included numerous plant takeovers. In 1974, responding to oil crisis inflation, nationwide strikes led by public service workers paralyzed the economy. The strikers won a 30% pay increase, welfare payments for the poor, and a promise by the government to consider allowing public workers the right to strike.

The labor leadership in private industry, however, followed a different course. They cut a deal with Japanese monopoly capital, obtaining higher wages and job security for a minority of super-privileged male workers in exchange for selling out the majority and kicking radicals out of the unions.

But this deal will not hold up as workers find that they have need of their militant and radical heritage in the current struggle against the onslaughts of the bosses.

The wave which Japan's export economy has ridden to success is about to break on a jagged reef. Japanese exports are increasingly threatened by competition from Taiwan, South Korea, Brazil, etc., and by a devalued dollar.

Japanese multi-national corporations are responding to this crisis in two ways. First, they now subcontract more work to smaller corporations which employ 50% of the workforce at the lowest wages. At these "second string" corporations there are no "lifetime" jobs. Rather, employee turnover is high because working conditions are so miserable. Secondly, Japanese big business is moving out of the country in search of cheap labor. The U.S. is one place the multi-nationals find it. Runaway companies wreak the same havoc in Japan that they do in the U.S. Japanese workers are facing levels of unemployment unprecedented since World War II, and soon the fabled "lifetime employment"—now enjoyed by only 16-25% of the workforce—will be a thing of the past. Labor strife is bound to increase.

In the coming fight, women will play a pivotal role just as they have in the past. Women workers make up 35% of the workforce but constitute 80-90% of the "irregulars," so-called because they are temporary or dispatched workers without job security. These "irregulars" are paid half as much as men and have no job benefits. Organizing underpaid women workers is the number one task facing the

Japanese labor movement.

For women, immigrant workers, and the super-exploited Korean and Chinese of Japan, "Japan, Inc." is no success story. The caste system of super-privilege for a few is simply a mirror image of the U.S., privileges which are eroding with the economy on the down swing.

The global trade war is a high-stakes game. In the first half of the '80s, Reagan pushed the dollar and the U.S. trade deficit to record highs with a massive military budget and tax cuts. The U.S. became the largest debtor nation, while Japan became the world's largest creditor. Then the dollar plummeted, threatening Japanese exports. Japanese finance capital is thinking twice about keeping the U.S. afloat.

There is no reason to believe that cutthroat competitors like U.S. and Japanese capitalists will develop some reasonable, rational means of settling their differences and stabilizing a crumbling capitalist system.

Thieves fall out

Shrinking markets and the stagnation of world trade mean greater rivalry among the imperialist nations.

Each national bourgeoisie tries to guarantee its interests against all the rest. Calls for protective tariffs—economic walls erected to protect domestic products by prohibiting foreign products—gather excited support, and political divisions among the imperialist thieves are exacerbated.

Inter-imperialist competition causes Reagan to insist that Japan and Germany must do more to stimulate their domestic economies. He wants them to lower interest rates and make credit easier to get, so that consumers and industry can purchase more American commodities and help reduce the U.S. trade deficit.

But such a policy runs counter to the self-interest of the Japanese and West German bourgeoisies, who have kept wages low and have no interest in increasing industrial production—because they, too, are experiencing a decline in economic growth.

As a two-edged sword which breeds retaliation, protectionism has thus far been held in check by the ruling class. But controlling the protectionist reflex becomes harder and harder to accomplish, and even such old allies as the U.S. and Canada find themselves at loggerheads. In the fall of 1986, Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney slammed the U.S. in trade talks, citing over 200 protectionist bills under consideration in Congress as the reason for developing closer Canadian ties with Japan and the Pacific Rim.

Calls for tariff walls find a responsive chord among chauvinists and racists (in the American auto industry, competition with the Japanese fed the flames of anti-Asian racism in the early '80s). The latest outbreaks of Asian-bashing are similarly fueled by economic jitters.

But protectionism—and the scapegoating it breeds—does not resolve the basic crisis anymore than sacrifices by labor make goods more salable, or closing the borders to illegal immigrants creates more domestic jobs. The crisis of capitalism is international and permanent, and travels from one country to another, causing vast dislocations of labor and markets.

There is no national solution to this crisis except for one capitalist country to go to war against others, or against workers states, in an effort to carve out a greater share of the international market and fields of investment. But even war (nonnuclear) is a temporary measure.

In the long run, only an international, planned, fair, rational, and publicly owned economy—socialism!—can end the anarchy in production, wars and

threats of wars, and the inane jingoism that are capitalism's curse.

Aftershocks and socialism

In the 1984 election, Reagan sold the American electorate on the bright future of American capitalism.

He didn't tell us it would consist of an economy mortgaged beyond all recognition and hopelessly dependent upon military production...where civil liberties would be trampled underfoot in domestic wars against abortion, drugs, pornography, illegal immigrants, political dissidents, and sexual freedoms...where creeping pockets of poverty would make an elite rich and threaten to turn the whole suit into tatters...where the only growth industries would be military-related...where stocks would plunge to their doom.

Yet this is the reality of economic "recovery" at this late stage of capitalism. Prosperity is bought very dearly. Today all signs point unwaveringly toward the end of even this very mixed and brief recovery period. It's a world crisis, says *Business Week*, and "the aftershocks of globalization's biggest tremor are just beginning to be felt."

An economic disaster of the scope menacing the human race cannot be resolved by pleading for confidence, tinkering with interest rates, shifting investments from stocks to bonds, pumping more currency into circulation, or snipping what's left of social services. The crash requires an all-out war by the bourgeoisie and its fascist flunkies against the world proletariat—a war to smash our civil liberties and civil rights, and to militarize our workplaces, to the end that greater profits can be squeezed from a grievously outdated system of production and distribution.

But the bourgeoisie faces workers who are singularly disinclined to give up without a fight their political and personal liberties or right to a better life than their parents had. Employees are growing weary of living on the edge of nuclear abyss, troubled about wars, increasingly irritated at the divine rights of management, landlords and bankers. Racial and sexual minorities, and women and progressives, chafe at all forms of super-privilege for all elites.

The bourgeoisie knows this well. That's why it takes such care to hide the extent of the economic-social crisis by manipulating statistics, concealing the dictatorial rule of the banks, scapegoating foreign labor, whipping up anti-Bolshevism, and promoting its middle caste defenders as the acceptable leadership of the harassed, unrepresented, disinherited, disenchanted, and super-exploited.

The bourgeoisie knows only too well how formidable an enemy the world

working class can become when its power and fury are unleashed and directed toward the seizure of state power, the overthrow of capitalism, and the establishment of a truly democratic socialist society with a planned and nationalized economy.

The viciousness of the imperialist counter-offensive attests not to its strength but to its terrors, not to its vaunted freedoms but to the turbulence of the world proletariat, in whose hands is placed the awesome

power to usher in humanity's first real morning since private property and class society obliterated the early communes. The choice between socialism or fascism has rarely been clearer; the erosion of the middle-ground center has rarely been so devastating.

The house of cards is tumbling down. The final conflict draws near. Let each stand in their place.

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Rescheduling Third World debt payments only delays default by preserving the fiction that the debts can be paid. The possibility of an international credit crisis is near.

The U.S. bourgeoisie faces workers who are singularly disinclined to give up without a fight their political and personal liberties or right to a better life than their parents'.

III. CAULDRON OF WAR, REVOLUTION AND COUNTERREVOLUTION

The years 1987-88 find the world in a state of permanent, unremitting class warfare, highlighted by (1) revolutionary struggles in the Third World and Middle East against domestic tyranny and imperialism, (2) the fight for socialist democracy in the workers states, and (3) mounting resistance to austerity in the imperialist bloc.

When we examine the state of the class struggle on these fronts—who is fighting, winning and losing—we learn that the tempo of struggle has markedly accelerated since the 1982 FSP convention. Far from retreating, the proletariat is striving mightily, despite setbacks and temporary defeats, to usher in a new world.

This phenomenon has not gone unnoticed by imperialism! A desperate, super-expensive counter-push against the world revolution has been unleashed. Before examining these fronts one-by-one, it is instructive to assess the effectiveness of the bourgeois assault, and to answer the question: which side is winning on a world scale?

Scoreboard

The bourgeoisie knows only too well that revolutions, unrest, strikes, and protests in one country become international in nature and scope because of the world-embracing character of economics and politics. (What we call Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, the bourgeoisie calls the domino theory or globalism!)

Hence, imperialism's fire department races frantically around the planet trying to extinguish the flames of revolt before they can spread.

Chief bully for the imperialists is U.S. capitalism and spokesman R. Reagan. He sometimes irritates European governments by his demands for total endorsement of unilateral U.S. military actions and threats; nevertheless, he directs his rhetorical and military firepower at the specter that all bourgeois regimes hate—the battalions of revolution.

Granted cordial bipartisan support in Congress (until Irangate), Reagan cheerfully employs guile, threats, air raids, murders, assassinations, private and secret funding of mercenaries, executive orders, torture, starvation, covert plots, and "disinformation" to defend bourgeois interests around the globe. His message is clear: no more Nicaraguas, no more irans, and not too many Philipines or South Koreans either.

In the past six years, this vicious counter-offensive has rained shattering blows on the advancing world revolution.

But the White House and the CIA have not been able to engineer one decisive defeat! The bourgeoisie has been unable to reinstall the profit system in any country where capitalist relations of production and distribution have been overturned!

Despite stepped-up saber rattling, and horrendous raids against Grenada and Libya by the Pentagon, the White House has not changed the relationship of forces between world socialism and world capitalism one iota. No new markets have materialized, no lost worlds reconquered.

Reagan's raids were designed as signals that the U.S. will punish heavily any country that opposes it in any way. But sending a signal of intent to roll back an advancing revolution, and actually defeating a successful revolution that enjoys a strong, unified leadership, like the Sandinistas, are two very different things.

Nicaragua will not be another Grenada for the U.S. It intends to be another Cuba. And the bourgeoisie and the Pentagon and Wall Street and the State Department and the CIA are aware of it.

Reagan's raids were also intended to demoralize the Left and the antiwar

movements in imperialist countries, especially the U.S.—to make them feel helpless to stop military firepower and the culture of Ramboism. But antiwar sentiment in the U.S. remains extremely strong; it is the paramount obstacle to direct U.S. intervention in other countries. Ramboism does not predominate; indeed, it is losing steam.

The ruling class, moreover, fears that counter-revolutionary moves will ignite revolutionary, anti-capitalist, antiwar movements in the imperialist countries. So it is exceedingly careful: it tests the waters of world opinion by hitting easy targets and getting out fast, or, alternatively, it supports democratic facelifts for military regimes which are out of favor and running out of time.

The bourgeoisie has no permanent answer to the irrepressible world revolution. The bourgeoisie plays with us, threatens us, tests us, punishes us. They are consummate politicians—but in a losing cause.

The Third World

The shattering of the equilibrium between imperialism and its former colonies accelerates, as predicted in *Crisis and Opportunity*, at an ever-increasing rate.

The battles in this war are fierce, the casualties high. But imperialism's control over the destiny of the Third World is slipping as the policies designed to maintain hegemony engender greater and greater outrage and protest.

Latin America: time running out

In the southern hemisphere, imperialism has bred poverty and vast slums, the debt grab, long decades of juntas and dictatorships, rightwing death squads, and terror.

The same policies have bred non-stop resistance. Today this is centered in Central America. But more and more, anti-imperialism threatens to engulf the entire continent of South America.

Faced with roiling hatred of the bloody juntas, and outrage over the apparently endless social crisis of Latin America—and needing to forestall continental revolution—the U.S. capitalist class is now experimenting with transitions to limited bourgeois democratic regimes spearheaded by the military. This is called the "Duarte solution," after Jose Duarte, president of El Salvador.

Elections are held under the klieg-lights of show biz. Capitalist politicians are installed with great pomp and hokum. The military dragons step out of the limelight and, apparently, into the shadows. But the phony "democrats" serve only at the sufferance of the generals. The constant threat of coups holds the timid moderates in line, and they in turn keep their foot firmly on the neck of the left wing to ensure their continued favor with the militaristas.

What a jaded, hackneyed, shabby scenario. Nonetheless, it is important to realize that this democratic charade is a **concession!** It is a victory won by workers and peasants, by the human rights activists and leftists of the U.S. and Latin America. Imperialism is forced to adopt this strategy by the threat of too many Nicaraguas.

But no Latin American is fooled, least of all labor and the families of the disappeared who see their new democratic leaders buckle under to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) demands and to the whip of the military.

The "Duarte solution" solves nothing for imperialism. It does offer new openings for proletarian struggle, how-



The human race is fed up with tyrants: China's unconquerable democracy movement takes Tiananmen Square, May 1989.

ever: some democracy is better than none at all for those on the front lines against a dictatorship.

Yet the bourgeois democratic governments that already exist in Latin America are helpless and obsolete.

The national bourgeoisie is so totally aligned with and dependent on imperialism, that its rule can only be sustained by mass repression and military might.

The starving workers and peasants will have to overthrow this parasitic ruling class and establish socialist democracies in order to achieve their long-delayed, bourgeois demands for land reform, civil liberties and human rights, and control over their economies, natural resources and destinies. The imperialist bank squeeze can only be ended by cutting off the domestic bourgeois hand that has them by the throat.

This is the lesson of the permanent revolution.

South America

Nothing demonstrates the impotency and treachery of bourgeois democratic regimes in Latin America like the new civilian governments installed on the South American continent during the last five years.

Argentina. In 1983, the rightwing Argentinean dictatorship of General Leopoldo Galtieri was the first junta in South America to relinquish power. It had been thoroughly discredited by its humiliating defeat at the hands of the British in the war over the Malvinas Islands (Falklands), as well as its disastrous economic policies and brutal human rights record. But it took more than a year for the newly-elected civilian government of Raul Alfonsin to put on trial some of the officers and junta members who for seven years had drowned the country in blood.

The trials were too much for the military.

In May 1985, Alfonsin announced that a military coup was being planned. The Argentinean people responded with massive demonstrations and a national strike opposing the coup. The masses demanded more trials and denounced Alfonsin's capitulation to the latest International Monetary Fund austerity program.

Brazil, Peru, Bolivia. 1985 was also the year of the return to elected civilian governments in Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, and Uruguay. The U.S. bourgeoisie hailed the return of democracy to South America (and naturally took much of the credit!). But subsequent events show there's not much to celebrate.

In **Brazil**, the military, which had ruled for 20 years, got a guarantee from the civilian government that no officers would be tried for their role in atrocities.

In **Peru**, the government of Alan García declared a state of emergency in February 1986 in response to a civil war raging in 18 provinces, where the Maoist Sendero Luminoso guerrilla forces are active. He suspended the right of assembly and issued a shoot-on-sight policy for anyone violating curfew. This was followed in July by the mass murder of 300 Sendero Luminoso inmates in a prison uprising that was put down by the military.

In **Bolivia**, a general strike in March 1985 lasted for 18 days, prompting a military chieftain to announce that the armed forces would not hesitate to intervene to maintain "internal security" if the civilian government could not.

The strikers, led by the Bolivian Labor Confederation and supported by national peasant organizations, demanded that the government reject an IMF proposal to devalue the currency and boost fuel and food prices by 400%.

The strikers called for President Zuazo's resignation and immediate replacement by a workers cabinet so that labor could institute its own economic program.

Labor eventually won some wage concessions from the government and the military did not seize power. But all the fundamental problems remain.

That is why revolution in Bolivia, or elsewhere on the continent, is not a dream. Between 1929-1933, under very similar conditions, 50 revolutions erupted in Latin America. It will happen again.

Central America

The sharpest conflicts in Latin America are taking place in Central America, where thousands of armed peasants and workers challenge the combined might of the U.S. and its puppet regimes.

A massive war zone, every country in the region is drawn into the conflict one way or another, whether as a staging ground for attacks on the Sandinistas or as a refuge for those escaping the conflagration.

Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The 1979 Sandinista overthrow of the U.S. puppet regime headed by the Somoza family greatly inspired the Resistance throughout Latin America.

Nicaragua's very existence, even under siege, and still far away from transformation into a fully developed workers state, so endangers Yankee hegemony that it must be obliterated. Hence the CIA's contra war of murder, assassination, massacre, and attrition.

Allegedly approved and suspended by a jittery U.S. Congress, the contra aid packages are a blow to the revolution—but not a fatal one. Much depends on the strength of the antiwar movement in the U.S. Will it break loose from the treacherous Democrats, who betray every unctuous promise to oppose the war drive? Will it launch a massive offensive to stop U.S. intervention?

U.S. interference, however, is not the *only* obstacle to a socialist Central America. The absurd "Peace Plan" of Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias Sanchez of Costa Rica may well derail and retard the Nicaraguan revolution to the point of paralysis. President Ortega may only be playing a diplomatic game on a dangerous tightrope as he pretends to go along with the plan, but it is demoralizing for a revolutionary leader to offer amnesty to the contras and approve negotiating with them. Is a revolution negotiable? Reagan wants nothing less than suicide for the full Sandinista program, and American aficionados of Nicaragua need to recognize the terrible risks lurking behind the vaunted Plan and denounce it.

For one thing, the Plan equates the leftist rebels of El Salvador and Guatemala with the contras, and orders the cutoff of all foreign aid to them. For antiwar activists to support such a counter-revolutionary policy is a betrayal of Central American revolution regardless of what Ortega says or does.

The final word on the Plan, fortunately, will most likely be spoken by the people of Nicaragua—and that word will be a resounding *NO!*

In **El Salvador**, the revolutionary forces of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (which controlled half the country in 1983) are prevented from seizing power by one thing: one-half billion dollars a year of congressionally-approved aid, military hardware, and advisors.

Under the Arias amnesty program for "rebel" forces, death squad hit men were released from prison in late '87—among them the notorious executioners of four American nuns in 1980. Rightwing assassinations of human rights advocates also rose. The Plan has brought anything but peace in El Salvador.

In **Guatemala**, the newly inaugurated Christian Democratic regime of Vinicio Cerezo is yet another bourgeois democratic facade for death squads and military henchmen operating on behalf of the United Fruit Company. The scorched earth military operations of the regime against the insurgent Indian population are Hitlerian in scope and ferocity.

40,000 Guatemalan refugees live on the Mexican-Guatemalan border in poverty and unrest. Nothing stops this revolution. Unionists and organizations of families of the disappeared press their demands in the cities while the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union guerrillas fight in the countryside.

Mexico. The insurmountable problems facing Mexico, one of the oldest democracies in Latin America, attest to the burning, too-long-delayed need for socialist revolution in the region.

The Mexican government spends *one-half of its total budget* on payments on its 100-billion dollar debt! Half the Mexican workforce is unemployed or underemployed, wages are at their lowest point in 50 years, and the inflation rate is 100%. The value of the peso continues to plunge as compared to the dollar—it now stands at 2000 pesos per dollar.

Revolt simmers in Mexico. And it

flares anew with every IMF-imposed devaluation of currency and cutbacks in government-supported programs. Only the mass exodus of refugees managing to cross the U.S. border provides some release for a society reaching a boiling point.

Bankers, guns and U.S. advisors create monumental suffering in Central America. But la lucha continua.

Cruising in the Caribbean

Deprivation and misery amid natural abundance and beauty are the unhappy inheritance of the beautiful Caribbean Islands from centuries of exploitation.

Repeated invasions by U.S. Marines, plus dictatorships and neo-colonial administrations imposed by the imperialists to the north, are the misfortune of the islands, a result of being in waters near the U.S.A.

Marines have a way of landing on Caribbean beaches and never leaving. Ninety years ago they stormed Puerto Rico to fight the Spanish-American War and they are still there. Puerto Rican nationals still fight for independence from colonialism.

But the notion that the U.S. could rule unchallenged in the Caribbean ended ingloriously in 1959 when Fidel Castro's incredible guerrilla army overthrew Batista and inaugurated social revolution in the Western Hemisphere, 90 miles from the American colossus.

Grenada. Twenty years later, in 1979, Grenada joined Cuba in tossing imperialism out on its ear. Under the leadership of the New Jewel Movement—an amalgam of Marxists, social democrats and bourgeois democrats—Sir Eric Gairy, a former British colonial administrator and buddy of the U.S., was deposed and his state apparatus and repressive security forces dismantled.

A People's Revolutionary Government was established with Maurice Bishop as Prime Minister. The Bishop government immediately reduced unemployment and illiteracy and supported widespread unionization and public health programs.

The Grenadian revolution came just months before the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua. Reading the handwriting on the wall of permanent revolution, the U.S. cut off all aid and made plans to overthrow Bishop. Above all, the example of solidarity and support which had so quickly developed between the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenadian revolutions had to be smashed.

When a split in the New Jewel Movement occurred in 1983, and Bishop was murdered by an opposing faction, the U.S. ruling class seized the opportunity to launch its long-postponed invasion. Citing a "danger" to Americans living in the country, the White House landed an occupying force of 6000—one U.S. soldier for every 20 Grenadians.

Without guns, and demoralized and confused by the internecine New Jewel Movement strife, Grenada offered minimal resistance. Movement leaders were arrested and a puppet government was set up.

Colonialism was reinstalled in Grenada the old-fashioned way: at gunpoint.

The invasion brought down a worldwide torrent of protest and outrage against the U.S., complete with charges of press censorship and government coverups of what was actually an American military fiasco.

Storming Grenada was a hollow victory for the U.S.

No new markets or investment opportunities were opened up, and capitalist property relations were not reinstated since they had never been overthrown.

The invasion was no test of the U.S. military's capacity to carry out a counter-revolution against an armed populace (such as exists in Nicaragua or Cuba) or

the willingness of the U.S. public to support such an invasion. The subsequent knee-jerk flagwaving in the U.S. had as much to do with the invasion's low body count as with anything else.

In Grenada, the U.S. had proved only that it could overrun a tiny, poverty-stricken island with an unarmed and leaderless populace.

Haiti. The bourgeoisie learned something from the quick succession of revolutions in Iran, Grenada, and Nicaragua: that it is better to sacrifice a few dictators before unrest reaches such proportions that revolutionaries seize power.

This lesson was put to work in Haiti in 1985-86 when the despised Duvalier regime faced massive opposition.

Three decades of Duvalier family rule made Haiti the poorest country in the Americas, marked by government corruption and extortion, starvation, 80% illiteracy, political repression and thugery, and 50% unemployment.

In February 1986, months of demonstrations for "land, work and freedom" culminated in Baby Doc Duvalier's hasty departure for France, courtesy of a U.S. rescue plan.

The U.S. immediately recognized the military junta Duvalier left behind to rule in his absence. But the junta collapsed a month later when Haitians demanded an end to "Duvalierism without Duvalier." A National Provisional Government took over—appointed by the military and headed by a general.

When the new government stalled over setting a date for elections to a constituent assembly, it too met with mass protests. A June 1987 general strike won a hasty government promise of November elections.

As the time to vote drew near, the Tontons Macoutes—the dreaded private gestapo of the Duvalier family—joined with government forces to unleash a reign of terror aimed at blocking the elections. Two thousand people were murdered in election-related violence, many massacred by soldiers and police as they waited to vote outside polling places on November 29, 1987.

The junta used this violence as a pretext to cancel the elections and suspend the civilian-run Provisional Elections Council. Haitian unions responded with a call for a general strike to oust the generals and reinstate the elections.

Radical priest Jean Bertrand Aristide told *Newsweek* after the voting day massacre, "There is only one avenue to take,

and that is revolution." Many Haitians agree with him.

Throughout this continuing revolution, the U.S. has maneuvered to maintain control. It negotiated the terms of Duvalier's departure, approved the junta members, guaranteed the safety of Duvalier officials, and is aiming for another "Duarte solution" of partial concessions. Just in case this ploy doesn't work, the White House has poured anti-riot equipment into the country and will send military advisors or a phony international "peacekeeping" force to help the Leopards—a U.S.-trained security force—maintain order.

The U.S. also keeps a massive naval presence in the Caribbean Sea.

But this revolution will not be easily stopped. Peasants are seizing land. Formerly outlawed unions are reorganizing everywhere. The Ligue Feminine has held demonstrations for equal rights, equal pay for women, and an end to sexual violence. Political refugees demand amnesty and removal of the death pen-

South Africa

A tidal wave of national liberation struggles engulfed the continent of Africa in the 30 years following World War II, and centuries of colonialism ended in 1975 when Angola, a Portuguese colony, became the last country to win political independence.

But the end of direct colonial rule by British, French and Belgian imperialism did not bring freedom and economic independence to Africa. European and U.S. imperialism still exploit African labor and resources through native elites and despots, who are utterly dependent upon the West for technology, food, and industrial development.

Imperialism's neo-colonial strategy in Africa has perpetuated a new holocaust. Today, twenty-nine of the world's poorest countries are African. The scourge of famine stalks Ethiopia, Chad, Uganda, Zaire, and Mozambique. Three million Africans are refugees from countries of famine, war and oppression.

And the relentless IMF debt squeeze further impoverishes the poorest of the poor.

South Africa: outpost of imperialism

One African nation dominates the political and economic scene: South Africa, the most industrially developed and best armed. Its white rulers are a symbol and bulwark of imperialist domination.

South Africa is an economic, political and strategic cornerstone of world capitalism. It is a vast storehouse of riches that are vital to world industry and finance. South Africa also serves as a counterrevolutionary military force throughout southern Africa.

Since 1980, South Africa has invaded seven of the region's nine independent nations; materially aided anti-government forces in Angola, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Mozambique; provoked a 1986 coup in Lesotho; attacked African National Congress (ANC) forces in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana, and Swaziland, in 1987; and it prevents the SWAPO national liberation forces from achieving Namibia's independence from South Africa.

The dying apartheid threatens to engulf *one-quarter* of Africa in war. And the U.S. always assists, rushing arms to Pretoria. After Reagan

dubbed Angolan counterrevolutionary Jonas Savimbi a "freedom fighter," Congress approved funds for Savimbi's bloodthirsty UNITA forces, which are at war with the Marxist government of Angola.

South Africa's Black revolution

The fallacious notion of South African invincibility is most severely challenged from within the country itself.

Apartheid will meet its end at the hands of its Black prisoners of prejudice.

Increasing protests and mass demonstrations, strikes and violence by Blacks, Asians and Coloureds (collectively known as Blacks) have roared through South Africa in the past three years. Wave after wave of Blacks armed with little more than sticks and stones hurl themselves against the police and military in desperate effort to end 300 years of minority rule.

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The "Duarte solution" solves nothing. U.S.-sponsored democratic governments in Latin America are helpless and obsolete. The national bourgeoisie is so dependent on imperialism that its rule can only be sustained by mass repression and military might.

Except for a brief period, Pretoria has responded since July 1985 by submerging the country in a State of Emergency.

During a hiatus in this lockdown, one and one-half million workers erupted in a general strike on May 1, 1986, demanding that the day become a workers holiday. The strike provoked the greatest assertion of multi-racial, proletarian solidarity in South African history, and it terrified the regime.

When the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) announced plans for a one-day general strike and demonstrations on June 16, 1986, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, the government quickly reinstated the State of Emergency. It has yet to be lifted.

Botha has imprisoned several thousand anti-apartheid leaders and activists, imposed harsh media censorship, placed some Black townships under curfew, and granted police the power to jail anyone for 180 days without charges.

UDF-COSATU cooperation marks a new level of struggle in South Africa. Though canceled by the government's imposition of the State of Emergency, the planned one-day strike was the first *nationwide* action called jointly by the Black trade unions and anti-apartheid organizations.

This historic step was made possible by the formation of COSATU in 1985. Representing 650,000 workers, COSATU's aims are openly political, and it is committed to ending apartheid by organizing the unorganized into big industrial unions and engaging in general strikes. While it has not yet adopted a complete political program, some leaders advocate workers' control over the economy.

Armed to the teeth, the formidable police state is unwilling and unable to grant reforms. Wealth and privilege are extracted from the super-exploitation of Black workers, leaving revolution as the only road to liberation.

But what kind of revolution?

The African National Congress wants to build a broad movement to overthrow apartheid, and move later into the struggle for socialism. This adherence to Stalinist "two-stage" revolutionism is disastrous.

In practice, the "two-stage" revolution means a Zimbabwe-style solution after the overthrow of apartheid, but Black majority rule under capitalism in Zimbabwe has not brought prosperity or peace for Blacks. The white minority retains its property and therefore its tremendous economic and political clout. Still locked into the imperialist economic orbit, the country is drastically poverty-stricken.

Furthermore, a "two-stage" strategy cannot overthrow the South African police state. Critical to the success of the anti-apartheid movement is the incorporation of *all the democratic demands*—of workers, women, and youth—that separately and together require the abolition of capitalism in South Africa.

Capitalism and apartheid are *inseparable* in South Africa. The intrinsic structure of South African and international capitalism depends on the super-profits derived through apartheid and the resulting political control over southern Africa's wealth.

To put off the direct and open struggle for socialism is inevitably to circumscribe the struggle for *democracy* in South Africa, and hence to blunt and fatally weaken the anti-apartheid movement.

Asia

Revolutionary upheaval in Asia is much feared by the U.S., which suffered its greatest military defeat in history at

the hands of Vietnamese communists 12 years ago. Since then, Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) and Laos have become workers states and anti-American sentiment rumbles from these new quarters.

Anxious to avoid a repeat of the Vietnamese disaster, as well as the loss of key military bases, the U.S. maneuvers to stay on top or ahead of the unfolding Asian revolution. But events are swiftly overtaking the imperialist strategists, and socialist revolution looms in such countries as the Philippine Islands and South Korea.

The Philippines

The mighty "people's power" revolt that toppled Marcos after the discredited February 1986 elections sent shock waves throughout the imperialist camp, waves which have not subsided.

Commitment to Marcos was key to U.S. policy in Asia. Aside from subjugating the Philippine economy to international import/export monopolists and the World Bank, Marcos guaranteed a perpetual welcome for the vast U.S. military presence, so essential to U.S. domination of Asia and Mideast oil lanes.

U.S. policy makers, in league with Filipino reactionaries, are now scrambling to reimpose control over events, keenly aware that a free Philippines means the unraveling of U.S. designs in the Far East, thus a qualitative weakening of their ability to dominate the earth. War is escalating between the reactionaries and freedom fighters throughout the Philippines. It is abundantly clear that Marcos' ouster was merely the first step toward liberation.

The fifty-six million Filipinos who rose virtually as one to fling out Marcos continue to press their claims for democratic freedoms: workers strike for jobs, higher wages, and the right to organize, and against the U.S. military presence, while peasants, national minorities, and indigenous peoples fight arms in hand for land and autonomy.

Militarists and the oligarchy are regrouping to undo the February overturn. Pitched battles between the Philippine army and the Communist-led New People's Army (NPA) foreshadow imminent civil war.

Atop the cauldron of Philippine politics sits Aquino, who promised democracy and didn't deliver. Clearly, Marcos' ouster was merely the first step toward liberation.

Atop the cauldron of Philippine politics sits the Aquino government, brought to power on the strength of her promise to install democracy. But Philippine capitalism and its imperialist backers still need a dictator, not democracy, in the saddle. So Aquino, committed pro-capitalist, is bowing to class imperatives.

She has refused to recognize the right to strike, to institute land reform, or to grant autonomy to the Muslim minority on Mindanao. Yet

these are among the first prerequisites of democracy. She likewise refuses to expel the U.S. military or repudiate the country's \$26 billion debt to foreign banks.

She promised to "reconcile" the government with the powerful Philippines Communist Party (CPP) and entered into negotiations for cease-fire with the National Democratic Front (NDF), a broad coalition representing the NPA. Yet at the end of September 1986, the government arrested CPP leaders and initiated a crack-down in line with that demanded by Defense Minister Enrile. (Two weeks earlier, in the U.S., Aquino pledged continued "friendship" with imperialism, received \$200 million in aid, and reportedly offered liberalization of barriers to U.S. imports.)

The impatient Enrile precipitated a crisis in November 1986, by instigating the murder of labor leader and political figure Rolando Olalia, and attempting a coup. Army Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos and U.S. strategists, alarmed at mass outrage over Olalia's murder, moved swiftly to align with Aquino against Enrile. Ramos stopped the coup attempt,

and shortly thereafter Enrile was gone from the government.

Ramos' split with Enrile was *tactical*; Aquino had announced a constitutional plebiscite to be held in February 1987. The new constitution allows her a six-year term in office. Ramos and the imperialists believe that a government thus constitutionally "stabilized" will allow the military to rid the Philippines of the communists in a more expeditious fashion.

The overthrow of Aquino, however, is always likely. Her power derives entirely from the good will accorded her by the masses; should she lose that precious commodity because of the services she renders to capital, the military will take advantage of her isolation and remove her—and engulf the country in civil war.

The likelihood of civil war increases with each passing month. In the first 18 months of the Aquino regime, five coup attempts were mounted against her. After each one, the military makes a show of rounding up the rebels, who in turn pretend to surrender to the government. Aquino chastises the conspirators, the next round of plotting for overthrow begins, and Aquino makes more concessions to the military.

Her administration now publicly endorses rightwing death squads, increased pay for the military, and mandatory national identification cards. In December 1987, Aquino came out in favor of keeping U.S. bases on the islands—a subject she had not previously taken a public position on. Government political attacks on the Left and the CPP have mushroomed dramatically.

Immediately upon the ouster of Enrile, Aquino demanded resumption of cease-fire negotiations, which the NDF had broken off after the Olalia murder. The NDF acceded, and a 60-day cease-fire was worked out, to last from early December until the February 1987 elections.

Many in the CPP saw the cease-fire accord as a legitimization of the party and a chance to win the Aquino center away from the hardcore right wing. They were disappointed by the election results which were a resounding endorsement of Aquino.

The CPP fell somewhat into disarray following its disastrous abstentionist course in the February 1986 elections, when it abandoned the huge anti-Marcos movement to Aquino. While the party has admirably refused to lay down arms as a precondition to "reconciliation" with the government, and has led numerous armed clashes against pro-Marcos landlords in the countryside, it continues to promulgate bourgeois democracy as the order of the day for the Philippines.

This follows the Stalinist dictum that two-stage revolution—bourgeois democratic today, socialist mañana—is the prescription for liberation in dependent countries. The CPP has refused to elaborate an all-sided, anti-capitalist democratic program which would educate the masses about the class nature of bourgeois democracy. The CPP continues to leave the political initiative to Aquino, who waits with Ramos to crush the party—and democracy.

Nevertheless, intense debate rages in the CPP and NPA over the party's present course, and this is the hope of the revolution. CPP leaders, faced with destruction by the government, may yet reverse their trajectory and begin to weld the real democratic movements—of workers, peasants, anti-imperialists, women, national minorities, indigenous peoples—into a conscious, all-encompassing organ for socialism.

New stirrings in Korea

Like the Philippines, Korea is strategically key to U.S. interests in the Far East.

A stone's throw from both China and the Soviet Union, South Korea is at once a major market for Japanese and U.S. goods and a toehold on the Asian mainland for the U.S. military.

Imagine the chagrin of the imperialist policy-makers in February 1986 when South Korea exploded in renewed opposition to the Chun dictatorship immediately after Marcos was booted out of Manila!

Tumult reached a high point on May 3 when a violent confrontation pitted

worker and student protesters against riot police in the industrial city of Inchon. For the first time in decades, protesters called openly for removal of U.S. troops and nuclear weapons from Korea, and pointed to U.S. imperialism as the main obstacle blocking reunification of the North and South.

Reunification has become a key rallying point for the opposition. The artificial division of the country, imposed by the U.S. and Stalin in 1948, laid the basis for South Korea's ab-

sorption into the imperialist economic orbit. Massive infusions of U.S. aid enabled development of an export-oriented economy directed by the state and dominated by a few big conglomerates.

Today the country is entirely dependent on the imperialist world market for technology, raw materials, and credit, and it must trade by terms dictated by the imperialists. It is also saddled with a ruinous \$40 billion debt, and racked by rising protectionism in the West against cheap Korean goods. Meanwhile, small farmers are being ruined by imports of cheap U.S. grain.

And South Korea's competitive edge on the world market is gained only by the impoverishment of the industrial workforce, for whom rock-bottom wages, horrific working conditions, denial of political rights, and ubiquitous police repression are standard.

South Korea, unlike the Philippines, does not have a strong, historically powerful, and organized Left. Opposition is rooted most strongly among industrial workers and students who have forged strong mutual ties, yet much of the leadership is in the hands of the anti-Communist liberal bourgeoisie in the New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP).

Tensions and a possible split are brewing, however, within the largest mass movement coalition in the country—the United Minjung (People's) Movement for Democracy and Unification (UMDU). The anti-U.S. militants are increasingly critical of NKDP opportunism.

A major rallying point has been the demand for free elections. Chun, with U.S. backing, refused outright to grant this demand until a wave of anti-government demonstrations in 1986 forced him to promise that the country's next leader would be elected by popular vote (under the dictatorship, the president was chosen by a 71-member electoral college rather than by direct election). However, in April 1987, Chun announced he would suspend the attempt at constitutional reform until after the Seoul Olympic Games in September 1988.

Chun severely miscalculated. His pronouncement provoked greater and greater demonstrations. On June 29, 1987, after 18 straight days of marches and violence in all major cities, Chun's hand-picked successor, Roh Tae-woo, announced that presidential elections would be held in December.

Then a massive, three-month strike wave deluged the dictatorship. Over 3,000 strikes were officially recorded between June and September, many by unorganized workers.

When the elections were held in December, Roh Tae-woo and two representatives of the NKDP—Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam—were on the ballot.

In Korea, the questions of reunification, repression, labor exploitation, and the U.S. stranglehold will become increasingly linked with the question of socialism.



A female socialist candidate bowed out of the race at the last moment and gave her endorsement to Kim Young Sam.

With the two Kims splitting the opposition vote, Roh was elected. His future is uncertain. Roh is hated by many Koreans for his brutal role in the 1980 Chun coup. He led paratroopers in a bloody assault against the large and rebellious southwestern city of Kwangju, which had risen en masse against Chun. Roh's forces ransacked the city for three days and murdered 2,000 people—with the approval of the U.S. military command which oversees the Korean army.

Many Koreans feel the "new" face of democracy in Korea has the familiar look of yet another U.S.-approved dictator.

Imperialist drives, Roh's victory, and charges of election fraud, portend greater upheaval in the months ahead, especially in view of the forthcoming Olympic Games which have focused world interest on Korea. Greater polarization between radicals and anti-communists in the opposition is brewing. The questions of reunification, government repression, labor exploitation, and the U.S. stranglehold will become increasingly linked with the question of socialism—and it is around this question that the emerging Left can congeal, to fight imperialism, the dictatorship, and capitalism in South Korea.

Entwined in a socialist program, national liberation and reunification become concrete possibilities. Reunification, moreover, posed in the context of an anti-capitalist democratic struggle in South Korea, would ignite a corresponding struggle for workers democracy in the North.

The ramifications of an anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic struggle—permanent revolution—on the Korean peninsula are staggering. They point inexorably to a rejuvenated world revolutionary movement and the demise of imperialism in Asia and globally.

The Middle East

Few regions of the world hold more importance for imperialism than the oil-rich Middle East with its proximity to the USSR.

And yet in few places where imperialism has much to lose does it exert less direct control over events. Israel acts on its own, and the Arab regimes, and Iran, are not mere pawns totally dependent on U.S. arms and money to survive, as is the case in Central America. The wealth accrued from oil gives these states a certain independence, and anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist pressure from the masses keeps the pot of revolution boiling.

Elite western emissaries have been sent to the Middle East by the hundreds to "search for peace." But the alliance of western oil-hungry capitalists with Israel and Arabic despots spells permanent civil war, revolution and counterrevolution in the territory.

Arabs and Israelis

Israel remains central to the conflict raging throughout the region. But its policy of territorial encroachment, military occupation of neighboring Arab states, war, and genocide against Palestinians has seriously backfired against Israel and its U.S. patron.

In December 1987 the Gaza Strip and West Bank flared up with the worst rioting and fighting in 20 years of Israeli occupation. Stepped-up Zionist settlement of these territories plus army killings and beatings feed the flames of rebellion. Said one young Palestinian, hospitalized in Gaza, "It's them or us." Demonstrators taunted Israeli soldiers with chants of "Kill us all or get out."

The occupation wars have raged now for 6 months, and 1988 will prove to be the year that shook up Zionism to its very core.

Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was meant to wipe out the Palestinians. What it did was to touch off mass protests among Israeli Jews and Arabs and an unprecedented resistance within the Israeli army. The invasion led to the ignominious withdrawal of U.S. forces from Lebanon after 200 Marines were killed in a bomb attack on their Beirut headquarters in 1983.

Eventually the invaders were forced

to retreat from almost all of southern Lebanon before the combined forces of a temporarily united Lebanese and Palestinian Left.

The 1982 war was a costly defeat for Israel, but it was hardly a victory for those opposing Zionist expansionism and Arab reactionaries.

Today Lebanon is a microcosm of the Mideast inferno. Various factions of Palestinians, Muslim fundamentalists and leftists, and Christian fascists, backed by varying interests in the imperialist, Soviet, Israeli, and Arab camps, are endlessly at war with one another. And the left leadership capable of uniting the have-nots of every religion and national group against their common enemies—Israeli and Arab capitalism, and imperialism—has not emerged.

This crisis of leadership is most profoundly expressed in the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Since the PLO was driven out of Lebanon in 1982, the Palestinian movement has been engulfed by factionalism, fratricide, and nationalist and religious rivalries.

From the beginning, the PLO leadership has evaded forging a clear revolutionary program, and has subordinated the class struggle to the national struggle for a Palestinian homeland. This has led to alliances with various Arab capitalist regimes and reactionary regional organizations which inevitably turn their guns against the Palestinians. PLO politics have led to an overemphasis on armed struggle and on building a quasi-state apparatus, at the expense of mass political action on the West Bank and Gaza, where the battle for liberation will be won or lost.

The shifting, vague PLO program has led to antagonistic relations between it and leftists in host countries such as Jordan and Lebanon, because the PLO's obsessive nationalism sidesteps and subverts the class struggle raging in these countries.

Meanwhile, Arafat's futile shuttle diplomacy among various Arab leaders (including the murderous King Hussein), together with the absence of radical leadership arising to unite the PLO, threatens to further delay the Mideast revolution.

Iran and Iraq

To the east of Lebanon, yet another war rages: the seven-year war between Iran and Iraq.

Iran's response to Iraq's imperialist-backed invasion in 1980 was initially a mighty and popular defense of its borders and its revolution. The spirit of the 1979 Iranian revolution played no small part in Iran's capacity to successfully repulse the Iraqi invasion.

But the war to defend a revolution turned into its opposite—it became a holy war to consolidate the Islamic counterrevolution in Iran and a war to conquer Iraq.

Khomeini's fundamentalist Islamic regime has used the war to strengthen its

murderous repression of all organized opposition in Iran, and to diffuse spontaneous protests against the death sentences, poverty, and religious inquisition that defines Khomeini's medieval rule. Iran has also driven deep into Iraqi territory in an effort to reach the country's capital and overthrow the Iraqi regime.

This "anti-imperialist" government now deals in war armaments with most imperialist countries, including Israel and the U.S., and is fast losing the support of a war-weary Iranian people who no longer support the Ayatollah's refusal to negotiate a settlement with Iraq.

An end to the Iran-Iraq war could well exacerbate the Khomeini regime's feudalistic incapacity to oversee a viable peacetime economy. Peace might lead to a revived challenge to the Islamic counterrevolution. Iranians have not forgotten that it was they who wrested power from the Shah, and why they did. They will do it again to Khomeini's pro-capitalist successor for the same reason: political freedom for women, national minorities, workers, political dissidents, artists and writers.

Irangate

Fears that Khomeini's death might spark a second Iranian revolution are at the bottom of the arms-for-hostages scandal rocking the Reagan administration. Each new revelation stuns the country, energizes the media, and degrades the once-hallowed Reagan image.

Ever since the overthrow of the Shah, the CIA has played a dual role with the Iranian regime. The CIA curries favor with the Khomeinists and at the same time aids anti-Khomeini exile groups and Iraq.

CIA operations have one objective: to regain influence or control over events in Iran. To this end, the CIA gave Iraq information, gathered by U.S. satellites, on Iranian military positions, and provided Khomeini with data on the communist Tudeh Party, resulting in its outlawing and the murder of many members.

When the arms-for-hostages-and-cash-for-contras story first broke, Reagan justified violating the U.S. arms embargo against Iran. Said he, "It's because of Iran's strategic importance and its influence in the Islamic world that we chose to probe for a better relationship." That's one reason; an even better reason is the painful fact that American hostages held (by Shiite Moslems) in Lebanon—including the bureau chief of the Beirut CIA—were a galling reminder to the administration of its impotency.

Khomeini was willing to bargain with the U.S. in order to undermine American support for Iraq and obtain the arms to mount a "final" offensive against the army of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

The hostages became pawns in this giant power play between two powerful capitalist states with something to gain

by calling each other names in public while engaged in secret negotiations. Israel was the go-between, setting up contacts through Israeli arms merchants with the Khomeini government and providing the first shipment of weapons.

Later, Israel received U.S. arms and transferred them to Iran, so that the Reagan administration could not be accused of violating the letter, if not the spirit, of the arms embargo.

But the Beirut CIA chief was tortured to death. Other hostages were set free one at a time, but more hostages were being taken. Still, the U.S. kept up arms shipments to Iran for 18 months—proving that this policy was not solely about freeing hostages. Had it been, the policy would have been jettisoned as a dismal failure.

Getting away with this violation of the National Security Act, which requires Congress to be informed of covert operations in "a timely manner," inspired the Reagan administration to circumvent the Congressional ban on military aid to the contras. Money from the Iran arms sales was placed in a Swiss bank account of the CIA, where it was funneled directly to the contras or used to pay Israel for arms which were sent to the anti-Sandinistas.

Israel made millions off the deal, contras got illegal aid, and the U.S. curried favor with Iranians in the military and government.

Then the glorious scam to aid anti-communism from Central America to the Middle East unraveled. And what it revealed about U.S. policy in the Mideast is that the main objective is to prevent socialist revolution in the region, above all in Iran.

As the single most powerful state in the entire Persian Gulf, a capitalist Iran is vital to U.S. interests. Iran's vast reserves of oil, its warm water ports, and its 1,000 mile border with the Soviet Union make it extremely important to keep within the capitalist orbit. Khomeini and his fanatical co-religionists—who make a huge public display of hating the "Great Satan" but share a fervent anti-communism and pro-capitalist world view with the White House—are much preferable to a socialist Iran.

Oil and nukes

The U.S. government stands ready and eager to intervene in this storm of Mideast bloodletting. The intervention in Lebanon, and blitzkrieg attack on defenseless Libya, were but dress rehearsals for what these warmongers have in mind.

In 1982, the U.S. created the Central Command, a rapid deployment force of 300,000 troops. Its purpose: to wipe out any threat to imperialist control of Persian Gulf oil. Should the Command be unequal to the task, both the Carter and Reagan administrations made it clear that the U.S. would use nuclear weapons to defend its interests in the Middle East.

With this chilling prospect in mind,
to next page

About the Authors

Guerry Hodderson, FSP National Secretary, and Clara Fraser, FSP National Chair, represent two generations of socialist feminist thinkers and builders.

Guerry Hodderson's radical instincts first found expression in the Black civil rights struggle and the Berkeley Free Speech and anti-Vietnam War movements. In the early '70s, she became one of the first women in Seattle to enter non-traditional trades as a truck driver. Her spirited leadership and intransigent, principled politics have earned her great respect in all the social movements. She is an initiator of the emerging U.S. mobilization against neo-Nazis and was an FSP delegate to the March European Open Conference of Trotskyists in Rimini, Italy.

Clara Fraser spent 20 active years in the Socialist Workers Party. In 1966, after the SWP's orientation to the labor aristocracy had congealed into terminal op-



Clara Fraser and Guerry Hodderson

portunism and bureaucratism, she led in founding the Freedom Socialist Party—the world's first feminist Trotskyist party. Fraser was the victor in a celebrated, eight-year-long, groundbreaking suit against Seattle City Light on the grounds of political and sex discrimination. She has authored numerous theoretical works, teaches Marxist economics, and is a featured columnist for the *Freedom Socialist*.

Both Hodderson and Fraser are defendants and key

legal strategists in the Freeway Hall Case.

The two produced this document during an intensive, five-month retreat, where every waking hour was spent examining and recording the faltering vital signs of world capitalism and the vibrant health of revolutionary and democratic struggles around the globe. Their scholarship and firm optimism in the socialist future shine through on every page of this work.

U.S. radicals have but one choice: to build a militant, anti-capitalist, antiwar movement in this country, one which will draw together defense of the Central American as well as the Mideast revolutions.

Workers states

Trotsky taught that revolt against the tyrannical, privileged, bureaucratic caste of the Stalinist workers states is a critical component of Permanent Revolution and the worldwide class struggle. Political revolution in degenerated workers states raises anew the banner of democratic, worker-controlled socialism and weakens the Stalinist bureaucracies which sabotage and delay world revolution.

Nothing happening anywhere in the world, then, is more important or exciting than the changes taking place in workers states.

The call for socialist democracy is being raised simultaneously in Poland, China, and the USSR. The particular strata pressing for change varies greatly from country to country.

And in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and, of course, Hungary, economic reforms are underway. "One after another, Eastern Europe's communist governments...[are applying] a coat of Gorbachev varnish to their peeling and cracking economies," reported Bernard D. Kaplan of Hearst News Service in November 1987.

And political demands tend to follow fast upon economic adjustments.

In Poland, the workers and intellectuals of Solidarity carry through open and underground struggle against the police-state rule of the Jaruzelski regime.

In China, it is students, impelled by a section of the Communist Party leadership, who swiftly responded with a massive outpouring of people and demands for socialist democracy. True, a hundred flowers didn't bloom very long, and in the end only one school of thought was allowed to contend. And Deng, having tested the waters, demoted some hapless officials and thundered a warning about going too far, capitalist roaders, etc., etc.

The point is that the students and workers do crave political freedom and relief from scarcity and shoddiness of consumer goods, and do yearn for a culture that widens their alternatives just as business-oriented Chinese are permitted to exercise new economic options in the free, private marketplace. As it introduces capitalist ventures and practices, the regime is playing with fire and knows it, and tries to simultaneously liberalize and control.

Even Lenin and Trotsky had trouble synchronizing a nationalized economy with individual entrepreneurship, and Deng is no Leninist. Wild fluctuations of policy are the pattern and the norm.

Meanwhile, in the USSR, the Gorbachev group fosters serious criticism of official malfeasance and corruption, sounding almost Bolshevik in its exhortations to resurrect the spirit of Lenin and restore debate, political options, artistic diversity, and media candidness about Soviet life. But if an official gets too carried away by these glowing objectives, he is promptly demoted and rebuked, of course.

Ethnic and religious hatreds and persecution still fester in the Soviet Union, birthplace of the self-determination principle. Intense conflict rages between the people of the neighboring republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the treatment of the Armenian minority in Azerbaijan. But the Moscow bureaucracy refuses to accede to the demands of the oppressed Armenian minority for territorial unity and incorporation with the Republic of Armenia.

Armenia was dismembered in 1923 when Stalin attempted to dissolve all the nationalities of the Caucasus into one republic. When this policy was reversed,

two sections of Armenia remained in Azerbaijan and one Armenian area was left within the boundaries of Georgia. These territories contain one-third of the Armenian population; the other two-thirds live in Armenia.

Armenians are mainly Christian, and in Azerbaijan they are subjected by the ruling Moslems to pogroms and to the suppression of their language and culture. The partition and the oppression are fiercely resented by Armenians in both Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In February 1988, hostilities reached the boiling point and exploded in one of the greatest mass protests against Soviet policy ever to occur. On February 12, in Azerbaijan, the local soviet of the predominantly Armenian region of Na-

Reform flurries in the workers states are an intrinsic part of the deep-seated revolutionary process. The bureaucracy cannot rule anymore through terror, absolutism, lies, and favoritism. Democracy is necessary to make the socialist system work.

gorno-Karabakh voted in favor of incorporation with Armenia! Enormous rallies for reunification were held in Armenia, culminating in a rally of one-half-million people on February 26. (The total population of Armenia is under 3 million.)

Azerbaijanis retaliated with a murderous pogrom on February 28 in which 26 Armenians were killed. Armenia protested these deaths with a rally of 400,000 people on March 8 and a one-hour general strike which shut down the republic on March 12.

The protests and turmoil continue. On May 17, 15,000 Armenians staged a rally in the Armenian capital to protest the inadequate sentence accorded the first of 80 Azerbaijanis on trial for the February murders. This was followed by a demonstration of 40,000 two days later. On May 24, hundreds of Armenians in the city of Stepanakert, Azerbaijan, went on strike and conducted protest marches. When an Azerbaijani home was burned in these protests, 100,000 Azerbaijanis went into the streets to protest *that*.

Gorbachev and Co. refuse to grant annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh into Armenia, and Soviet troops patrol and intimidate the strike city of Stepanakert. Gorby meanwhile promises a "costly development program...to improve economic and social conditions," according to Reuters and AP.

Why can't the Kremlin overlords grant ethnic autonomy to Armenians? All hell would break loose if they conceded to the democratic rights owed to Armenians; such a victory for fundamental freedoms would be disastrously contagious, engendering similar upheavals throughout the length and breadth of the USSR. So Gorby and his minions must appear to try reforms first, even as they impose military repression on the region.

Regardless of whether reform flurries and apparent "sensitivity" responses are initiated at the top or the bottom, they are an intrinsic part of the deep-seated revolutionary process. They make it clear that the bureaucracy cannot rule anymore through terror, absolutism, lies, and favoritism. Democracy is necessary to make the socialist system work at all.

These exciting developments are doubly significant because they occur simultaneously in various Soviet bloc sectors, strengthening and reinforcing each other. While it is difficult to ascertain how much the masses of each country are aware of what is going on in other countries, some interchange and filtering through of ideas and actions certainly occurs. During the 1978-81 "democracy movement" in China, Solidarity's program was published in the Chinese underground press, along with the writings of Hong Kong Trotskyists.

As the contagious crosscurrents of political revolution gather velocity in the

workers states, new and greater struggles against Stalinist degeneration loom on the horizon. This promise bodes extremely well for world revolution.

Change/perestroika in the USSR

The winds of change blow lustily in the Soviet Union.

Discussion of democratization and the "lack of genuine socialist democracy" appear regularly in the Soviet press today.

Social problems—alcoholism, crime, abuses of minorities, racial and sexual discrimination—are actually being examined publicly.

Newspapers print letters critical of the bureaucracy... censors are reappraising banned poets and writers, and a few are being published...controversial new plays are staged and some restrictions lifted on what theaters can produce (in May 1986, the Cinema Workers Union voted out two-thirds of their leadership, including a member of the Communist Party Central Committee, and set up an arbitration commission for filmmaker complaints about cen-

sorship).

The name of Trotsky is being heard in the land, and the earth shakes, as Gorbachev writes a book about restructuring—*Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*.

What is behind Glasnost, how pervasive is it, and what does it really mean?

Problems, problems

Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in March 1985, the youngest man to head the country since Stalin's death.

In the two years previous to his ascendancy, the economic growth rate had fallen steadily.

Soviet dependency on grain from the West was rising because of stagnating agriculture. Technological advances, especially in computerization, lagged far behind goals. In addition, 17-20 million Russians worked in a vast, illegal service sector, which generated \$8 billion a year by providing services and goods to consumers who chose to pay high prices rather than wait for the slow and unreliable official agencies to provide.

Alcoholism was and is rampant, afflicting 40 million people. Life expectancy was falling (because of alcoholism as well as a poor public health system), and job absenteeism was high.

Discontent among intellectuals was expressed, according to a French Marxist and longtime resident of Moscow, by the feeling that, "For ten years nothing has changed, certainly not under Brezhnev..."⁵

The economic and spiritual malaise gripping Soviet society was hardly unusual. It is the product of the bureaucratic caste which usurped political power from the working class through repression and mass terror, and has ruled the Soviet Union ever since Stalin. The layer of top officials keeps a police-state stranglehold on political dissent, and employs corruption, false reporting, waste, bribery, bureaucratic administrative practices, and thievery. It strangles the economy, sabotages worker initiative, and creates the hopeless, depressing, anxiety-wracked milieu which spawns alcoholism.

Herein lies the contradiction and limitations of what any top-down reform program can do.

The bureaucracy's privileges rest on its monopoly of political power. To do away with absenteeism, corruption, and bureaucratic inefficiency in the economy, the government would have to give workers the control of the workplace and economic planning—and that means *political* power. But true democracy, and bureaucratic privilege, which Gorbachev represents, are mutually exclusive.

Fundamental change in Soviet society, then, must arise from the bottom, from the workers. It cannot come from the ossified top layer of society, which in a thousand ways defends and perpetuates, in its own self-interest, the miserable status quo.

Still, the internal situation was reaching a crisis point by 1985 and something had to be done.

Gorbachev's reforms

To re-introduce limited private production, Gorbachev initiated a "merciless war on bureaucracy" and called for perestroika (restructuring) or "radical reform" of the economy.

A top-down shake-up ensued within the CPSU. A few notoriously corrupt and inefficient party officials were replaced. The powers of the Kremlin's national economic planning bodies and plant managers were enlarged while the powers of intermediate planning bodies, including ministries in the republics and authorities responsible for specific industries, were reduced.

Some criticism of idiotic mid-level bureaucratic practices, and some discussion of social and economic problems, were encouraged in the press.

Soviet intellectuals welcomed this loosening up and held great hopes for Gorbachev once he consolidated his power within the bureaucracy.

Soviet workers held a different viewpoint.

The new course consisted essentially of increased demands for productivity, a crackdown on absenteeism and pilfering, and a war on alcohol abuse. In 1985, new laws restricted the sale of alcohol, raised liquor prices, reduced liquor production, and enacted stiff penalties for public drunkenness and drinking on the job.

These measures were logical from the bureaucracy's standpoint. Since it will not and cannot reform itself in order to increase efficiency and provide a better standard of living, which everyone demands, it tried to find other ways to do this.

Gorbachev's clique selected two methods: cracking down on workers while introducing incentive pay for extra work and better quality, and permitting private enterprise in some goods and services.

In November 1986, the Supreme Soviet enacted legislation giving individuals and families the right to go

into business for themselves to manufacture certain consumer goods (clothes, shoes, furniture) or to provide certain services (car repair, house painting, language instruction). The law prohibited hiring labor for these enterprises.

The law is obviously an attempt to reorganize, regulate, and tax the underground economy and at the same time meet consumer demands. (The Soviet press also linked this change to the need to provide a cushion for workers who will be temporarily displaced by automation.) But the law also shows that the *Soviet bureaucracy prefers to revive limited private production for individual gain rather than reform its own deformed, corrupt system of social production and distribution*.

This fact alone shows how totally incapable is the bureaucracy of making basic change.

Fundamental Soviet change must arise from the workers. It cannot come from society's ossified top layer, which in a thousand ways defends the miserable status quo.



Any private production for private gain within a socialized system is dangerous. It legitimizes and reinforces the practice and reinforces the profit over social interests and socialized production, and it increases inequality and elitism.

There are other ways to meet consumer demands. Doing away with the bureaucrats' luxurious lifestyle would make a greater share of the national income available to workers. Attacking the stupidity and malfeasance (which created the illegal economy in the first place), by granting workers freedom to criticize and to make improvements without fear of reprisal, would help productivity and morale.

But the bureaucracy will never do these things.

Instead of "radical reform," Gorbachev offers only palliatives and dangerous stop-gap measures which hardly resolve the fundamental tensions between the haves and have-nots in the USSR. To implement such measures, the workers themselves will have to lead a political revolution *against* the bureaucracy.

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, Trotsky characterized the contradictions inherent in wars against bureaucratism initiated at the top:

In Soviet political literature you often meet with accusations of "bureaucratic" as a bad custom of thought or method of work. (The accusation is always directed from above downward and is a method of self-defense on the part of the upper circles.) But what you cannot meet anywhere is an investigation of the bureaucracy as a ruling stratum—its numbers and structure, its flesh and blood, its privileges and appetites, and the share of the national income which it swallows up. Nevertheless it exists. And the fact that it so carefully conceals its social physiognomy proves that it possesses the specific consciousness of a ruling "class"...

The many faces of Perestroika/glasnost

Perestroika—restructuring—is many things to many people. Gorbachev calls it "a revolution" involving "far-reaching, radical, uncompromising [measures] which affect the whole of society from top to bottom."

Hardly. It is actually a reform package which seeks to stimulate economic growth through competition for markets and profits among individual enterprises.

The pursuit of profits is now an economic life and death matter for 48,000 state enterprises where all the cost cutting and production-bolstering mechanisms of market economics make themselves increasingly felt. Piecework, speedup, wage cuts, layoffs and plant closings are being implemented as solutions to industrial sluggishness and anemic revenues. Enterprises that cannot turn a profit are allowed to go under.

Managers are expected to make profits and still be subject to the broad, complex framework of heavy-handed state planning. But economic planning is antithetical to market anarchy, and *the nationalized economy will be destroyed if perestroika is pushed too far*. Profits are a powerful stimulus to free production and marketing from planning imperatives.

Pressure for a free, capitalist economy will increase as Western entrepreneurs move in. They are allowed to assume 49% ownership of Soviet enterprises. Likewise, the state's monopoly of foreign trade—a cornerstone of nationalization and planning—is eroding dangerously by the practice of selected state enterprises contracting independently with Western firms.

The dangers are many. And perestroika without the proletariat's participation is doomed to failure. Two-thirds of the factory workers polled outside a plumbing equipment plant in 1987 by Soviet sociologists complained that so far perestroika has meant only more work.

A Ukrainian worker, writing to the Central Committee in May 1987, complained that Gorbachev's "radical reform" was just more official hot air: "We all vote yes, yes, yes for perestroika but something is lacking. The desire burns inside but when it comes out into the open, it is all smoke and no fire."

Soviet women initially favored perestroika over Soviet men, partly because cutbacks in vodka distilling have reduced male drunkenness, the number one cause of divorce in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev returned this support with exhortations to "Open the path to leadership to young people and to women," echoing Trotsky's famous injunction in the **Transitional Program**.

Gorbachev has no real intention of bringing women and youth into the leadership; the Soviet bureaucracy depends just as much for survival on women's continued second-class status as do western capitalists. And as the outlines of perestroika come more clearly into focus, women are looking with increasing disfavor upon it.

The new market economics—leaving enterprises to survive or fail strictly according to profitability—will put an estimated 15-20 million people out of work in the next few years. Hardest hit will be women workers, already the lowest paid, and overwhelmingly stuck in unskilled blue-collar positions. How to handle the impending crisis? In a country where unemployment has been virtually unknown, there exists no structure to deal with mass joblessness or the monumental task of retraining millions. Gorbachev's solution? Bounce women out of their jobs and back, fulltime, into domestic slavery.

Gorbachev is playing with fire. Soviet feminists' protests have escalated over the last decade against women's confinement to the lowest-rung jobs, the lack of childcare and health safeguards, rising infant mortality, and the fact that, 70 years after the revolution, they are still expected to keep house for nothing. Soviet women want *socialist* solutions, promised by the October Revolution, to the backbreaking drudgeries of existence. And they will not stand for regressive capitalist-style maneuvers made in the name of socialism that will only quadruple their misery.

Gorbachev's view that women's "mission" consists essentially in being wives and homemakers is not so far removed from Stalin's. Gorbachev echoes the "Father of Soviet Peoples" in yet another way as well: in his attitude toward Trotsky.

Glasnost/perestroika notwithstanding, Trotsky remains a persona non grata in official circles. Gorbachev expressed the bureaucracy's antipathy toward Trotsky in his November 2, 1987 speech commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. He vilified Trotsky as an "excessively self-assured politician who always vacillated and cheated," while Stalin made an "incontestable contribution to the struggle for socialism."

Despite the invective, Trotsky's rehabilitation has come a long way. He has been retrieved from non-existence. He now lives as an historical figure, even if his stellar leadership of the revolution is still suppressed in official circles. Millions of Soviet citizens lost family, friends and neighbors for alleged Trotskyism during Stalin's bloody purges. Their comrades and descendants are ever-eager to know the truth about this maligned man and his ideas, and for them perestroika/glasnost means a too-long-delayed reexamination of Soviet history.

Not all the ongoing re-evaluations are good news. Gorbachev is even more conciliatory toward imperialism than previous regimes. Among the phrases he employs to capture the essence of his new approach is "obshchaya bezopasnost"—mutual security. According to this nostrum, Soviet military security is based on a heavily militarized U.S. "Less security for the U.S. compared to the Soviet Union," he announces, "would not be in our interests since it would lead to mistrust



Armenian rally, February 1988: pushing the limits of glasnost.

and produce instability."

The corollary de-revolutions is striking. The new edition of the Communist Party program offers "profound sympathy" to those poor souls in the struggle against imperialism. Gone is the assurance of economic and military aid as in years past. At the 1986 Party Congress, Gorbachev signalled this backpedalling when he told party leaders, "It is inadmissible and futile to encourage revolution abroad."

Yet wars and revolutions convulse the world, with or without Russian aid. And Trotsky's ghost is not the only one haunting the Kremlin's walls; the spectre of 1917—of the revolution betrayed and beheaded—has returned to whisper the fateful words "socialist democracy." The bureaucracy can't survive in a democratic culture, but the Soviet system can no longer live without it. And therein lie both the fetters and the engine of glasnost/perestroika: the revolution envisioned by Gorbachev may be startlingly different than the one that the Soviet Union will experience.

A contradictory course

The caste-conscious bureaucracy has set out upon a dangerous path.

Too much democracy can backfire. Firmly and kicked the new liberalization seriously and kicked out their union leadership.

Too much pressure on workers to produce more without an increase in their standard of living can also recoil. In heavy industry, scattered strikes and work stoppages are reported over wages, working conditions and overtime.

Too much private production can create the social base for anti-socialist, pro-capitalist attitudes and political currents which will challenge the bureaucracy, whose power in the final analysis rests on a nationalized economy and socialized production.

Gorbachev's reforms may well turn out to be a Pandora's box which the Soviet middle caste will find very difficult to shut. Only a workers' movement, including intellectuals, writers, artists, and scientists, can wrest power away from the entrenched bureaucracy and complete a political revolution which will truly transform Soviet society.

Trotsky, the prophet, foresaw this development in *The Revolution Betrayed*:

It has happened more than once that a bureaucratic dictatorship, seeking salvation in "liberal" reforms, has only weakened itself... All indications agree that the further course of development must inevitably lead to a clash between the culturally developed forces of the people and the bureaucratic oligarchy. There is no peaceful outcome for this crisis. Not off he ever yet voluntarily cut off his claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The develop-

ment leads obviously to the road of revolution.

Peace and war

On the international front, the Gorbachev regime has launched the sophisticated "peace offensive" against the U.S., featuring a universally popular proposal to do away with nuclear weapons by the year 2000 (79% of Americans polled in February 1986 supported this), and a self-imposed, temporary ban on nuclear testing, lifted in December 1986.

Gorbachev is also building fences with China and strengthening ties with North Korea. And his regime is extricating their forces from Afghanistan, which Gorbachev calls "a running sore." Afghanistan costs too many rubles and too much bad press and internal grumbling.

The USSR occupied Afghanistan in 1979 to prevent pro-U.S., feudal-minded counterrevolutionaries from overthrowing the Marxist, pro-Moscow government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The Soviets obviously could not risk an entrenched U.S. presence along the 1000-mile Soviet/Afghanistan border.

Eight years later Soviet troops are still there, and although a pull-out has begun, it has generated antiwar sentiment in the Soviet Union and discontent among soldiers assigned to Afghanistan, especially Soviet Muslims. The occupation, moreover, is a terrible financial drain.

Afghani workers and peasants are also unhappy. They prefer to run their own country without foreign troops. But the Soviets—who bureaucratically remove one PDPA leader after another—have not been able to build the mass support for the leftist government which would enable the Afghani forces, without Soviet help, to defeat the rebels, who are led and armed by the CIA. Even so, without the U.S. aid that is funneled through the Pakistani dictatorship, the reactionaries would have to give up.

We defend the right of the USSR to self-defense against imperialist encroachment, which a counterrevolutionary victory would amount to. But we also criticize the Soviet Union for failure to mobilize local support against brutal reactionaries.

The politics of the situation are tricky. A Bolshevik leadership would explain to the world why its intervention in Afghanistan is progressive and internationalist. The Soviets *did* come to the aid of the government, which enraged Muslim fundamentalists when it redistributed land, legalized unions, outlawed child marriages, and taught women to read! But even when the bureaucracy, to defend its own interests, is forced to do the right thing, it refuses to explain its action to the workers of the world—for fear of further antagonizing imperialism, with which it strives to achieve an impossible peaceful co-existence.

The degenerated bureaucracy can't even justify the military presence of Soviet soldiers to Afghanis or to Soviet citizens, so how can it defend its liberationist policy to the world (as Trotsky did with Finland, and Fidel Castro does with

to next page



Cuban forces in Africa and Latin America)? Because it can't defend itself politically, the Soviet Union can't win militarily.

Hence, discretion and a pullout are the better tactics for Gorbachev in the short run, even though disengagement might set the stage for a later disaster.

The deepgoing contradictions of the Soviet ruling caste have seldom been so mercilessly tested and exposed.

Poland: crisis of leadership

Crisis and Opportunity asserted that "The Polish revolution fatally weakens the Stalinist monolith and inspires revolutionary proletarian activity in other workers' states and the West."

Hard times have befallen the revolution since martial law was imposed by the Jaruzelski government in December 1981.

The revolution has receded drastically from its high point. Solidarity has been driven underground by military/police repression; its ability to coordinate resistance at the national level has been straitjacketed and the leadership has become demoralized and paralyzed.

Nevertheless, the revolution is alive and reaching for higher ground. In April 1988, transit workers in north-

western Poland held a one-day work stoppage to protest the Polish version of perestroika—unilateral price hikes ranging from 40% for food staples to 100% for utility charges. This strike touched off the biggest wave of labor unrest since 1982 and revived the demand for legalization of Solidarity.

Polish perestroika without the input of the proletariat was decidedly unpopular.

Steelworkers at the massive Nowa Huta mill near Krakow were the heart and soul of this new revolt. They took over the steel works for more than a week, demanding legalization of Solidarity, amnesty for all strikers, and most importantly, doubled compensation for all workers and retirees to meet the price hikes. They surrendered only after the secret police led an assault on the mill and attacked the sitdown strikers with concussion and flash grenades. And even this unprecedented violence could not force the workers back to the job; many called in sick.

Inspired by Nowa Huta, shipwrights at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk mounted a sympathy strike and once again hung Solidarity banners from the famous yard's impressive gates. For nine days in May, they occupied the shipyards under the slogan "No freedom without Solidarity" and held on even after the steelworkers' strike was drowned in blood. Finally forced to give up by the cutoff of food and by daily military maneuvers at the shipyard gates, they defiantly told the press: "We are not leaving the shipyard in triumph. [But] we are leaving it with our heads held high, convinced of the worthiness and righteousness of our protest."

Solidarity is still fairly strong at the regional level. Students and opposition groups support it. Many factories retain elected workers' councils. Rank and filers respond to calls for strikes; before the April-May '88 strike wave, women workers conducted the largest and longest strikes of the past three years, with little help from the union leadership. And a large underground press with a huge circulation flourishes, featuring a raging ideological debate over prospects and direction of the movement.

Most significantly, an organized left wing is emerging in Solidarity that openly challenges the rightward-moving leaders. Trotskyist influence is felt; *Imprekor*, the Polish magazine of the Fourth International, has made significant contributions to the debate.

Political revolution is far from dead

in Poland. But it suffers from a crisis of leadership, reflected most tellingly in the vacillations, apathy, cynicism, and degeneration of Solidarity leaders. This degeneration assumes varying ideological forms.

Lech Walesa tries to stifle the revolutionary initiative of the masses and to accommodate the government bureaucracy. Some leaders, such as former Marxist Jacek Kuron, are rapidly sliding toward openly pro-capitalist nationalism. Both Walesa and Kuron oppose Solidarity trying to overthrow the bureaucracy and take power; they want to reform the government and negotiate a uniquely Polish "national compromise."

No wonder they have not been jailed.

Part of the loss of faith in the leadership can be chalked up to the relentless batterings of the past five years, their forced underground existence, jailing, persecution, and isolation from the ranks—circumstances that have aggravated the ideological weaknesses that plagued Solidarity's leadership from the outset.

Chief among these weaknesses is the tendency to equate workers state power with Stalinist repression, which then must be accommodated or replaced with a capitalist state.

This confusion in theory sharply threatens the revolution, for it fosters a virulent anti-Sovietism, followed by deepened Polish nationalism, anti-communism, reliance on the nostrums of the Catholic Church, and a rose-colored vision of the imperialist West.

Uncountered, these conservatizing influences in the leadership retard the development of an international proletarian consciousness, of realization that Stalinism is the product of world imperialist pressure, of an understanding that it is necessary to make common cause with the world's workers in an international and anti-capitalist—as well as an anti-bureaucratic—revolt.

Bereft of an internationalist perspective, Solidarity's leaders are left with a scenario that pits the unarmed Polish people—cheered from a distance by pro-capitalist "friends"—against the Polish bureaucracy backed by Soviet tanks. This chilling prospect ends in fatalism, despair, and a yearning to reach accord with the bureaucracy.

But accord is impossible. Workers democracy, and workers control over the productive forces, necessarily involves destruction of the bureaucracy. Forcible overthrow of the Stalinist regime, in a political revolution, remains the order of the day, and growing numbers of Solidarity radicals are reaching this conclusion.

The draft platform of the Workers Opposition, founded in 1985, and unaffiliated with Polish Trotskyists, attests to this grasp of political revolution as the only way out. This draft platform was worked out jointly by representatives of four underground newspapers, including the publication of the Provisional Coordinating Commission of the Miners of Solidarity in Upper Silesia. Says the statement:

The belief in the possibility of a compromise with the bureaucracy is already a dangerous illusion that can prove fatal... The overthrow of the bureaucratic regime can unfold in different ways. One way of rising up against the bureaucracy is a revolutionary general strike being transformed into an active strike supported by actions outside the factory. Only in such revolutionary conditions can one count on a part of the armed forces joining the working class, above all the rank and file soldiers, recognizing the

chances for success of the working class forces... We consider the seizure of political power as the instrument of the conquest and appropriation, by the workers, of economic power.

Fortunately, the ranks of Solidarity are not nearly as demoralized and confused as is their top leadership.

When the Prime Minister, General Jaruzelski, sold coal to Margaret Thatcher during the 1985 British miners' strike (thus helping to break the strike), Walesa made no official protest. But some of Solidarity's regional councils did, in particular the miners of Upper Silesia.

And when Walesa and other leaders called for a symbolic, 15-minute general strike against price hikes in 1985 and then canceled it at the last minute, Anna Walentynowicz (whose firing from the Gdansk shipyard sparked the 1980 rebellion) rallied workers to strike anyway.

She represents the progressive pole in Solidarity around which women workers, youth, and the rank and file rally to continue the battle.

No "historic compromises" for them!

It would be wonderful if the Polish workers had a Leninist/Trotskyist party to help them battle the Stalinist monolith. But they do fight on, searching for an ideology and strategy which will guide their quest for socialist democracy.

Political revolution in Poland—the apex thus far of permanent revolution in our time—may yet be the gravedigger of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste in Poland. And by infectious example, Solidarity will occasion a chain reaction in Eastern Europe and eventually in the Soviet Union itself.

The socialist/internationalist revolt against counterrevolutionary Stalinism will strike a death blow at the heart of the world capitalist system when it raises the glorious banner of a democratic workers state!

War in Indochina

Nowhere is Stalinism's counterrevolutionary role in world affairs more nakedly and shamefully revealed than in China's fomenting of war and strife in Indochina.

American bombers no longer rain their deadly cargo over Vietnam, and the famed Ho Chi Minh trail through Laos and Kampuchea is gone.

But to these war-ravished lands, the expulsion of the Americans did not end the fighting.

Today all three countries suffer military incursions or counterrevolutionary threats from an unholy, three-way alliance among China, the Thai military dictatorship, and U.S. imperialism. Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea are the unhappy butt of Chinese hatred for the Soviets (who provide aid to all three countries) and they are also victims of the Chinese bureaucracy's desire to curry favor with the U.S.

Vietnam and Kampuchea

100,000 Vietnamese troops entered Kampuchea in December 1978. In collaboration with 20,000 insurgent Kampucheans, they overthrew the despotic, psychopathic Khmer Rouge regime, which revolutionaries in their right mind could not have supported. The government was hated and feared by the people.

China retaliated two months later, dispatching 600,000 troops to despoil Vietnam's northern provinces. This attack followed Deputy Premier Deng Xiaoping's visit to the U.S. where he planned the raid with President Carter.

Again, in April 1984, China tried to seize territory within Vietnam. 10,000 artillery shells were fired across the bor-

der. This attack preceded President Reagan's visit to China by only a few weeks. Another assault was set in motion while Reagan met with Deng in Beijing.

In the fall of 1984, the Vietnamese uncovered a well-armed, counterrevolutionary ring operating inside the country and plotting to overthrow the government. Composed of officers, soldiers, and officials of the former U.S.-puppet Thieu regime, the cabal was supplied with money, guns and ammunition by China—and headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand where it consulted regularly with U.S. embassy officials.

Presently the Chinese and Thais finance and arm Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge guerrillas, who make up the largest military force in the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPLNF), a three-way alliance between Pol Pot, former Prince Sihanouk, and anti-communists. (In 1985, Congress authorized \$5 million in aid for the non-Khmer Rouge forces in KPLNF.)

The KPLNF operates out of Thailand and threatens to overrun Kampuchea if the Vietnamese leave. Kampucheans fear the return of the Khmer Rouge above all; there is no mass sentiment for Vietnamese military withdrawal. Demoralized and disoriented by the terror visited on them by four years of Khmer Rouge rule, they passively support the Vietnamese-installed People's Republic of Kampuchea.

The Vietnamese have made several offers to hold national elections that would exclude the Khmer Rouge, but all offers were rejected by the KPLNF. So for now, even after nine years, Vietnamese troops are the only alternative to another blood bath imposed by the right wing or the crazed Pol Pot forces.

Laos

A communist-led revolution triumphed in destitute, land-locked Laos in 1975, but it also suffered at the hands of the Chinese and their Thai cronies.

Since 1979, the Chinese have massed troops along the border with Laos and provided safe haven and assistance to reactionary Laotians seeking to overthrow the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The Thais copy the Chinese. The Vietnamese, on the other hand, have provided Laos with economic assistance, and with 40,000 troops to help protect the regime from the military raids and plots by Beijing and Bangkok.

China: war and workers states

The enmity that has existed between China and the Soviet Union since the 1960s is a by-product of the Stalinist

notion of "socialism in one country"—the addled belief that an advanced socialist society can be established in a single workers state, based on internal production and culture alone.

This is a utopian, nationalistic, immoral, and unattainable theory—anti-Marxist to the core—that was cooked up by Stalin to justify the self-interest of one workers state against another, or against the interests of revolutions abroad.

As China has proven, this anti-internationalist, economics-defying

policy can lead to war between workers states.

Self-concern and opportunism have fueled China's cheering for imperialist machinations in Southeast Asia—the antithesis of the solidarity and mutual assistance that should exist between workers states. China's old-type-Stalinist foreign policy has been a complete disaster for the revolutions of the region; indeed, compared to China, the Soviet Union and Vietnam play a more positive and progressive role.

Now comes Gorbachev who says he

Gorbachev is mending fences with China. The healing of the Sino-Soviet split would deal a severe blow to imperialism, whose world hegemony rests on anti-internationalism.



wants to heal the Sino-Soviet split, and plans to open talks with China on border disputes. The Chinese demand discontinuance of Soviet support for the Vietnamese as a condition for improved relations, and the Soviets are unlikely to comply. Nonetheless, there is a warming trend between the two countries, and should peace break out between them, it will deal a severe blow to imperialism, which depends upon anti-internationalism for its world hegemony.

Perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness) are now joined by the call for solidarity among workers states. It will come to be.

Europe, the British Isles, and Australia

Unrest and resentment seethe from sunny Australia to the frigid British Isles.

High unemployment, social service cutbacks, and attacks on labor yield a more bitter and militant harvest of protest with each passing year.

The December 1986 French student rebellion against cuts in education was the largest outpouring of French student protest since 1968, and drew considerable support from the trade unions.

Two months later, Spanish students in Madrid demonstrated and rioted over the higher education budget and tuition costs.

These uprisings are only the tip of the iceberg of discontent in Europe, the British Isles, and Australia which threatens to sink the ruling parties of these regions, whether left or right, which heed the bidding of the bourgeoisie.

Unrest in Europe

In the early 1980s, social democratic parties swept into power in France, Spain, Greece, and Sweden.

The hopes of the European working class soared as socialist leaders promised to make life better. Alas, conditions got worse. The social democrats administering capitalist states undermined labor's gains and earned the wrath of workers, the poor, and the unemployed.

Sweden's Olof Palme instituted three years of wage cuts after his party's 1982 election.

In 1985, the Andreas Papandreou government in Greece announced a two-year wage freeze and decreases in cost-of-living allowances—touching off a general strike.

In France, disillusionment is so profound with President Francois Mitterand's Socialist Party, and with the French Communist Party which joined Mitterand's government, that rightwing political parties have gained considerable ground in national elections.

Military adventures in Chad (Africa)—where Mitterand sent troops in 1983 and 1986 to protect French imperialist interests—further tarnished the regime's "socialist" image.

Ditto the Rainbow Warrior scandal which found French secret police blowing up a Greenpeace ship that protested French nuclear tests. An anti-nuke activist was killed.

Regardless of who is in power, there continue to be huge strikes throughout Western Europe and massive opposition to the spreading militarization of the region by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In Belgium, the conservative coalition government of Christian Democrats and liberals provoked a month-long series of general strikes in May 1986.

Led by public employee unions, the strike wave was ignited by newspaper reports that the government intended to cut the budget deficit by holding down wages and dismantling social services. When the ruling coalition announced its plan to abolish 28,000 jobs and slash funds for education, pensions, health and unemployment benefits, Belgian workers held the largest demonstration in the country's history.

And they were joined by enormous and enthusiastic contingents of feminists and peace activists.

In West Germany, labor put up a terrific, though unsuccessful, fight in 1984 for the 35-hour week. An October 1985 rally attracted 650,000 protesters against the austerity measures of the Christian Democratic/liberal coalition

government. This was followed by a work stoppage in December 1985 involving one-half million workers. The issue: a government proposal to undermine the right to strike.

The West German anti-nuclear movement still rallies tens of thousands, despite occasional storms of police violence.

Danish workers have also tackled their Thatcher-type government headed by Paul Schlueter. In the spring of 1985 they held immense demonstrations and a de facto general strike after parliament outlawed strikes.

Britain

Thatcher's Tory government has met stiff resistance, most notably in the 1984-85 British miners strike.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) led a heroic, year-long battle against Thatcher's plans to close coal mines and lay off thousands. Nothing deterred them—not police terror, the deaths of two members on the picket lines, the jailing of hundreds of miners and their supporters, the despicable betrayal of Labor Party leaders who condemned the strikers' violence, or the cowardly sell-out by Trades Union Congress officials who refused to call a general strike.

The NUM held out month after month, built strong international support, and returned to work unbowed, unbroken and only temporarily halted.

Out of this epic battle was forged a new alliance between the miners and other victims of Thatcher. Women, Blacks, lesbians and gays, and radicals gave the strikers unstinting support, in marked contrast to the treachery of some labor leaders and unions.

Women Against Pit Closures, a national organization working closely with women from mining communities, was critical in helping to keep the strike going. This heroic role of women prompted Peter Heathfield, NUM general secretary, to observe, "The whole movement should learn that in struggle, if you have got the family, the women, behind you, then you can become a formidable force."

In a show of solidarity, NUM was one of the few organizations within the Labor Party to back the demands of women and Blacks for formal, minority caucuses.

More and more, females, people of color, unemployed youth, take the lead against Thatcherism.

Blacks and young people, especially young women, predominated at a quarter-million-strong demonstration in June 1986 against Thatcher's support to South Africa.

In the 1986 general elections, Black Labor Party candidates won three times the number of positions they had held in the past.

British reporter Alexandra Manning Sheffield, commenting on a strike by newspaper workers against press baron Rupert Murdoch, wrote in the September 10, 1986 U.S. Guardian, "The dispute has generated tremendous energy, and the role of women workers has been even more decisive than in the miners' strike."

The Guardian also reported that Ken Livingstone, a Labor Party leftist and former Greater London Council member who won widespread admiration from his working class constituency for fighting Thatcherism, summed up the achievements of the Council as follows:

In the long run, moving the equal opportunities debate center stage—through our policies on lesbians and gays, Blacks, women and people with disabilities—that will be the thing most likely to transform Britain.

The increasing radicalization in the country terrifies the Labor Party leadership. In a frenzy to prove their loyalty to

British capitalism, they have mounted a witchhunt against the Left. They expelled Trotskyists, a leading advocate of autonomous Black caucuses, and a member of the Labor Committee on Ireland.

But persecution of political minorities will not save the Labor Party. Like it or not, the party will either respond to the rising tide of anger among those bearing the brunt of capitalist decay or it will be totally discredited.

A Labor Party that in effect endorses Thatcherism is worse than useless or treacherous. It is dead.

Ireland

In the not-so-United Kingdom, the 1985 Anglo-Irish agreement between Thatcher and Irish Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald touched off the worst violence in Northern Ireland since the mid-'70s.

Protestant fanatics are up in arms because the agreement allows the government in the south to "put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland" at regular intergovernmental conferences.

But mechanisms for implementing these "views and proposals" are sketchy

Numerous Australian unionists see that the Prices and Income Accord is nothing but a shabby deal between the bosses and labor's middle caste. A Left-led fightback movement is taking hold. As in Britain, the capitalist crisis is causing a right/left split in labor.

and the agreement is anything but a program for reunification of north and south.

However, for the neofascist proponents of a divided Ireland and British tutelage over the six counties of the north, the agreement is cause for murder, mayhem and mob violence against the Catholic minority.

And Thatcher is trying to sell the Anglo-Irish agreement to Protestant loyalists on the grounds that north-south cooperation will strengthen border security and help step up the fight against the IRA and the Irish Republican National Liberation Army.

Meanwhile, Irish radicals and political exiles are being handed over to the British by the U.S. and Western European nations to stand trial for "crimes" committed in the struggle to free Ireland.

Meanwhile, the Thatcher government is escalating its crimes against the Irish people. In March 1988, three Irish nationalists were shot dead by British special agents on the British crown colony of Gibraltar. The British justified the murders in their usual way, claiming that the victims had been plotting a car-bomb attack outside the Governor's residence. A Spanish eyewitness, however, said the killings looked like a summary execution. And British authorities afterward were forced to admit that the Irish had been unarmed and that their car had contained no explosives.

The admission was nonetheless followed by stepped-up British terror, including the shooting of an unarmed Catholic by a British soldier at the cross-over point between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

Thatcher's government meanwhile refused to investigate the Gibraltar murders.

The British terror upsurge provoked a Catholic riot in Belfast in March, as hundreds of youths battled cops, injuring seven.

In addition to terror, Thatcher is seeking new ways to smother the Irish rebellion: censorship of media coverage of the IRA in the "United Kingdom." Not long after the celebrated "Spycatcher" ruling, wherein British law courts ruled that the government couldn't ban a book detailing British Security's efforts to destabilize and destroy the Labor govern-

ment in the mid-'70s, Thatcher announced that advocates of armed anti-British struggle in Ireland could no longer be interviewed on TV or radio. It now appears that the IRA and Sinn Fein will be written out of historical documentaries on Ireland.

This censorship is but a spate of repressive moves on Thatcher's drawing board. The day after the censorship ruling, the government sandbagged an age-old cornerstone of British law by striking the right to silence for "crime" suspects. It appears as well that this reversal—now applied only to Northern Ireland—will be extended throughout Britain this year.

The war against the Irish is, as ever, also a war against the British people.

These latest efforts to stamp out the Irish struggle will fail, as have all others in the 800-year history of the rebellion.

The Irish revolution for national liberation and reunification will not go away. Not until victory.

Australia: an anti-labor Labor Party

In Australia, a Labor Party government was elected in March 1983. New Premier Bob Hawke immediately set

about implementing the Prices and Income Accord reached between the Labor Party and the Australian Congress of Trade Unions (ACTU) shortly before the election.

In exchange for wage restraints and "labor peace" by the unions, the Labor government promised improved living standards through expansion of social programs, tax reform, price controls, and other measures.

At the same time, according to the labor bureaucrats, the Accord would breathe new life into the ailing economy by raising profits and thereby encouraging business to expand investments and create more jobs.

The Accord has borne predictably bitter fruit: labor is held in check while prices climb and wages and living standards erode.

Unions which have broken the Accord and gone on strike—like the Maoist-led Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) and the Food Preservers Union—have to stand up to withering denunciation and savage attacks by both ACTU conservatives and the Labor Party.

BLF union organizers have been jailed for "trespassing" on construction sites. Union leader Norm Gallagher was convicted of corruption, the union was deregistered in three states, and members who refuse to join the phony, ACTU-endorsed Building Workers Industrial Union have been driven off work sites by battalions of cops dispatched by the Labor government. In the fall of 1987, union financial records and funds were seized by the government in an attempt to dismantle the organization.

No wonder an exuberant Liberal Party member in Victoria told his colleagues in the state parliament that he liked the Labor Party's role. Said he, "If a Labor government can do that, imagine what a conservative government would be able to do!"

Labor Party style union-busting has caused outrage from most Australian leftists and many feminists, lesbians and gays. Numerous unionists are beginning to see that the Accord is nothing but a shabby deal between the bosses and labor's middle caste. A Left-led "fight back" movement is taking hold across the country; regional and national conferences are being held to discuss ways for anti-capitalist activists to resist the rightward drift of the labor leadership.

As in Britain, the capitalist crisis is causing a right/left split in labor and creates fresh opportunities for radicals.

Government rollbacks

The Hawke government has earned the nickname of "razor gang" for its deep cuts in social services and Reaganesque

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budgetary policies.

Funding for affirmative action, childcare, multi-cultural education, and English-as-a-second-language courses has been slashed. As usual, women, Blacks, and migrant workers suffer most, and they have fought back.

In 1985, the federal government announced massive funding cuts for childcare centers. A well-organized campaign, culminating in a mass meeting of 1000, forced the government to hastily restore the funds on an interim basis.

Also in 1985, the Women's Social and Political Coalition, an umbrella socialist feminist organization, launched an all-out effort to stop the Labor government from introducing regressive tax measures. The Coalition organized a public education and pressure campaign around its own proposals for higher taxes on business profits and capital gains, and a more equitable personal income tax. Feminists, labor, and welfare rights organizations joined forces on the issue and won a significant victory.

The government dropped its consumption (sales) tax measure and implemented a capital gains tax instead.

More and bigger protests against "razor gang" cuts can be expected. Public employees especially are feeling the effects of austerity measures and will doubtless emerge onto the front lines of resistance to the rollbacks.

Aboriginal rights

Black aborigines are fighting for improved health care and a decent welfare system.

Suffering the highest unemployment and mortality rates in the country, the super-oppressed, indigenous minority struggles for survival.

The aboriginal rights movement, however, increasingly focuses on the demand for sovereignty and self-determination, and a nationwide campaign to expose the racism of the legal system and police brutality. (The Black imprisonment rate is 10 times higher than that of whites; in western Australia, the rate is 20 times higher.) In the last five years, numerous Black prisoners, women and men, have died in custody, some of them murdered by their jailers.

The Sydney-based Committee to Defend Black Rights has taken up the fight against these murders and official coverups and wrist slapping of the cops. In mid-1985, the Committee conducted a national speaking tour by relatives of the murder victims and received widespread support from people of color, migrants, feminists, and radicals.

Left/right splits

The polarization within the labor movement is echoed in other social movements.

Among lesbians/gays, some men are

moving to the right, while lesbian activists are moving leftward. Many once-radical gay men have renounced feminism in their drift toward single-issue male chauvinism.

Government support for AIDS education and for gay service organizations has played a role in this regression; former political activists with cushy jobs in the public health bureaucracy don't want to make waves on other issues which might jeopardize their privileges.

However, as some gay men move rightward, and out of politics, many lesbians are becoming more politically active, playing leading roles in a multitude of social struggles and international solidarity movements.

Associated with this development is the rapid decline of radical feminism/lesbian separatism, which replaces politics and struggle with mysticism and superficial cultural events.

Socialist feminism, by contrast, is on the rise. And the once amorphous, ill-defined movement which called itself socialist feminist is undergoing a polarization. On one side are those who orient toward the reformist union and Labor Party bureaucracy in order to achieve women's liberation; on the other side are women disillusioned with leadership sell-outs and looking for radical analysis and revolutionary feminism.

Within Australian socialist feminism, only Radical Women fits the bill for leadership.

Special role of Radical Women

The fledgling Melbourne RW branch has already established an impressive record of dedication to principle and energetic attention to every vital feminist issue—abortion, childcare, pornography, comparable worth, and many more. RW furnishes important support to the Black movement, especially Melbourne's Aboriginal Rights Solidarity Group.

The branch has worked in numerous areas affecting lesbians and gays in Australia and worldwide. In 1985, RW came to the aid of New Zealand lesbian/gays fighting to decriminalize male homosexual acts and win anti-discrimination protections for lesbians and gay men.

RW organizer Alison Thorne's stirring speech on decriminalization, delivered on a picket line in front of the New Zealand consulate in Melbourne, was reprinted by the gay press in the U.S., Canada, and New Zealand.

RW has established close ties with such solidarity groups as the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, Australia Aid for Ireland, and Australia-East Timor Association, which supports the 11-year-old national liberation struggle against Indonesian occupation of East Timor.

RW has won high respect from serious radicals and feminists for its unstinting work in the Labor Party and the

teachers union. And women will be increasingly attracted to the organization as disgust rises with the Labor Party record of capitulation.

In Australia as elsewhere the only road to women's liberation is socialist revolution.

A glass half-full

What is so remarkable about the state of the world is not the ruthless depravity of the tyrants and overlords, but the exciting fact that *everywhere* the dictators and bureaucrats are countered by fierce opposition from the people of the planet.

It is often a blood-drenched struggle. The suffering meted out by a convulsing system is immense. And it is taking capitalism too damn long to go the way of the dinosaurs. But power never conceded anything without a struggle, and the most powerful system the world has ever known will not go down to defeat easily or gracefully.

But what mighty phalanxes gather across the earth to defeat it—to disarm the warmongers and strip the bankers of their portfolios and power! To jail the jailers and free the political prisoners! To seize the factories and offices, the galleries and museums, the fields and mines, the banks and airlines, the media and the movie studios, so that those who produce wealth and culture may enjoy it! To outlaw privileges for every elite that has ever lorded it over the unlucky and the outcast and the rebels!

Liberty, justice, plenty, and freedom to create are the goals of the human race. No wonder the bourgeois counter-offensive is so relentless.

The glass of world revolution is half-full, not half-empty. And it is getting fuller all the time. Even as we chafe under the slow tempo and delayed timetable and flubbed chances, we have rich grounds for confidence and revolutionary optimism. Revolution, like biological evolution, is inexorable. It has to be—it is a law.

Marxists respect this law.

Notes to the Text

1. The Federal Reserve System (popularly referred to as the Fed) was created by Congress in 1913. It regulates 6000 federally chartered banks, which control 85% of total bank deposits. The system is overseen by a Board of Governors, appointed by the U.S. president and approved by the Senate, and consists of 12 District Reserve Banks and their branch offices. The chairman of the Board of Governors reports regularly to Congress, but Congress does *not* set monetary policy for the system; this is done by the board and the district bank presidents.

The Federal Reserve System issues the country's paper currency. It also controls the supply of money that banks have for making loans. The system sets the discount rate—the price member banks pay to borrow money from the district banks in the system—and expands or curtails the reserve assets that banks keep as the source of their loans. When the Fed increases bank reserves or lowers the dis-

count rate, falling commercial interest rates are the result.

2. Ernest Mandel, "The Beginning Recession," *International Viewpoint*, October 13, 1986. By "industrial goods," Mandel apparently refers to consumer goods as well as those goods produced by heavy industry (steel, rubber, auto, etc.).

3. The GNP is the total market value of all goods and services produced during a year. It is the most comprehensive measure of a nation's economic activity.

4. A transaction where a small group of investors buys a company's stock with mostly borrowed money, often obtained by borrowing against the assets of the targeted company itself.

5. Interview with Michele published in French Trotskyist newspaper *Rouge*, October 1985.

NEXT INSTALLMENT

The next and final installment of "Towards the '90s" examines the problems, progress, and potential of the U.S. labor and social movements. It documents the increasingly impatient struggles of workers, people of color, feminists, and lesbians and gay men against exploitation and inequality; describes the growing left/right polarization in the imperialist heartland; and shows how new leadership is emerging to challenge the tenure of movement bureaucrats and sellouts.

Hoddersen and Fraser also discuss the fights for democracy and left politics in the antiwar/antinuke campaigns and evaluate the state of human rights and civil liberties in the "land of the free."

Flowing from their analysis of the U.S. scene is the authors' assessment of the tasks and perspectives facing the FSP in the period ahead. They urge the strengthening of the party and its sister organization, Radical Women, through intensive theoretical education and recruitment. Other priorities include winning the Freeway Hall Case, sending delegates to Nicaragua, running candidates for public office, building a dynamic antiwar movement, working toward a labor party, and launching a united front against reaction.

The resolution concludes by affirming the necessity and feasibility of socialist revolution in the USA.

Where to find the FSP

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles: 1918 W. 7th St., #204, Los Angeles, CA 90057. 213-413-1350.

San Francisco Bay Area: 180 Diamond St., San Francisco, CA 94114. 415-626-6182.

NEW YORK

New York City: 32 Union Square East, Rm. 307, New York, NY 10003. 212-677-7002.

OREGON

Eugene: 29 Thomas, Springfield, OR 97477. 503-726-0094.

Portland: 1510 N.E. Brazee, Portland, OR 97212. 503-249-8067.

WASHINGTON

Port Angeles: 512 E. 7th, Port Angeles, WA 98362. 206-452-7534.

Seattle: National Office, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98118. 206-722-2453.

North Branch, 1931 E. Calhoun, Seattle, WA 98112. 206-722-3812.

South Branch, 6021 S. Redwing, Seattle, WA 98118. 206-725-5009.

Tacoma: P.O. Box 5847, Tacoma, WA 98405. 206-851-2165.

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne: P.O. Box 266, West Brunswick, VIC 3055. 03-386-5065.

The FSP is a revolutionary feminist organization dedicated to the replacement of capitalist rule by a genuine workers' democracy guaranteeing full economic, social, and political equality for women, people of color, gays and all the exploited and oppressed.

Socialist Feminism— LIVE from our BOOKSTORE!

1988 National Convention Documents

A. "Towards the '90s: Approaching the Final Conflict,"

Vols. I and II, Draft Political Resolution by Guerry Hoddersen and Clara Fraser. An exhilarating trip around a world on the verge of revolutionary explosions. Charts the accelerating disintegration of capitalism and how oppressed peoples on six continents are rising to reclaim the earth. \$8.00

B. "On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State," Draft Reso-

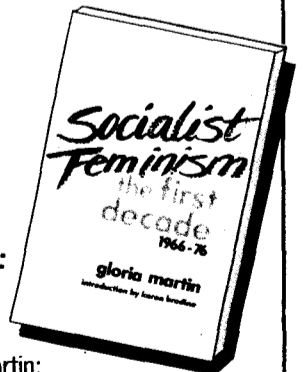
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