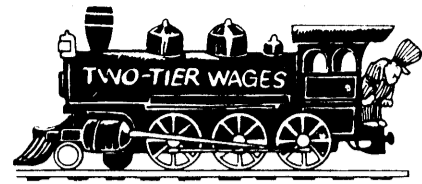


# A Socialist ACTION

Railworkers under attack



Special story: See pp. 4-5.

NOVEMBER 1986 Vol. 4, No. 11 50 cents

## U.S. gov't spreads "Big Lie" to prepare public for war

By CARL FINAMORE

The "Big Lie" is being spread around pretty thick these days. The government is trying to convince the people in this country, who are facing a bleak economic future, that what we need are guns, guns, and more guns.

It started with a government "disinformation" campaign to brand Libya as a

**More on Nicaragua, See page 9.**

base for terrorism. This was closely followed by hollow U.S. denials about CIA involvement with the North American aircraft that was shot down in Nicaragua while on a contra supply mission.

The finale came when President Reagan claimed at the Reykjavik meeting with Premier Mikhail Gorbachev that his pet project, "Star Wars," was a simple defensive system deemed just as harmless as "radar."

Behind the recent lies

The *Washington Post* quoted a government memorandum on Libya which advised planting false information that "combines real and illusionary events—through a disinformation campaign..."

Secretary of State George Shultz saw nothing wrong in lying because, quoting Winston Churchill, "the truth is so precious, it must be attended by a bodyguard of lies." Shultz's peculiar philosophy didn't impress his press secretary, Bernard Kalb, who resigned to maintain his "credibility."

The second instance of government

(continued on page 9)



Oct. 25, 1986: Over 2000 demonstrate for Jobs, Peace and Justice in San Francisco. Similar marches and rallies occurred in cities across the country to oppose U.S. intervention abroad and poverty at home.

## Aquino opens door wide to U.S. big business

By SEAN FLYNN

Eight months after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, the regime of Corazon Aquino shows little sign of breaking the

Philippines' subordinate relationship to the United States. Mrs. Aquino's September visit to the United States confirms this.

On the eve of her meeting with Ronald Reagan, the Philippine Constitutional Commission hand-picked by Aquino overwhelmingly passed a draft clause which would allow the government to renew the leases for U.S. military bases in the country, subject to a plebiscite.

And in an address to the U.S. Congress, the Philippine president pledged she would take up the "sword of war" against the Communist Party-led New People's Army (NPA) if a ceasefire was not forthcoming.

Equally reassuring to the United States are Aquino's assurances to honor the Philippines' \$26 billion debt—of which \$14 billion is owed to U.S. banks. Moreover, the Philippine government is offering foreign capitalists the prospect of "less government interference in the economy," as a multi-page ad in the Sept. 19 *New York Times* declared.

Backing up these promises, the government has announced plans to privatize numerous companies absorbed by the government during the Marcos years. More than 30 companies in manufacturing, banking, and shipping—with assets of some \$1.67 billion—are up for sale.

While many of these companies were taken over in an attempt to bail out financially-strapped Marcos cronies, others were seized from anti-Marcos capitalists in order to undermine their economic power. The government's "fire sale" thus represents a redistribution of wealth within the Philippine ruling class.

The Aquino government's open-door policy for big business has received due notice in Washington. A *New York Times* headline declared that "Reagan offers Aquino wide support," while a consortium of 483 U.S. banks agreed to lower the annual payments owed to them. And after some debate, the U.S. Congress authorized an additional \$200-million aid package to the Philippine government.

Rifts in the government

Last February, Marcos' defense chief, Juan Ponce Enrile, joined with Aquino and her running mate, the strongly pro-U.S. Salvador Laurel, to form a government capable of riding the crest of "people power" and outflanking the Communist Party (CPP) and other components of the workers' movement.

In recent weeks, despite Aquino's success

(continued on page 10)

## Hormel strike points to need for labor party

By MILTON ALVIN

In August 1985, meatcutters in Austin, Minn., were forced on strike against the Hormel Company. The results of their struggle are not yet in. Despite a new contract that was approved on Sept. 12, the strikers are still fighting to get back their jobs—as well as to form a new union.

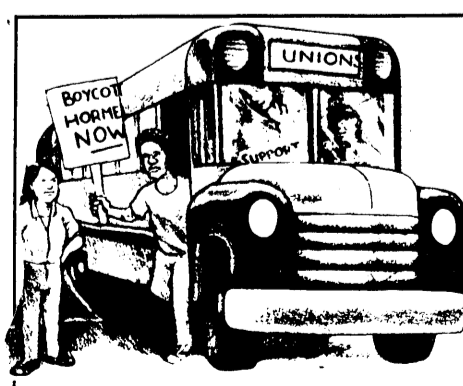
Nevertheless, two main lessons of the strike have emerged up to this point.

The first lesson is that a militant working-class struggle, no matter how "local" in its origins, is capable of producing a tremendous display of labor solidarity.

The Hormel strikers received unprec-

edented support from unions all over the world. This outpouring of labor solidarity

(continued on page 6)



What we stand for, See pp. 7-10.

# Duarte cries crocodile tears



By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

The vicious nature of capitalism in El Salvador was revealed most openly during the recent earthquake.

Over 200,000 were left homeless as their houses collapsed around them. Nine working-class neighborhoods in the capital city of San Salvador were over half destroyed.

The Salvadoran rulers and their U.S. backers cried crocodile tears about the desperate need of the people. But the truth is that most aid was given to the upper-class neighborhoods—which have suffered the least damage.

Water, electricity, and telephone service were restored to the wealthier districts within two days. Weeks later, on the other hand, thousands of poor people continued to sleep in the streets. Medical teams encountered long delays in trying to obtain necessary supplies from government bureaucrats.

"It's bad, it's very bad," Claude Mahoudeau, an official of the French relief organization Doctors Without Borders, said on Oct. 12. "There is no coordination and no government help in the poor areas."

When some government aid did

arrive, a week or so later, much of it was disbursed by the infamous Treasury Police, widely known for its corruption and its ties to right-wing death squads.

The Salvadoran daily *El Diario de Hoy* commented on Oct. 19 that despite the rising numbers of sick and hungry, "tons of plastic tenting and all kinds of provisions are piling up in [municipal] warehouses."

The Archbishop of San Salvador, Arturo Rivera y Damas, harshly criticized the failure to provide greater relief services to the poor: "What is most apparent, without offering lectures on social class, is that the poor neighborhoods of the marginal zones are those that suffer most and are those that show the precarious conditions, often inhuman, in which our people live."

### Mud shacks

A stark picture of those inhuman conditions was given by James Lemoyne in the Oct. 13 *New York Times*. His article from the Comunidad Modelo neighborhood starts off:

"The people of this miserable warren of mud shacks have been promised by the government that it will help them rebuild from the earthquake that swept away their homes and buried their loved ones on Friday morning. But tonight, as the rains of a violent thunderstorm added to their misery, they found it hard to believe that the promise would be kept any time soon."

"Comunidad Modelo," Lemoyne pointed out, "is one of the dozens of poor neighborhoods that circle the capital city of San Salvador, housing thousands of refugees from the war and the

urban unemployed—people who provide the most recruits to the guerrillas."

These working-class ghettos have suffered the most from the earthquake largely because of the appalling condition of their ramshackle housing—often slapped together from pieces of tin. The impoverished residents are often compelled to construct their shacks on mountainsides. When the earthquake hit, the shacks slid down and were buried in a mountain of mud and debris.

Typically, these communities have no running water, no health care, and least of all, any influence that could bring

government aid in this emergency.

Lemoyne stressed that El Salvador "is a highly stratified society, in which the richest live in walled homes in beautiful neighborhoods and the poorest in squalid canyons such as this one. Thus, the lack of help from the more affluent appears as notable as the absence of help from the American-trained and American-financed army."

"There are no volunteer soup kitchens or clothes distribution centers in Comunidad Modelo," Lemoyne continued. "The only apparent service was a crude clinic on the back of a flatbed

truck, manned by teen-agers from the local Boy and Girl Scouts."

### Stepped-up bombing

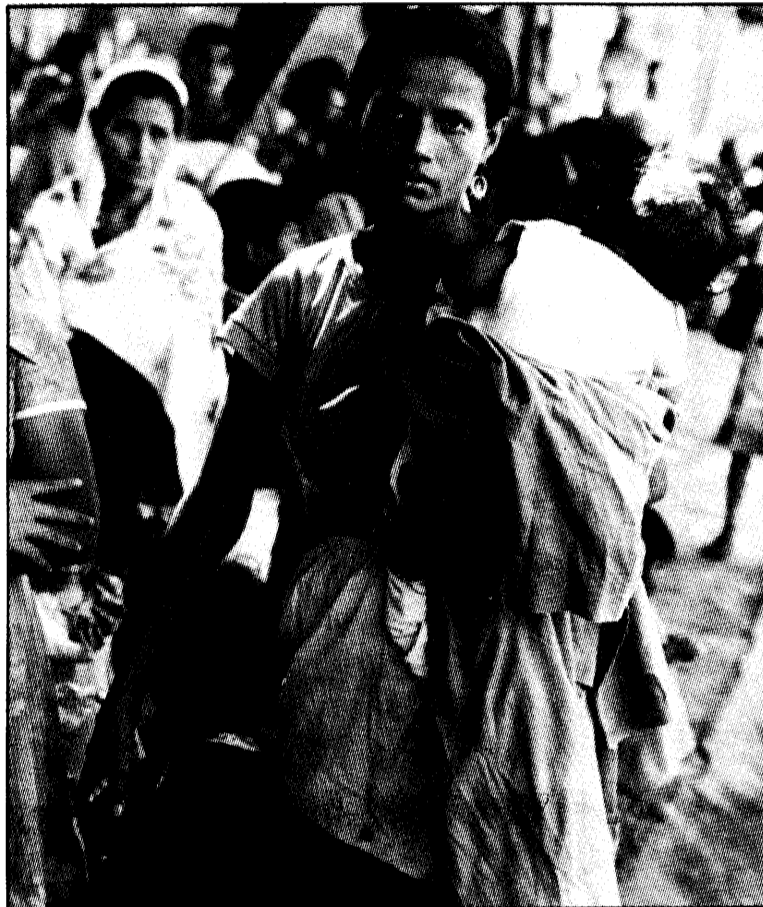
Immediately following the earthquake, left-wing guerrilla groups declared a unilateral cease fire in order to aid rescue operations. But their offer was rejected by President Jose Napoleon Duarte. The government responded instead by stepping up aerial bombing raids on areas of the country deemed sympathetic to the rebels.

For over a week after the quake, Salvadoran military forces kept a notable distance from rescue sites. "In a daylong tour of disaster areas," *The New York Times* reported on Oct. 13, "not one soldier was seen helping people dig out their homes and relatives. Two officers said the army was busy providing security."

Clearly, the 50,000-man Salvadoran army is not there to protect and help the victims of the earthquake, but to guard the wealthy from the poor.

The military of El Salvador, like the contras of Nicaragua, are financed by the United States to protect the investments of U.S. capitalists—as well as their local capitalist junior partners. Their job is to jail, torture, and murder the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua who are determined to fight for their independence and for a better life.

These events following the earthquake shed more light on the lies of the U.S. capitalist government, which maintains that it supports "freedom fighters" in these countries. They are butchers bought and paid for with our taxes and sent to murder the real freedom fighters. ■



## Why workers should oppose drug testing

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

Do we really enjoy the right to privacy in the United States? Not if the Reagan administration's plan for mandatory drug testing of workers comes to pass.

The administration's plans fly in the face of a large body of law, from the Constitution itself (the Fourth Amendment prohibits unreasonable search and seizure), to hundreds of state and local restrictions on governmental invasion of individuals' rights to privacy.

At a recent public forum sponsored by

### SAN FRANCISCO

Banquet and rally to wind up Sylvia Weinstein's campaign for Board of Supervisors.  
Music and dancing.

Sat. evening, Nov. 1,  
3435 Army, Rm. 308, S.F.  
(415) 821-0458

10th anniversary commemoration of the death of Carlos Fonseca, Nicaragua Cultural Center,  
Nov. 8,  
3021 24th St., S.F., Calif.  
Tel. (415) 824-6292

Socialist Action, Joan Braconi, a program coordinator of the Institute for Industrial Relations at the University of California at Berkeley, gave three big reasons why drug testing is an invasion of privacy that workers should not allow:

1) The employer, Braconi stated, can gather "unauthorized information about the medical condition of an employee from the blood or urine sample taken for a drug test, opening a 'chemical window' through which the employer may peer into the private lives of individuals."

The boss can learn if you are pregnant, are genetically predisposed to a particular disease, have AIDS or other disease, and much more.

2) The tests are often inaccurate, Braconi pointed out. For example, the Enzyme Multiplied Immunoassay Test (EMIT), widely used by employers because it is cheap, has a "false positive" rate of 25 percent to 65 percent.

Many factors can contribute to a false positive test. For example: codeine, a common pain-reliever, can "look" like heroin in urinalysis because it metabolizes in the body into morphine like heroin does.

Quinine, a common adulterant in heroin, (but also found in tonic, soft drinks, and over-the-counter medications), found with morphine in urine is a strong indicator of heroin use. So the ingestion of codeine and quinine "looks" like heroin use.

Procaine penicillin, a prescription drug, looks like the procaine used to adulterate

cocaine. And some tests for marijuana use are so sensitive they come up positive for a person who may have just been in the same room where someone else was smoking marijuana.

And as if non-white people didn't already have enough problems, drug testing adds this: Melanin, the substance responsible for skin color is also found in the urine and it appears to trigger false positive responses for marijuana use. Blacks, who obviously have more skin color—more melanin—will test positive at a higher rate than white people.

3) Drug tests, according to Braconi, do not test a person's ability to perform their job. Urinalysis tests for *past*, not current drug use. And the length of time the drug can be detected in the urine can vary with each individual depending on fluid intake, metabolic rate, kidney function, food intake, and other factors.

Even so, the approximate detection time for certain drugs is very revealing: Alcohol—12 hours; heroin—24 hours; barbituates—38 days; cocaine—18-144 hours; marijuana—120-720 hours.

In other words, drug testing gives the employer another weapon to be used against workers, even though the "offense" might have no effect whatsoever on job performance and might have taken place a month earlier.

Why is the government pursuing a policy which so blatantly violates rights to privacy already written into law? First, it allows the bosses, who are pushing for increased productivity by decreasing the workforce, to blame the workers for the accidents caused by safety cutbacks.

Second, drug testing is a handy method for harassing workers the boss would like to get rid of, such as union militants, organizers, radicals, and whistle-blowers.

Cutbacks of the workforce in dangerous

jobs leads automatically to increased accidents. Train derailments are way up since rail cutbacks began. The employers have blamed these accidents on the workers, accusing them of being "under the influence" of drugs and alcohol. And now they do this with the bipartisan blessings of the government. ■

## Socialist ACTION

**Closing date: Oct. 25, 1986**

Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN  
Asst. Editor: MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Staff: Paul Colvin, Suzanne Forsyth, May May Gong, David Kirschner, Hayden Perry, Joe Ryan, Carole Seligman, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: DON MAHONEY

*Socialist Action* (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$6 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

RATES: For one year (12 issues)—U.S. 2nd Class: \$6, 1st Class: \$9; Canada and Mexico 2nd Class: \$9, 1st Class: \$12; All other countries 2nd Class: \$12, 1st Class: \$24. (Canada money orders or checks should be in U.S. dollars.)

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialist Action*. These are expressed in editorials.



By JOE RYAN

# America's homeless: A capitalist legacy

You see them everywhere. Walk around any big U.S. city and you can see them in soup-kitchen lines, sleeping in parks, cars, doorways, and movie houses. They are one of capitalism's fastest growing populations: homeless Americans.

Contrary to the official line that the U.S. economy is going through a "recovery," millions of Americans are experiencing the horror of being deprived of the most elementary human right—the right to shelter.

In 1984, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated that as many as 350,000 people are homeless on any given night. The National Coalition for the Homeless, however, accuses HUD of *underestimating* the numbers, indicating that close to 3 million people will experience some form of homelessness during the year.

Not since the Great Depression of the 1930s have there been so many homeless Americans on the street.

In the last analysis, these legions of homeless people are the legacy of plant closures, unemployment, cuts in social services, and the lack of available low-cost housing.

## Who are the homeless?

In a report titled "The Rise of the New Urban Homeless," published in the October-December issue of *Public Affairs Report*, Professor Richard H. Ropers presents a study that is a scathing indictment of the ravages of capitalism in America today.

Today's "new urban homeless," Ropers states, have a far different composition than the homeless of 20 years ago, who represented a much smaller portion of the population. He continues:

"As a group the new homeless are younger than previous 'skid row' homeless populations that were dominated by individuals in their fifties and sixties. The current average age of the homeless population is between 36 and 38 years..."

"Women are still a minority among the homeless, representing 20 percent of that population, although in the past they may have constituted only about 5 percent of the homeless."

Ropers points out that Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans are "over-represented" among the homeless—a major change from the past.

"Twenty years ago," Ropers states, "at least 90 percent of the skid-row homeless population were white." But today, "in New York City 86 percent of the shelter population are non-white, in Los Angeles they are 51 percent of the homeless, and in Dallas 47 percent. Homeless Blacks constitute the largest and most over-represented minority group."

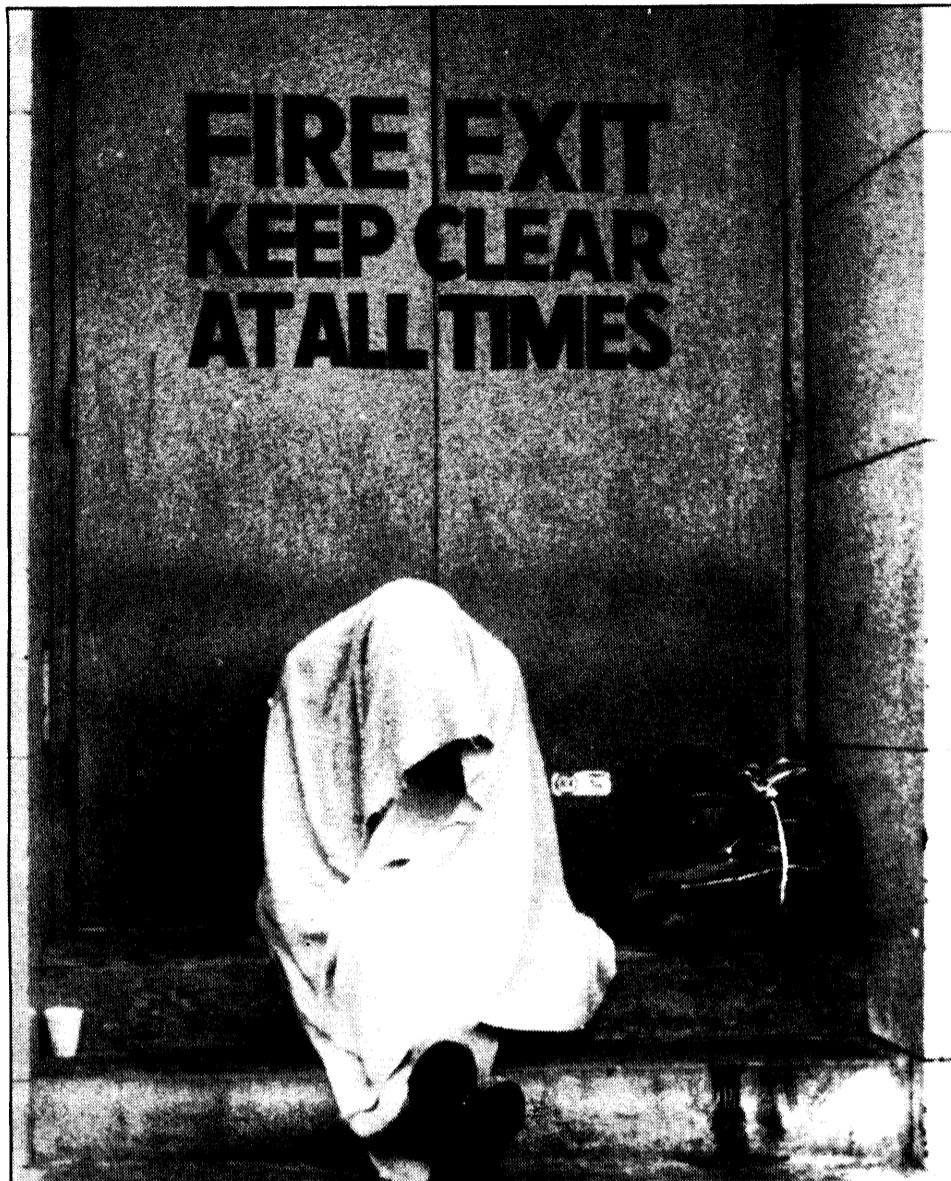
Unlike the popular stereotype of the homeless as "bums" or "hobos," many of today's homeless are unemployed workers who are actively looking for work. Some of them, in fact, are employed full-time or part-time, but their wages are too low to pay the exorbitant rents that prevail in all large cities.

"Such working homeless," Ropers continues, "constitute 20 percent of the homeless in Los Angeles, and 29 percent in Chicago. In New York City, 44 percent of the homeless males are looking for work, and in Los Angeles 50 percent are looking for work."

Today's homeless include whole families, with single female-led households pre-dominating. A survey conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 1985 found that 28 percent of the homeless are families with children. Half of homeless males are veterans; one-third of them Vietnam vets.

## Capitalism can't solve crisis

The inability of capitalism to deal with this social blight is also well documented by Professor Ropers. Only 111,000 beds in emergency shelters are available for the government-estimated 350,000 homeless. "Twenty thousand of these beds," Ropers says, "are held for certain populations:



**"...as many as 350,000 people are homeless on any given night."**

12,000 for runaway youth, and 8000 for battered women."

The U.S. Conference of Mayors survey, which was conducted among 25 major cities, indicated that in most urban centers the demand for emergency shelter increased by 25 percent in 1985!

Furthermore, the survey revealed that most of the cities expected increases in shelter demand in 1986. Most ominous for the future, the conference survey concluded: "In none of the cities...has the economic recovery lessened the problems of homelessness."

The responsibility and blame for this social cataclysm rests squarely with the capitalist class. The corporations and their political representatives—the Democratic and Republican parties—have been on a merciless campaign to increase the rate of private profit by *increasing* the rate of misery for American workers.

In this context, the pauperization of so many millions of workers and oppressed people is a *conscious* bipartisan policy. That is why the U.S. Conference of Mayors could do no more than sound the alarm about the scale of homelessness—but could offer no solutions.

## Declining living standards

Since the end of the post-World War II economic boom in the 1960s, the standard of living of American working people has been declining. In the 1970s alone nearly 38 million industrial jobs were permanently lost due to "restructuring." Plant closures, mergers, buy-outs, and

mass lay-offs have set the stage for the big increases in unemployment, poverty, and homelessness.

Cutbacks in government financed social service programs were the *coup de grace* for many people—especially the elderly and single-parent households. Subsisting on fixed incomes, these people were already on the brink of permanent hunger and homelessness.

For instance, in the Social Security Disability Insurance program alone, the tightening of eligibility criteria led to the exclusion of 150,000 to 200,000 former recipients between March 1981 and April 1984. Of the estimated 8,134,000 unemployed in 1985, only one in three received unemployment benefits.

Over 35 million Americans now live below the official poverty line. Combined with this is the fact that virtually no federally financed low-cost housing has been built since 1960, and rents increased 101 percent between 1970 and 1979.

## Capitalism's march for profits

Because of competition, overproduction, and shrinking world markets, the capitalists have no choice but to increase their profits at the expense of working people and the oppressed. This means that although the workers produce the whole pie, the meager slice that they receive in terms of wages, benefits, and social programs will continue to grow smaller.

The social cost is readily apparent on every big-city street: an ever-growing caste

of pariahs who have no place to call home. It can be stated with certainty that "the new urban homeless" are going to be a permanent feature of contemporary life in capitalist America.

## Homeless begin to organize

The vast majority of America's homeless population did not *voluntarily* put themselves on the street. In many cities the homeless and poor are fighting back by organizing to press their own demands. Coalitions—like the Philadelphia/Delaware County Union of the Homeless—have been formed to organize around demands for housing, jobs, medical care, and social services.

These organizations, which have received support from some trade unions, could eventually evolve into a massive unemployed movement. Building such a *national* network of the unemployed, poor, and homeless is a basic prerequisite for an organized and effective fightback.

But the key to reversing current trends is the role the trade unions will have to play in this fight for social justice. The poor and homeless will become powerful allies of the labor movement if they see the unions championing their demands for jobs and housing. An example was the labor upsurge of the 1930s where the strong bonds forged between the unemployed leagues and the CIO made it almost impossible to break strikes by hiring the unemployed to be scabs.

On the other hand, if the labor movement—which is currently dominated by a self-seeking and short-sighted bureaucracy—ignores the poor and homeless, then these declassed and desocialized people will become enemies of the trade unions.

The "reserve army" of unemployed, poor and homeless that capitalism consciously creates can, and will, be used to break strikes and lower wages. For that reason alone, the union movement *must* formulate a program for these victims if they are to turn them into labor's allies.

In addition, the vast majority of the poor and homeless come from the working class. Their desperate situation is the result of setbacks the union movement has suffered over the last 20 years. Therefore, it is in the interests of the union movement to not only address the problem of poverty and homelessness, but to take action to eradicate the *cause* of the problem, which is capitalism.

## A program for the unions

The trade unions, organized in their *own* political party, will be able to implement a social program that will give both political and social clout to the struggles of the homeless. Only through the political instrument of a Labor Party, based on the unions and open to all the oppressed, can working people pose solutions to the misery they see intensifying all around them.

Some of these solutions would include: A public works project for full employment; reduction of the work week ("30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay"); massive construction of high quality low-cost housing; rent not to exceed 10 percent of a person's income; and all wages at union scale—with the money coming from the abolition of the war budget.

Until the U.S. labor movement begins to fight on these questions, on the shop floor, in the streets, and in the political arena, the situation will only get worse. That's the unavoidable logic of capitalism.

In the meantime, millions are becoming victims of a system that would rather fund "Star Wars" than meet pressing human needs.

# Railworkers face union-busters



Socialist Action

By J.D. CRAWFORD

There are big events taking place in the railroad industry. From all indications, we could be headed for one of the largest labor confrontations of this century, possibly culminating in 1988 when key rail contracts come up again.

Management obviously sees a historic opportunity, not just to get some concessions, but to smash the rail unions and to pose the possibility of a fundamental change in the relationship of class forces in this country.

The ruling class is particularly interested in targeting the transportation industry. It is not coincidental that it destroyed PATCO, the air controllers' union, in one of its key moves.

This is a heavily unionized industry, with hard-won union wages and working conditions. But the rail unions in particular have become weak. There have not been large nationwide rail strikes in which the existence of the unions were challenged since the 1920s.

The unions are organized on a craft basis, facilitating the companies' attempts to pit one craft against another. In addition, there is a growing gap and hostility between the membership and the top leadership of the rail unions. All these elements make the rail industry a good entry point for the capitalists to step up their attacks against the working class as a whole.

## The post-war boom

Coming out of World War II, the U.S. capitalists saw what they called the "American Century" opening up before them. They were a little overly optimistic on how long this would last, but for the next 20 or 25 years U.S. imperialism did completely dominate the world capitalist market.

In recognizing that possibility, one of

## Memoirs of a Radical Rank & Filer

by Ben Stone

The story of one who turned radical during the Great Depression and was a militant, rank-and-filer, through the '40s, '50s, and '60s. Today, in his seventies, he marches to the same drummer.

Price: \$7.95. (189 pages)  
Send check or money order to:  
Prometheus Press, Box 318 Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028

the things the capitalists wanted was a stable transportation system, free of disruption either from competition or strikes. They were willing to trade a general rise in the standard of living of transportation workers for a period of labor peace so as to exploit their domination of world markets.

A structure already existed for this development through the Railway Labor Act of 1926, which was also extended to the airlines. The Railway Labor Act established a mediation board appointed by the president to affect a settlement of labor disputes. Strikes are prohibited during the mediation process.

A few largely sham strikes did take place on individual railroads. The companies

abandon or change their service.

The employers made an early test run of their new strategy when they broke the unions on the Florida East Coast (FEC). The railroad cut out all passenger service, reduced its workforce by some 70 percent, and obtained severe work-rule changes.

The union officialdom called the Florida East Coast defeat "an aberration." But the attitude of management was revealed by an article that appeared in the May 8, 1978, issue of *Railway Age*, a magazine for management.

"There is no reason why the industry could not do exactly what we've done," FEC President Winfred Thornton explained in *Railway Age*. He outlined a program for breaking the unions that is now being

## "Management sees a historic opportunity not just to get concessions, but to smash the rail unions..."

made no attempt to get workers to cross the token picket lines put up by the unions. Eventually, the disputes were settled through mediation and government intervention. None of the settlements were designed to really attack the unions or attack the fundamental standard of living of the employees.

And so, the functioning of the unions became one of hustling votes for the Democratic Party in return for "fair treatment" under the Railway Labor Act.

None of the union officials ever had to organize a real strike. The idea of being faced with a situation where the rail carriers would attempt to run scabs across a picket line was as foreign to them as the possibility of the moon crashing into the earth.

But the rules of the game began to change with the end of the economic boom in the early 1970s. The employers saw that it had become necessary to neutralize the unions and drive down the standard of living of the working class. They made plans to pull out of national bargaining, develop a system for recruiting scabs, and work to pit the crafts against each other.

The government backed up the railroads' anti-union drive. In 1980 Congress passed the Staggers Act. Under the guise of "deregulation," the act swept aside all legal restrictions on the railroads' ability to

adopted point for point by every major railroad in the country.

Several other preliminary struggles took place. In December 1977, a phony bankruptcy was set up on the Milwaukee Road. Huge concessions were imposed on the workers. Crew sizes were reduced, a wage rate was imposed lower than the national scale, seniority rules and work rules were broken, and different crafts were combined.

A key figure in the Milwaukee Road bankruptcy was a young lawyer named John Riley. In reward for his services, Riley was made head of the Federal Railway Agency—the government agency that supervises safety rules on the railroads. He then immediately brought about a massive change in safety rules to allow speedups with a huge deterioration of safety.

## The 1984 contract

What has been the response of the top union officials to these attacks? A look at the voting on the 1984 United Transportation Union (UTU) contract will shed light on what their plans are. (The contract was actually signed in late 1985, 18 months after the contract came due—normal procedure in the rail industry.)

The contract was rejected on the first vote, despite the fact that rank-and-file members don't get to vote on the contract.

They don't even elect the general chairmen who do vote on the contract. And any general chairmen who did not vote or whose ballots arrived late were counted as having voted "yes."

On the second ballot, the top leadership was able to twist a few arms and obtain a narrow contract approval—thus avoiding a national rail strike.

While the second vote was taking place, a week before the results were known, the new edition of the *UTU News*, the newspaper of the United Transportation Union, came out. It did not have a word on the situation, not a word of advice on what to do if the contract was voted down, not a word on the possibility of a national rail strike.

Instead, almost the whole issue was devoted to an attack on the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) and the "Lake Erie Plan," which the BLE had put forward as a proposal after the first contract was voted down.

Although the Lake Erie plan was a very bad proposal, it was practically identical to the contract that the UTU had proposed. Both accepted a two-tier system, reduced crew sizes, and other disastrous work-rule changes.

There was only one real difference. The reduced crew size under the BLE plan would consist of an engineer and an assistant engineer. The reduced crew size under the UTU plan would consist of an engineer and a brakeman/conductor, who would be a member of the UTU.

## The unions' raiding campaign

The top union officials believe there is nothing they can do to prevent the railroads' demands for speedup and reduced wages. They accept as unavoidable that the number of rail workers in this country will be reduced to about 50 percent of the present work force.

But the officials realize that reduced memberships will increase the difficulties in maintaining the huge salaries of the union officialdom. Many top rail union officials receive \$100,000-plus salaries. As a result, these top officials have begun a cannibalistic raiding campaign to obtain members from the other craft unions.

But their problems will not go away. The 1988 contract negotiations are going to be entirely different than in 1984. On the Burlington Northern, for instance, the head of labor relations says openly, "We're pulling out of national bargaining. All the major railroads are doing that. We're going to bargain railroad to railroad."

"There have to be fundamental changes," Burlington Northern tells its workers. "If we can't come to an agreement with the unions after what we consider a reasonable length of time, we're going to present our final offer directly to you employees. Those of you who want to accept our offer are welcome to work here. Those who don't—maybe you can do better in another industry somewhere else."

Despite the inability of top union officials to challenge the companies' attacks, there are signs of a fightback

(continued on next page)



Socialist Action



(continued from previous page)

among rail workers. At the recent national convention of the BLE, the union president and almost the entire leadership were voted out, an unprecedented event. The top salaries were also significantly reduced across the board.

### The Guilford strike

An important struggle has been taking place on the Maine Central Railroad, where Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way workers were forced to go on strike in March 1986.

The Maine Central is owned by Guilford Transportation Industries, which also owns the Boston & Maine and the Delaware & Hudson railroads. Guilford's owner, Timothy Mellon, is one of the richest men in the country.

Mellon apparently had some kind of deal in the works to purchase a 1000-mile piece of ConRail and catapult himself overnight into one of the major rail owners in this country. But as part of the deal he had to show the government that he could smash the unions on his three railroads.

Two years before the strike began, Guilford hired professional strikebreakers to come in and write a white paper outlining their tactics in the upcoming struggle. The white paper suggested that the company break the smallest local on the most isolated carrier and then extend the process throughout the system.

The white paper also advised selling off branch lines to non-union operations. This tactic is being carried out on major railroads throughout the country.

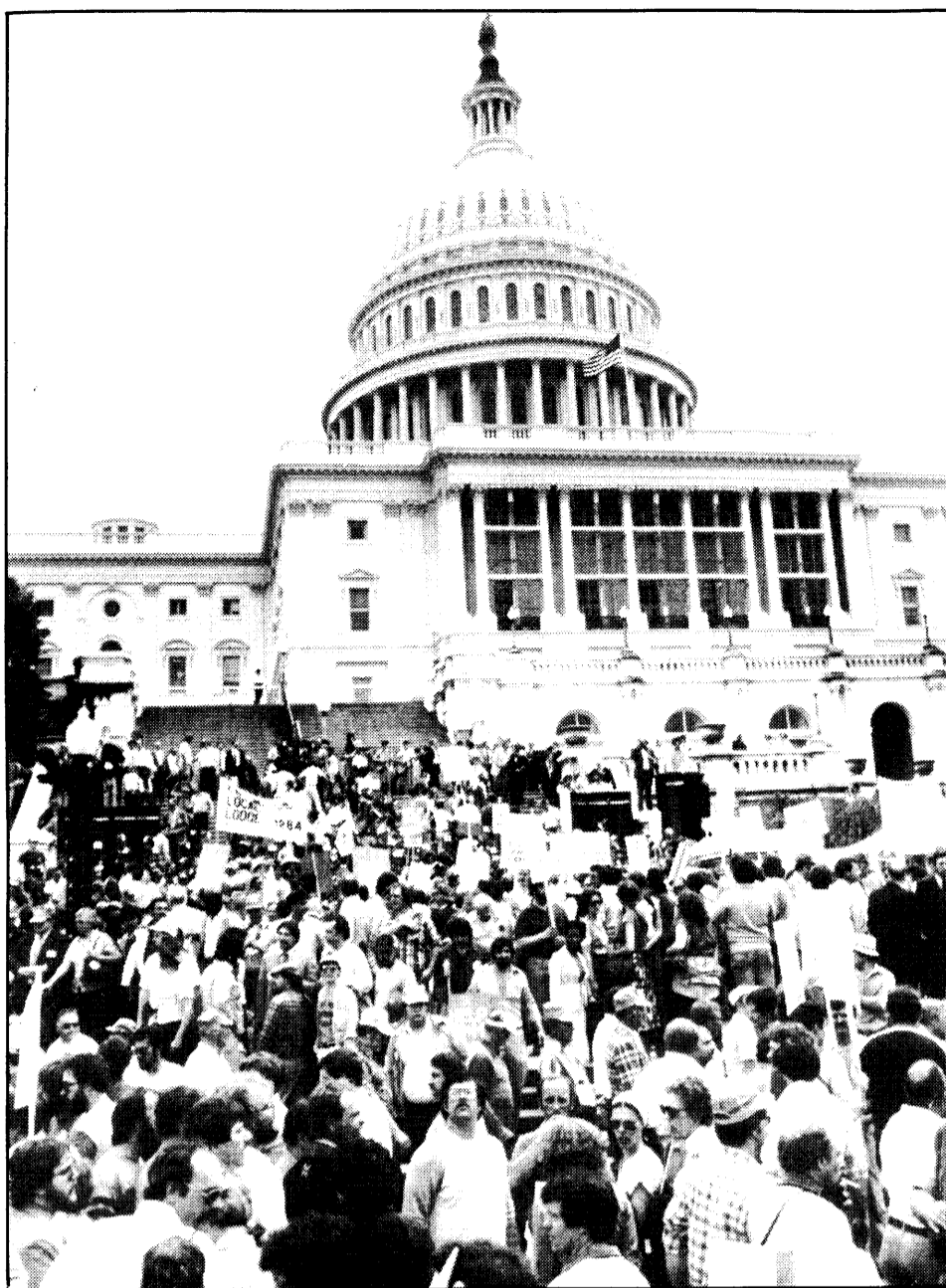
These branch lines are usually completely phony setups. The big railroads provide all the financing. Sometimes they don't even sell it, but lease it for a dollar. The branch line then becomes a pocket of non-union labor designed to be used against the core railroad when management wishes to move to smash the unions there.

### Solidarity among the crafts

The Guilford workers surprised everybody—including the international union leadership. There was almost solid support for the Maintenance of Way strikers. None of the other crafts crossed the picket line.

The membership on its own, with no direction from the international, went out and organized a whole series of demonstrations. A little town like Waterville, Maine, had a demonstration of 2500 people. Support activities culminated in a big labor demonstration in Boston.

The response of the international union leaders, on the other hand, was horrible. Their whole strategy consisted of a



May 27, 1982: Over 20,000 railworkers demonstrate in Washington, D.C., against cutbacks in ConRail and Amtrak.

campaign to beg Reagan to intervene to impose a settlement. But Reagan wasn't interested. It seemed that, given time, the company had a chance to smash the union.

Guilford began to fly in scabs from other places around the country. Money, personnel, and equipment were funneled to Guilford from six other railroads. The major railroads saw it as a test run for 1988.

The strikers pointed to the Railway Labor Act, which says that if other railroads give direct aid to a railroad that is on strike, they can legally be included in the strike action. A judge ruled in their favor, and picket lines were set up at ConRail.

As soon as the picket lines went up, the ConRail workers walked off. Two hours after the ConRail strike started, Reagan came in and ordered the workers back to work for a protracted "cooling-off period."

The union officials are still trying to project this as a victory. But the railroad companies are more far-sighted. They have begun a campaign to plug up the loopholes in the Railway Labor Act so strikes cannot be spread "legally." Their strategy for 1988 will focus on a plan to isolate the unions from railroad to railroad, to provoke strikes, and to break the unions one by one.

The carriers have already achieved a great deal of success in scuttling any union protection under the Railway Labor Act, both in Congress and in the courts. The Supreme Court, in fact, has just agreed to hear a suit by eight major railroads to declare provisions of the Railway Labor Act allowing unions to strike other railroads unconstitutional.

### Fightback at Burlington Northern

In 1981, after the Staggers Act was passed, the Burlington Northern (BN) railroad set up a holding company to separate the railroad out from the coal, oil, lumber, and other property it had received through government land grants. It was a device to siphon funds away from the railroad and served as part of its preparations to smash the unions.

Some of the rail locals on the BN decided to initiate a court suit against the holding company. In the Twin Cities, Minn., an organization called the Intercraft Association of Minnesota (ICAM) was set up to help support the suit.

A number of rank-and-file unionists and

local union officers became involved in ICAM and organized other activities—such as a rally of 500 people that included workers from all the crafts and other trade unionists.

The suit was defeated, but ICAM was revived about two-and-a-half years ago, when Burlington Northern launched a huge propaganda campaign calling for "corporate-culture committees" to organize direct talks between management and the workers. This was really a move to set up a shadow company union.

ICAM responded with the first issue of its newspaper, *Straight Track*. The newspaper explained what "corporate culture" was. It went into the history of the so-called quality circles in Japan, and how they were used to break the unions in that country with the help of the U.S. Army occupation forces.

Rail workers took issues of *Straight Track* on the road with them. Hundreds of workers on the BN and other railroads wrote back to the editors, stating, "You're saying the things that have to be said and done."

### BN sacrifices safety

While this was happening, massive job cuts were taking place. In a year, Burlington Northern cut its workforce from 55,000 to about 35,000. This was done in a direct sacrifice of safety.

As a result of the cuts, three head-on collisions took place around the time ICAM was being reactivated. One collision took place just north of the Twin Cities in a little town called Motley. It involved two coal trains running on a single-line dark territory. Dark territory is track that is not signalled—a 19th-century track in the 20th century.

The movement of the trains on dark track is completely controlled by the dispatcher through train orders. The company had cut all the operators who used to back up the dispatchers and catch any errors. At the same time, it had cut the number of dispatchers and located them all in the Twin Cities, where they were dispatching in territory 100 or 200 miles away that they had never even seen.

In the past, a new dispatcher worked with experienced dispatchers for up to six months. The company slashed that time to a few weeks. In the Motley incident, a new dispatcher was on his second day on the job by himself. He made a mistake and there

was no operator to catch it, and two trains went into each other.

The Burlington Northern immediately accused members of the two train crews of being under the influence of alcohol. They dug the bodies out of the burning coal and announced that they had alcohol in them. The charges were backed up by John Riley, head of the Federal Railway Agency (FRA).

### ICAM defends workers

*Straight Track* launched a big campaign defending the train crew. The newspaper pointed out that one of the three dead men was even a teetotaler. ICAM organized a picket line outside the federal government's offices that demanded the FRA retract its charge that the workers were drunk. Meanwhile, with few exceptions, the international leadership of the unions did nothing.

Pressure brought by the dead men's UTU locals and ICAM forced medical and federal authorities to admit that whatever alcohol was in the bodies was the result of decomposition under the burning coal. The Motley accident won a great loyalty among rail workers for ICAM.

ICAM later organized another successful protest against charges of alcohol and drug abuse among Burlington Northern workers. ICAM played a role in encouraging a suit against the railroad's use of "drug-sniffer dogs" against its employees. ICAM also put out a brochure warning of the dangers of trains carrying nuclear wastes across the country.

When it looked like a national strike might take place after the contract vote last year, ICAM called a meeting and pointed out that the union had to prepare itself in advance. The meeting proposed a full mobilization and laid out a plan of getting all the crafts down to the picket line, regardless of which craft was actually on strike.

### "Solidarity in action"

ICAM describes itself as a coalition of unionists on Burlington Northern that has come together to address new policies implemented by management:

"ICAM promotes the broadest participation of all rail workers in their respective unions and solidarity in action between all rail unions in pursuit of our common goals.

"ICAM recognizes the importance of full cooperation between rail unions on different roads. Finally ICAM points to the need for rail labor to reach out in solidarity to other sectors of the labor movement as well as to those in the general public whose lives are deeply affected by our industry."

ICAM members explain that their coalition is not and should not be a substitute for the existing unions. ICAM cannot negotiate contracts. ICAM is a device for mobilizing people to go to their own union meetings and begin transforming their unions and to coordinate activity between all the unions.

It is clear that ICAM and *Straight Track* provide a big opportunity for rail workers. ICAM is the type of organization that can begin to lay out a correct strategy for how to fight back against the attacks of the employers and the government. ■

## Guilford strike is settled

By ART LECLAIR

PORTLAND, Maine—President Reagan signed into law a joint House-Senate resolution imposing a settlement of the six-month-old contract dispute between the Maine Central Railroad (MCR) and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees.

The bitter strike was the result of the flagrant union-busting schemes of the MCR's parent company, Guilford Transportation Industries of Billerica, Maine, and its owner Timothy Mellon, heir to the Mellon bank fortune.

The terms of the settlement include a 6.5-percent wage increase and payment of up to \$26,000 in severance pay to all track workers laid off since the strike began on March 3. But the settlement also includes "greater flexibility of crew assignments" and the loss of up to 800 jobs of workers who were laid off last July.

As this chapter of Guilford's anti-labor assault comes to a close, those close to the scene will not soon forget the true spirit of solidarity which was forged during the fight.

Without question it was the show of strength and support by all the unions which helped the BMWE hold off the vicious attacks leveled against them. ■



ICAM picketline at Federal Bldg. in Twin Cities in defense of killed railworkers.



Local P-9, in addition to fighting Hormel, also had to contend with betrayal by UFCW International leadership.

## ...Hormel lessons

(continued from page 1)

resulted from the manner in which the strikers and their union, Local P-9, sought their objectives—their firm stand against the company and its allies.

Workers everywhere were inspired by what this local of only 1500 members was able to do. And it was no small matter that they persisted in their struggle despite the opposition of the national leaders of their union, the United Food and Commercial Workers, who withdrew financial and other support they had given in the early stages of the strike.

The international leaders went so far as to sue in court to oust the elected leaders of Local P-9. But backed by a majority of the union membership, the local leaders fought on and are still fighting. They deserve to win.

### Government intervention

The second important lesson of the strike has received far less attention—despite its

great importance. This lesson may be drawn from an analysis of the interference of government institutions in the strike.

First, Austin police, using tear gas, intervened to help the company and oppose the union. Second, courts and judges who presided over them were unalterably on the side of the company and against the union. Their decisions, injunctions and so on, reflected their bias on every occasion.

Third, the power of the courts was shown by the jailing of strike leaders and others. Fourth, the National Guard, which is supposed to defend citizens from danger, was used to intimidate strikers, to restrict picketing, and to act in a manner that left no doubt about where its sympathies lay.

Fifth, Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich, a member of the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party, presumably elected with support of unions and their members, actively took the side of the company and not those who had voted for him.

When Perpich called out the National Guard, he succeeded in proving once again

that Democrats are no use whatever to workers in their struggles with employers. (In Minnesota the Democratic Party uses the name "Democratic Farmer-Labor Party," reflecting the takeover of the old Farmer-Labor Party years ago.)

### A sordid history

This record of government support to the Hormel Company did not attract very much attention, perhaps, because people are accustomed to this sort of thing whenever workers go on strike and show a certain amount of fight.

Throughout labor history, government officials and agencies have always sided with the capitalists—never with the workers. No one can find examples in which police came to a picket line formed by strikers in order to defend them against scabs.

No one knows of judges who issued injunctions against a company whose workers were out on strike. Or judges who put capitalists in jail.

The example of the head of the Montgomery-Ward Company during World War II, photographed as he was physically carried out of his office when he defied government "seizure" of the company, was so exceptional that it made front-page news everywhere. It did little or no good to the workers, in any event.

### National Guard killings

The National Guard has often been called out to intervene in strikes, but without exception, these instances have found the Guard on the side of the bosses. Many times killings were the result of this kind of intervention.

Even students on a campus were not safe from shooting by the National Guard at the time when opposition to the war in Vietnam was expressed on campuses all over the country. In 1970, three were killed at Kent State University in Ohio.

So many instances of government support to capitalists and against workers can be found that a fat book would be required just to list them. Even President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who has been made

a saint by union leaders (and by Stalinists), turned his back to striking workers time and again.

In one example, when 10 workers were murdered by Chicago police in the 1937 Republic Steel strike, Roosevelt responded to mineworkers' leader John L. Lewis's appeal for help by answering, "A plague on both your houses."

This infuriated Lewis, then CIO president, and he broke with Roosevelt. Unfortunately, Lewis then went over to the Republican Party instead of calling for a labor party.

### Build a labor party

The time to raise a demand for a labor party based upon the unions is now, when the lessons of the Hormel strike are fresh in the minds of many workers and union members. Educational work along this line is essential. It should not be delayed for a moment.

Those who convinced workers by the millions to vote for Democrats or Republicans—and this includes almost every top union leader in the United States—stand guilty of betraying their trust. The action of the Minnesota governor shows that only a political party that really represents the working class can be trusted with support from workers.

If a labor party is not organized, if workers continue to support and vote for Democrats or Republicans, repetitions of the Hormel experience are inevitable.

If it had not been for intervention of government institutions in the strike, the meatcutters' union would have won a victory long ago. As the labor song put it, "We are many—they are few."

The lessons of the Hormel strike are clear: Workers need a labor party to defend themselves from the violence of the bosses and capitalist state power.

Since the workers are the majority and also the sole producers of society's needs, they must organize themselves politically, win state power, and set things right. In the final analysis, they will do no more than recover stolen property as well as their rights. ■

By MARIE WEIGAND

LORAIN, Ohio—On Oct. 18, United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Locals 1104 and 2354 hosted a march and rally here in support of the workers locked out by USX since Aug. 1. Local 1104 President Al Pena estimated that 5000 to 6000 people showed up to express their opposition to USX's union-busting at-

ttempts. Hundreds of steelworkers from the locked-out USX mill in Lorain came with their families. Two busloads of steelworkers came from Cleveland. A bus brought LTV pensioners from Warren, Ohio. Several USX steelworkers from Pittsburgh and Gary, Ind., participated.

There were also large delegations from area auto plants. The building trades were well represented in the march. There were also teamsters, rubber workers, government workers, and workers from many other local unions. A three-piece band from the Musicians Union led the way.

As the demonstrators marched past the huge USX mill, they voiced their encouragement to the pickets by chanting "hold that line." When the protestors reached the main gate, they began singing "Solidarity Forever."

Throughout the three-mile march, on-lookers expressed their solidarity. Passing motorists honked their horns and displayed "V" signs or clenched fists. A fire engine sounded its alarm in support. Residents came out of their homes to wish the marchers luck.

The opening speaker at the rally, USWA Local 1104 President Pena, reminded those

## Rally boosts support for USX workers

from other unions that they can expect to face the same corporate attacks. He added, "But I'll be damned if they'll get by the steelworkers in Lorain."

Pena described the effective picket-line action that prevented USX's attempt to use scab supervisory personnel to ship steel pipe on Sept. 21 and 22. Although 50 workers were arrested over the two-day period, they successfully prevented steel from leaving the plant.

Before Sept. 21, the steelworkers had allowed supervisors free access in and out of the plant. However, once these supervisors began doing the bargaining-unit work of shipping steel, they were no longer allowed in and out of the plant.

The company went to court demanding an injunction limiting the number of pickets and guaranteeing its access to the plant. Its attorneys were able to gain a temporary injunction that limited the number of pickets to five per gate and guaranteed supervisors access to and from the plant.

But to the company's shock, the injunction also prohibited supervisors from doing bargaining-unit work and stated that any customer wishing to remove steel purchased prior to Aug. 1 had to receive permission from the judge and then remove it themselves.

Workers recognized that it was their militant picket line defense which forced this unusual court order. Since then, a new court order permitted one customer's order to be shipped. The order stated that union members would have to be brought back to work under the contract provisions in effect prior to the lockout to ship any additional orders.

USWA International Vice President

(Administration) George Becker explained the issues that have kept 22,000 steelworkers locked out since Aug. 1. "Money isn't the issue," he said. "It's job combinations and contracting out. Not only your dignity, but thousands and thousands of your jobs are on the line."

Becker explained that the cash flow generated by Marathon Oil, a USX subsidiary, is being used to finance the lockout. He urged demonstrators to spread the message to every Marathon customer that their money is being used to starve out steelworkers.

United Auto Workers Union Region 2 Director Warren Davis pledged his union's total support stating, "We understand that your fight is our fight."

Since the lockout began USX has refused to return to the bargaining table. When U.S. Steel Supply workers' contracts expired on Oct. 1, USX responded by locking them out. The company attempted to institute even harsher wage and benefit cuts than those they unsuccessfully tried to impose on USX workers in basic steel.

USX has taken legal action to try to stop those states that are paying unemployment compensation benefits to the locked-out steelworkers. This rally and similar rallies organized in other cities at major USX facilities are designed to show the company that its attempts to starve out the workers will not succeed.

Carl Icahn (of TWA fame) and several other well-known corporate raiders recently purchased large blocs of USX stock. While rumors of a possible takeover grow, the USWA emphasizes that its demand for a fair and equitable contract remains the same—regardless of who owns USX or what alias the company chooses to use. ■

### U.S. Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685).

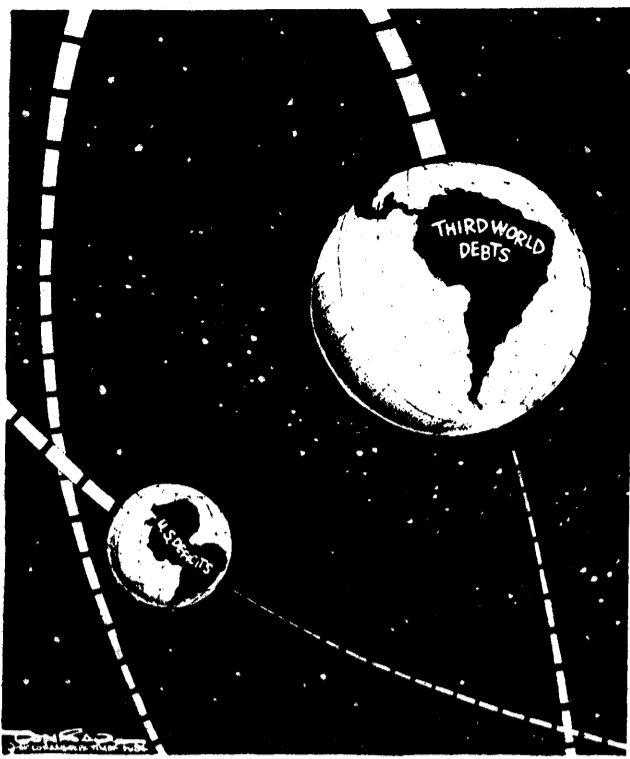
- Title of publication: Socialist Action.
- Publication no. 721090.
- Date of filing: Oct. 6, 1986.
- Frequency of issue: Monthly. A) No. of issues published annually: 12. B) Annual subscription price: \$6.00.
- Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.
- Complete mailing address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.
- Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543. Editor: Alan Benjamin, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543. Managing Editor: Don Mahoney, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.
- Owner (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.): Socialist Action Publishing Association (unincorporated), 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110, Nat Weinstein and Alan Benjamin, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.
- Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities (if there are none, so state: None).
- For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 423.12 DMM only): Does not apply.
- Extent and nature of circulation. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 2,500. B. Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 914. (2) Mail subscriptions (Paid and/or requested): 705. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation (sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 1,619. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 86. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 1,705. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 778. (2) Return from news agents: 17. G. Total (Sum of E, F, and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 2,500.
- Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 2,500. B. Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,120. (2) Mail subscription (Paid and/or requested): 711. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 1,831. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 0. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 1,831. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 669. (2) Return from news agents: 0. G. Total (Sum of E, F, and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 2,500.
- I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed)  
Don Mahoney  
Business Manager

Post Office Box 404830  
Brooklyn, NY 11240-4830  
718-855-2140

Affordable photos, cartoons, caricatures and illustrations for the movement and the progressive press





By ALAN BENJAMIN

The world capitalist economy is heading for its deepest crisis since the 1930s. This view is openly—and at times nervously—discussed in the newspapers and other media.

Lester Thurow, an economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently wrote an op-ed article in *The New York Times* in which he stated that an even more devastating depression lurked on the horizon.

"I am often asked whether the financial panics of the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s could happen again," Thurow stated. "For 20 years, I have answered that what happened then could not happen now. Today, I would not so answer."

Thurow points to the skyrocketing national and international debt as the major cause for a possible collapse of the international economic system. "In the 1980s," Thurow said, "international debt, not the stock market, is apt to be the hammer that shatters a fragile financial system."

Few capitalist economic forecasters are willing to predict when or exactly how the financial house of cards will come tumbling down. But many of them say that no substantial or long-term resolution has been found to avert an economic crisis of severe proportions.

To emphasize their concern, many economists are drawing comparisons to the "boom" right before 1929 and the "boom" today.

#### Government spending swells debt

While it is true that both these upturns were fueled by falling interest rates and growing debt, today the factor of public and private debt is qualitatively greater and potentially more explosive.

The post-World War II "economic boom" was based on a gigantic infusion of government spending (particularly military spending), which in turn led to a swelling of the national private and public debt.

The current U.S. public and private debt now stands at approximately \$6.7 trillion.

The annual federal budget deficit is approaching \$250 billion, with the interest on the total accumulated debt costing \$100 billion of the government's annual budget.

On a world scale, the expansion of credit and the extension of purely speculative financial ventures added an additional \$1.3 trillion in debt; the large bulk (\$900 billion) from countries of the so-called Third World.

Latin America is perhaps the clearest example of the logic of the debt crisis.

The total Latin American debt to the imperialist banks today is over \$400 billion. One tenth this amount—or \$40 billion—must be paid yearly to the banks in the form of interest.

In 1982 the Mexican government's near default on its \$10-billion interest payment sent a chill up the spine of the world capitalist financiers. It is estimated that Mexico is in hock to over 1000 foreign banks. A quick restructuring of Mexico's \$98-billion debt was necessary to avoid a catastrophic series of failures of major lenders, most of which are major U.S. banks.

But the Mexican debt problem is cropping up again because the lower prices for Mexican oil in February 1986 have made impractical the repayment schedule which was rearranged in 1982.

The capitalists are delaying and running away from the problem. But the debt stares them down as in a typical Joe Louis face-off—"You can run, but you can't hide."

#### Financial Wizardry

According to Lester Thurow, "The American public thinks it has the full faith and credit of the federal government behind it, but legally it doesn't. The net result is a banking system that is surely as fragile today as it was in the 1920s."

Thurow continues, "Financial markets are filling up

# U.S. debt economy skates on thin ice

with instruments—junk bonds, index futures, bundled mortgages...One can easily imagine a default, say in the junk-bond market, that would bring the salability and hence liquidity of these instruments to an abrupt halt."

A growing phenomenon today are mega-buck corporate mergers involving "junk" bonds and highly leveraged buyout schemes that simply use the purchased property as collateral. No new plant or equipment results from these mergers.

Thus, incredible amounts of money are exchanged without any development or expansion of the productive forces. An esteemed Wall-Street investment firm, Sachs, has estimated that 70 percent of the 1984-85 stock market rise was simply due to the merger wave. In other words, capitalists are making money off speculation rather than from capital investment.

For example, Union Carbide's stock went from \$52.75 to \$87.63 solely on the basis of takeover rumors after the otherwise catastrophic Bhopal incident.

In addition, in the last several years major banks like Continental Illinois, Chase Manhattan, and Bank of America have suffered hundreds of millions in annual losses through bad credit extensions.

In 1984, Continental Illinois was on the verge of going under. In order to avoid a string of bankruptcies, the U.S. government flew to the aid of Continental. The Treasury lent the nation's seventh largest bank \$7.5 billion to keep it solvent. This is the largest amount

dollar has made U.S. exports more expensive and imports cheaper.

The dollar rise of 60 percent between 1980-85 contributed heavily to the whopping U.S. balance of trade deficit.

Prices of foreign-produced goods dropped by 35 percent relative to the price of U.S.-produced goods between 1978 and 1984. There was a mammoth trade deficit of \$123 billion in 1984. And the \$130-billion deficit in 1985 is being surpassed in 1986.

The latest business upturn brought the economy to the point of producing at 80 percent of its productive capacity—hardly an economic miracle. Today, according to the Brookings Institute, unused industrial capacity in the United States is at its highest level since the Depression of the 1930s.

The 1983-1985 economic recovery has been accompanied by an increase in industrial and bank failures. Business failures are currently four-fifths as high as the worst time during the Depression, with corporate and consumer debt increasing 13 percent yearly.

While millions go hungry all over the world, U.S. farmers are stockpiling their surplus wheat crops in silos, barns, and make-shift storage areas because the market is saturated and prices are low. Farm foreclosures and bankruptcies are on the rise. And small-town, farm-community banks are closing their doors in record numbers due to the rise in uncollectible loans.

The May 1986 Commerce Department report of a trade imbalance in agricultural products was, meanwhile, the



ever lent to a bank. It shows how close the financial system was to collapsing.

Another aspect of the present financial crisis is the severe tension on the world's money markets provoked by the high U.S. interest rates.

#### Debt pushes interest rates up

The United States has the highest interest rates in the world because of the great demand for credit caused by the huge U.S. debt. These high rates attracted a lot of foreign

**"The nation's burden of debt is like a string drawn very taut..."**

capital which kept the dollar's value high relative to the currencies of U.S. imperialism's chief competitors.

The influx of capital from around the world also permitted the U.S. government to finance its budget deficit. As the July 14, 1984, issue of *The Economist* noted, "the 'boom' in the U.S. economy is strongly linked to the transfer of foreign capital into the United States."

But probably 90 percent of the foreign capital invested in the United States has been in high-yielding government bonds, with only a small amount going to direct investment in new plant and equipment.

As a result, U.S. investment in factories and machinery is still only about one-third of Japan's investment. U.S. productivity has therefore consistently fallen below its Japanese and European capitalist competitors.

Higher interest rates have also choked off borrowing to finance industrial investments. And the high value of the

first deficit of its kind in 27 years.

Trade regulations, tariffs, voluntary agreements, and monetary arrangements are the patch-work "solutions" that only postpone the inevitable crisis looming over the horizon.

#### Postponing day of reckoning

The 1983-1985 economic upturn has allowed the media and the government to mask the deep underlying crisis of the U.S. economy.

Over 11 million U.S. workers lost their jobs due to plant shutdowns between 1979 and 1984. And only 60 percent of these workers have obtained other jobs, most of them at reduced wages and with inferior working conditions.

Over 550,000 steelworkers have been permanently laid off since 1978, with 250,000 auto workers displaced in that same time period. And capitalist economists now predict a major glut in auto and related industries in the next year or two.

On Oct. 12, 1974, *Business Week* magazine published an editorial which is more relevant today than it was then. It stated:

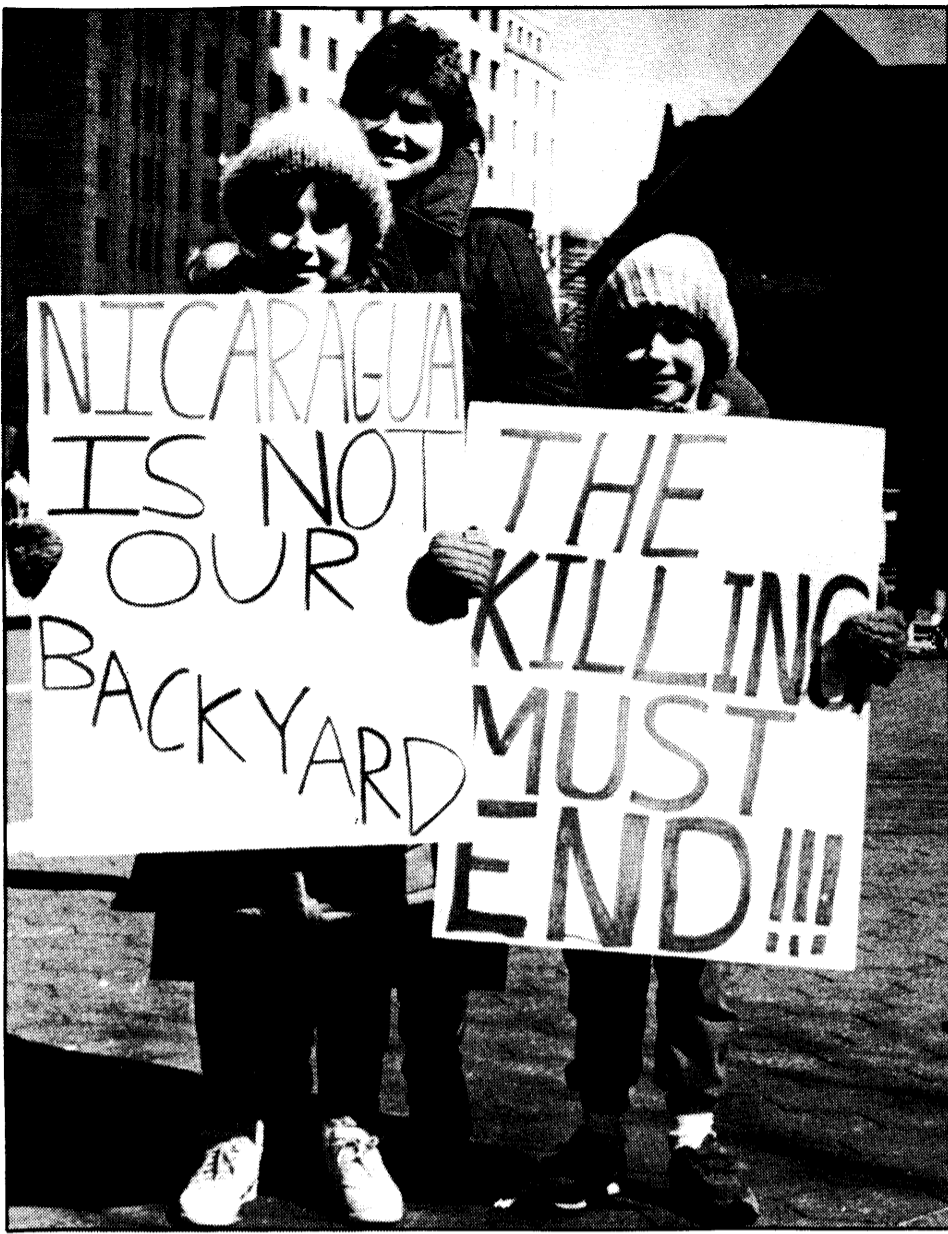
"The United States is the Debt Economy without peer...The most pessimistic view is that the specter of a chain reaction of defaults by borrowers and lenders will thrust the world into a deep depression.

"It is not the 1930s...yet the dangers are greater than in the 1930s. The amounts at risk are greater and so is the leverage, here and abroad..."

"The nation's burden of debt is like a string drawn very taut...No one knows the precise breaking point and, while there are schemes and theories galore, no one really knows how to ease the tension, either."

World capitalism has been able to find temporary solutions to ease the tensions. It still retains a wide margin of maneuvering room based on its tremendous financial resources, as the Continental Illinois bailout attests.

But these are stop-gap solutions that only delay the day of reckoning. The financial crisis is unavoidable. It is written into the growth of the "debt economy." ■



Socialist Action/Joel Auciello

## ...U.S. spreads "Big Lie"

(continued from page 1)

deception was discovered because a 19-year-old Nicaraguan soldier held a shoulder rocket launcher steady enough to down a CIA aircraft that carried three U.S. citizens aboard.

The one survivor, Eugene Hasenfus, identified an extensive web of CIA agents, Salvadoran military officers, U.S. Embassy officials, and private mercenaries illegally funded by Washington—all working under the direction of officials operating at the highest levels of the U.S. government.

Vice President George Bush's top aide was in direct contact with the mercenaries, and Bush even admits to meeting with the CIA agent Hasenfus describes as his boss. Yet immediately after Hasenfus was captured, the government claimed, "We don't know that guy."

In addition to these two episodes, the American people were dealt another low blow when President Reagan rejected Premier Gorbachev's plan to abolish all ballistic missiles. The reason: Reagan adamantly refused to confine the "Star Wars" project—the next great leap in the arms race—to just laboratory research.

The Strategic Defense Initiative or "Star Wars" plan involves placing hundreds and perhaps thousands of anti-missile weapons into orbit. This would give the United States the capacity to knock out Soviet missiles while in flight. Of course, the rationale for militarizing space is that it will protect the American people from a "Soviet first strike."

But the truth—once you get through the "body of lies"—is that such a "defensive" system would make launching a "first strike" extremely attractive to the U.S. warmakers. Theoretically, "Star Wars" would mean that the United States could destroy any retaliatory missile attack by the Soviet Union.

It would also give the United States the ability to attain the pin-point accuracy needed to destroy hard targets like ICBM silos, nuclear-missile submarines, and the command and control centers of the Soviet Union.

In short, "disinformation" aside, "Star Wars" is an offensive system—not a "defensive" system.

### Why the U.S. lies

The U.S. imperialists cannot satisfy the demands of the world's workers and

peasants for political democracy, an adequate standard of living, and land reform. In 83 poor countries, 3 percent of the landlords own or control four-fifths of the land.

Washington must use force to enforce these class divisions and to intimidate the world's poor. Inevitably, massive social revolutions develop out of these conditions.

Hence, the imperialists must use their military superiority to achieve their political objectives of stopping social revolutions which threaten capitalist profits. The U.S. government either directly intervenes, as in Grenada, or it threatens and destabilizes, as in Nicaragua.

Revolutionary struggles for self-determination like in Nicaragua and the Middle East become conflicts where the imperialists use the threat of direct military intervention to extract substantial political concessions from the oppressed.

Washington demands, for example, that the FSLN government in Nicaragua negotiate with the CIA contra murderers. It also demands that the Palestinians give up their claim to their homeland—to the establishment of a democratic, secular Palestine.

The military arsenal of the United States is essential to accomplishing these goals. But the government's arsenal of weapons is also reinforced by an arsenal of lies. "Disinformation" plays an important role in disorienting and confusing public opinion, thus making it more difficult to mobilize mass opposition to U.S. policies.

Widespread protests against military interventions, mercenary funding, and assorted destabilization campaigns would jeopardize U.S. imperialist interests. The capitalist class in this country is still haunted by the specter of then-President Richard Nixon looking out the White House window to observe 1 million anti-Vietnam War demonstrators.

### Government deception is a policy

The American people have become accustomed to government "double-speak," especially since the Watergate days. At that time, government documents showed that lying to the American public was official policy for decades.

The modern nuclear era was, in fact, ushered in under a cloud of secrecy and deception. The government purposely hid the fact that the Japanese sought surrender

terms—before Hiroshima and Nagasaki—almost identical to those which were agreed to after the atomic bombs were dropped.

Winning popular support for the Vietnam War also required the government to completely alter the facts. We were told it was a war for "freedom and democracy." U.S. troops would be less likely to risk their lives for dictators and American big-business interests in the Far East.

Similar deceptions were uncovered in authoritative reports that revealed a direct U.S. role in overthrowing Allende's government in Chile in 1973 and in attempting to assassinate Fidel Castro, Muammar Qaddafi, and other opponents of U.S. foreign policy.

### Real enemies are at home

Another function of the government's campaign of lies is to divert attention away from the cause of the problems confronting working people. Focusing attention on the alleged dangers to the American people posed by Nicaragua, Libya, and the Soviet Union takes the heat away from the real enemies at home.

The standard of living of the working class has been steadily eroded. Wage rates in major collective-bargaining agreements reached new lows in 1985 and again in the first three months of 1986, when a record low 0.8 percent increase was registered.

And there are millions of Black and Latino youth unemployed. The seemingly low official figure of 7 percent unemployment (this figure excludes those who are no longer looking for work) is higher than at any time during the 1950s and 1960s.

Profits in the second quarter rose \$5.6 billion after taxes, the highest level in two years. Next year's proposed federal budget has allocated over \$275 billion, the largest amount ever, for the military. This will further increase the profits of the war industrialists.

Now that's worth getting angry about.

But instead, working people are fed lies which channel their frustrations against other workers. One example is the steady diet of anti-immigrant propaganda coming out of Congress, such as the recently approved Simpson-Rodino immigration bill.

## Antiwar conference to be held in Toronto

By BARRY WEISLEDER

TORONTO—The Toronto Anti-Intervention Coalition (TAIC), Canada's most broadly-based local alliance against the U.S. war in Central America, calls on all interested organizations and individuals to attend TAIC's Anti-Intervention Action Conference on November 15-16, 1986.

The gathering will be held at Cody Hall, Russell St. and St. George, on the University of Toronto campus.

In the wake of the U.S. Congress' decision to give \$100 million aid to the contra mercenaries and to place the CIA officially in charge of the war against Nicaragua, the two-day gathering, the only one of its type scheduled this year in Canada, takes on a special urgency.

A major emphasis of the conference will be educational presentations, panels, and workshops on the current situation across Central America.

Guest speakers will include representatives of the Nicaraguan government; the FDR-FMLN liberation movement in El Salvador; Richard Johnston, an NDP member of the Ontario Legislature who participated in the recent Louis Riel Teachers' Brigade in Nicaragua; representatives from the Guatemalan community; and representatives from anti-intervention groups across English Canada and Quebec.

The conference will consider plans and perspectives for many anti-intervention educational and protest activities, including a major cross-Canada demonstration for the

Blaming immigrants for the loss of jobs is the corollary to the "Buy America" scheme, which promotes competition and division among working people internationally and cuts across working-class cooperation and solidarity.

Racism targets the most oppressed sections of the American working class and is the domestic version of the chauvinist "disinformation campaign" directed against Libya and Nicaragua. Both varieties of government propaganda are designed to protect profits at home and abroad.

### Mass protests needed

A social movement that aggressively seeks to provide the public with the real facts can mobilize a powerful challenge to Washington's war and austerity plans.

The job of social and political activists is to reach the real forces who have the power to change society—working people, the unemployed, farmers, students, and youth. They are the majority who have no interest in financing and dying for "Star Wars" or for the contra mercenaries.

Even after the extensive government propaganda campaign to whip up support for Reagan's stance at the Reykjavik meeting, the majority of Americans still registered their opposition to some major aspects of U.S. policy.

Major polls indicated 61 percent believed that the CIA was involved in illegal contra aid schemes; 66 percent opposed contra funding; and 54 percent supported Congress' override of Reagan's veto of South African apartheid sanctions.

Linking this sentiment with the demand for jobs will place organizers of peace, jobs, and justice protests in the best position to appeal to the millions who are suffering under the worsening affects of the capitalist crisis.

The government's "disinformation campaign" is built on a pack of lies. It will not be sufficient to stop the inevitable massive reaction against the harsh realities of war, austerity, and unemployment.

Major labor, church, and anti-intervention groups are already discussing how to build massive national protests in the spring of 1987. This development is sorely needed and should be encouraged by all those interested in pushing back the strikebreakers and warmakers. ■

spring of 1987. TAIC is a locally-based coalition of labor, church, disarmament, women's rights and community groups. Its purpose in inviting participation from across the country at this conference is to facilitate better coordination on a Pan-Canadian basis for work against the war in Central America, including against Canadian government complicity with U.S. militarism.

The Anti-Intervention Action Conference has been endorsed by the Ontario New Democratic Party, the Ontario Regional meeting of the Central America Solidarity Network, the Central American Mobilization Committee of Vancouver, TDN Youth, Youth Against Apartheid—in addition to the support of the over 90 organizations affiliated to the TAIC. ■

### Distributors of Socialist Action in Canada:

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
229 College St., Suite 208  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5T 1R4  
(416) 535-8779

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
Box 2728  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 4B3

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
Box 12082  
Edmonton, Alberta

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 76916 Station S  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V5R 5T3



# Nicaragua rejects talks with contras

By ALAN BENJAMIN

Every day, the U.S. government increases its offensive against the Nicaraguan Revolution, demonstrating its clear intention to overthrow the Sandinista government.

With the signing, on Oct. 24, of the executive order that will provide \$100 million in aid to the contras, the U.S. government and the CIA will now be able to do openly what they have been doing covertly all along. Reagan administration officials explain, for example, that it will now be legal to mine Nicaragua's harbors and train contra troops.

According to interviews conducted by *The New York Times* with high administration officials on Oct. 22, the purpose of the U.S. government's support to the contras has been "to do whatever is necessary to either radically change the present Nicaraguan government or to remove it from power."

A central component of this U.S. strategy has been to try to push the Nicaraguan government to lay down its arms and negotiate some form of power-sharing with the contras as part of a so-called regional "peace" settlement.

The Reagan administration stated openly in June 1986 that the purpose of the contra aid was to force the Sandinistas to the bargaining table with the contras. A major argument in Reagan's appeal for the \$100 million in additional aid was that the Sandinistas had so far "refused to seek internal reconciliation as offered under the Contadora regional peace plan."

But such "internal reconciliation" would grant legitimacy to the contras, provide them with an internal foothold, and

ultimately pave the way for the overthrow of the Sandinista government itself.

The FSLN government has refused to negotiate with the contras. It has vowed never to talk to the contras, stating that only traitors support such talks. The Sandinistas have also systematically rejected the imperialist-backed demand that they disarm.

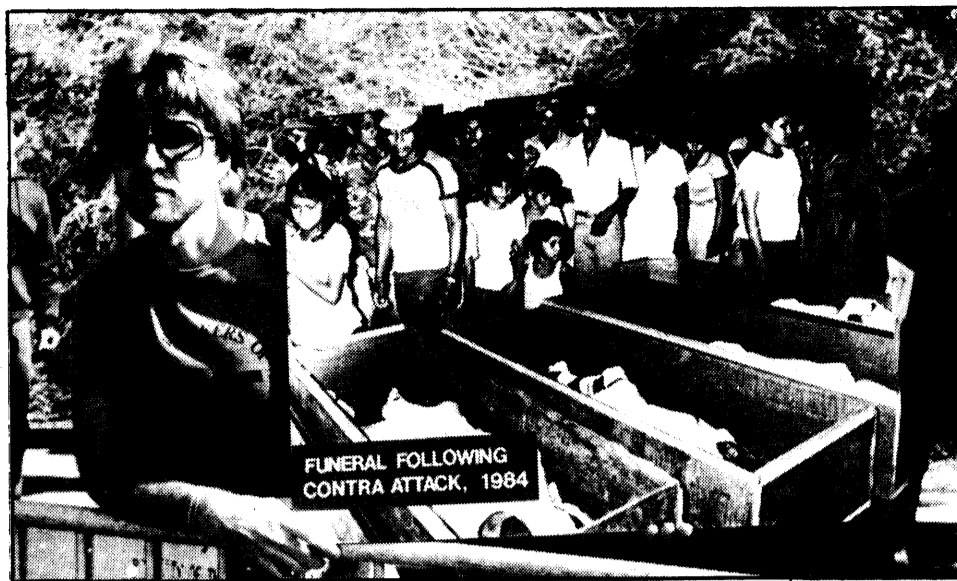
## Pressure to negotiate

Tremendous pressures are being exerted from various quarters on the Sandinista government to negotiate with the contras. On Sept. 1, a petition was signed by five political parties in the Nicaraguan National Assembly demanding a two-month delay in constitutional drafting proceedings in order to carry out what was termed a "national dialogue."

The five parties included three capitalist opposition parties—the Democratic Conservative Party (PCD), the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), and the Popular Social Christian Party (PPSC)—as well as the two pro-Moscow Stalinist parties—the Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCdeN) and the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN).

In a recent issue of *Avance*, the official organ of the PCdeN, party leader Eli Altamirano stated that the "thesis of national dialogue is the most patriotic thesis that can be defended in our country today."

The official response by the FSLN government to the five-party proposal was immediate. FSLN Commander Carlos Nunez rejected it outright, stating that "such a dialogue would open the door for the counterrevolutionary forces to obtain a political foothold in the country to accompany the interventionist escalation that has worsened with the approval of the \$100 million."



Socialist Action/Joel Ryan

Other so-called friends of the Nicaraguan Revolution have also urged the FSLN to capitulate to U.S. imperialism.

In June 1986, the Socialist International (SI) congress in Lima, Peru, "moved away from declared support for the Sandinista government and toward a position calling for dialogue and compromise on both sides," according to political analyst Lucy Komisar. (*Miami Herald*, June 28, 1986)

And the list goes on—from the so-called Contadora nations of Latin America to the Soviet bureaucracy itself. All agree in condemning the Sandinista government for its refusal to sign a Contadora "peace plan" that would demand that Nicaragua disarm while placing no such conditions on the U.S. government.

Still, despite the pressures, the Sandinista government has pledged to defend the revolution. "The battle we will wage will be with rifles and millions of Nicaraguans with rifles," Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said at a recent news conference.

## United States Out Now!

The U.S. government is rapidly heading toward another Vietnam in Central America. In order to roll back the Nicaraguan Revolution, more than aid to

the contras will be necessary. The step from having advisers training the contras to having U.S. troops directly involved in the fighting is a short one—as Vietnam demonstrated.

Working people in this country have no interest in waging a war in Central America. They have no interest in going to fight and die in a war against a people whose only crime was to say they wished to determine their own destiny, free from U.S. interference.

Yet if the U.S. war in Central America follows its course, it will be the sons and daughters of American working people who will be forced to shed their blood to defend the interests of U.S. imperialism in this region.

This is why the demand of "U.S. Out Now!" is the most effective slogan for mobilizing masses of American people.

Poll after poll in this country has revealed that a majority of the American people are opposed to U.S. aid to the contra terrorists. They oppose the current bipartisan policies of the government.

It is possible to build a powerful antiwar movement in the streets of this country today to demand that the U.S. government end its intervention in Central America. ■

# Cleveland meeting backs Shell boycott

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

CLEVELAND—On Oct. 10-11, approximately 250 people attended a conference here on "Apartheid and the Shell Oil Boycott," sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Anti-Apartheid Committee (NOAC).

Registration forms indicated that participants came from 34 different local unions and from local campus and high-school anti-apartheid groups.

The conference program on Oct. 11 opened with welcoming remarks by Rufus Sims, a representative of the Cleveland State University Black Law Students Association, which hosted the conference; and Richard Acton, acting president of the Cleveland AFL-CIO Federation of Labor.

Acton explained that Shell Oil has been selected as a boycott target for two reasons: its role in propping up the apartheid system through its sales to the South African government, and its viciously anti-labor record. He pointed out that Black workers in South Africa are fighting for the same thing as workers in the United States—the right for free, democratic trade unions.

The conference featured three panels:

what apartheid is, how apartheid affects us, and how apartheid can be ended.

The first panel was made up of David Lewis, the general secretary of the General Workers Union (affiliated with the Congress of South African Trade Unions) from 1976-1985; and Dee Zondo, a local South African exile who fled to avoid imprisonment for her activities in the high-school student movement.

Lewis defined apartheid as a "legalized system of racial oppression and economic exploitation" and emphasized that none of the South African government's so-called reforms end any restrictions on the labor movement.

Zondo described the complete lack of human rights in South Africa, adding that "apartheid exists by violence, by the blood of Black children, women, and men."

Participants in the second panel were James L. Hardiman, first vice president of the Cleveland branch of the NAACP; Ken Zinn, an international representative of the United Mine Workers of America; and Rev. Donald G. Jacobs, general minister of the Interchurch Council of Greater Cleveland.

Zinn pointed out that apartheid's survival is dependent upon foreign multinational

corporations. "We cannot allow corporate giants to pit workers in one country against those in another," he said. "We must raise the wages of the lowest."

The final panel consisted of Grace Jones, adult adviser to Youth United to Oppose Apartheid; Jerry Gordon, an international representative of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and a coordinator of NOAC; and Elizabeth Franklin, a former South African who had been active in prisoner-defense there.

The conference concluded by unanimously endorsing a resolution submitted by the United Mine Workers of America in

memory of the 172 Black mineworkers and five white mineworkers killed Sept. 16 at the Kinross gold mine in South Africa.

This resolution supported "the call by the National Union of Mine Workers of South Africa for an independent, comprehensive inquiry into this disaster and the working conditions of South Africa's mines in general."

It further demanded "comprehensive, mandatory sanctions against the South African government, whose apartheid system allows such corporate disregard for the health and safety of working people." ■

# Ortega accepts S.F. Mobilization invitation

By JEFF MACKLER

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega has accepted an invitation to participate in a public discussion in San Francisco with U.S. President Ronald Reagan on the subject of "The Road to Peace in Central America."

The discussion proposal was initiated by the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice, a broad coalition of church, labor, and community organizations in the Northern California area.

The objective of the discussion, according to the letter sent to both presidents, is to permit "the people of both countries to hear a frank exchange about issues that, in the future, may well have a profound effect on their lives."

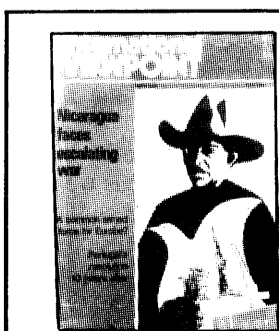
The invitation, which was sent in early October, was signed by seven U.S. Nobel Laureates; Congressman Ronald Dellums; John Henning, secretary treasurer of the California Labor Federation (AFL-CIO); and James Herman, president of the

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU).

"The fact that this initiative derives from a broad source of distinguished personalities and representatives of the North-American people," Ortega wrote in an Oct. 15 response to the Mobilization, "attaches overriding importance to an event of this nature."

In a press statement released on Oct. 24, Al Lannon, president of ILWU Local 6 and one of the coordinators of the Mobilization, stated that "If President Reagan agrees, it would be the first meeting between the two leaders." But Lannon continued, "Unfortunately, no word has been received from President Reagan."

The proposal called for the discussion to take place between Nov. 10 and Dec. 16. If Reagan does not accept the invitation, top Nicaraguan officials have indicated they would be available for comment and would be willing to hook up a TV-satellite communication with Ortega. ■



Subscribe Now!

International  
VIEWPOINT

A biweekly magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International. We offer a special introductory offer of three issues for \$3. A six-month subscription is \$22, and one year of International Viewpoint is available for \$42.

Write to 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, S.F. CA 94110

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

*Move Your Shadow*, by Joseph Lelyveld, Penguin Publishers, \$7.95.

The quick-paced tread of youths in the streets, the thud of shotguns—these are the images of struggle and suffering that have become almost commonplace in newspaper stories datelined "South Africa."

Joseph Lelyveld, in his book "Move Your Shadow," has succeeded in penetrating this newsreel-like footage and translating it into personal terms for non-South African readers. His book of interviews, anecdotes, and commentary has just come out in paperback.

Lelyveld was the South Africa correspondent for *The New York Times* in the mid-1960s (until he was expelled from the country) and again 14 years later. His badge as a reporter for the leading American daily enabled

# Chronicle of South Africa is insightful...but pessimistic

## BOOK REVIEW

Lelyveld to interview South Africans on all sides of the various political divides and throughout the spectrum of colors, tribes, and "nations" catalogued by the apartheid government.

"I was regularly surprised and often astonished by South Africa," Lelyveld states, as he descends, like Gulliver, into apartheid's "political rituals."

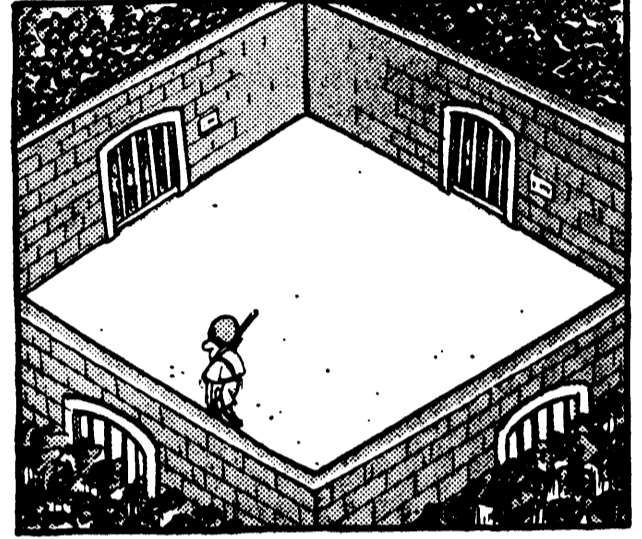
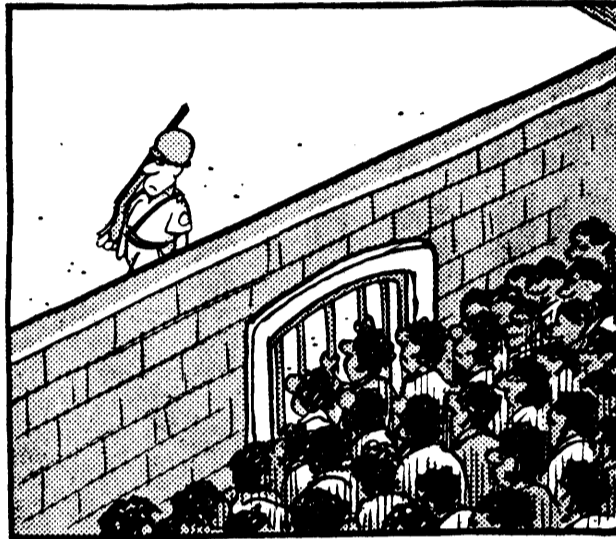
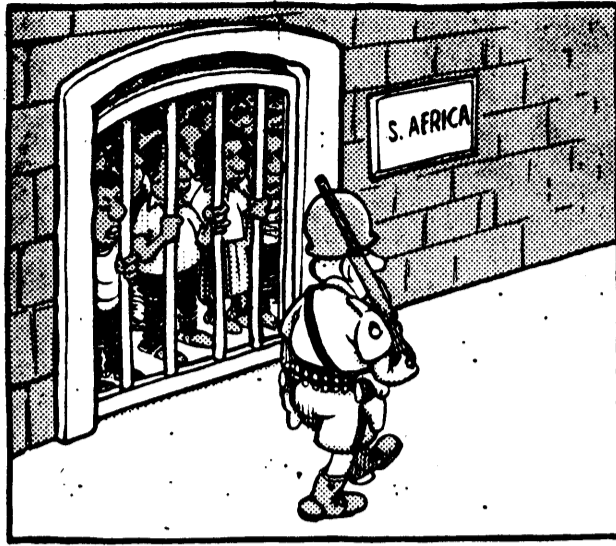
"The people in the shanties I was passing," he remarks, "were there not because they were poor but because they were Black." But he found that whites, despite their privileges, were also chained to apartheid's "willful denial of reality."

Lelyveld seems to have begun his enquiries more to satisfy his reporter's sense of curiosity than out of any prior convictions. But he does not hide his opinions. He surmounts the limitations on what's "fit to print," claimed by his employer, and frankly endorses the goal of "majority rule" expressed by most Black leaders.

However, Lelyveld cannot help wondering, at what cost will freedom be bought? "The thought of an inevitable catastrophe was frightening," he says. And the thought that Black freedom "could be indefinitely deferred" was even more alarming. This paradox, real or imagined, injects a note of pessimism—and even cynicism—throughout the book.

The most-influential Black liberation group, the African National Congress (ANC), has been ineffective in its "armed-struggle" approach, Lelyveld states. After 70 years, the ANC "has little to celebrate beyond its survival." Other militant Black organizations, he points out, "tend to be reduced to debating societies."

To be sure, Lelyveld left South Africa in 1983—just at the beginning of organizing activities that led up to the present mass-upsurge. The South African political scene has changed in three years. But recent events confirm that Lelyveld exaggerates very little when he writes, "Only in the new Black trade unions is there a chance to build real organizational strength."



Unfortunately, he fails to pursue the point. Trade-union leaders are interviewed in only one very brief section of the book. He likewise gives short shrift to the slogan of "worker's control," which the 650,000-member Congress of South African Trade Unions has now taken for its own.

In a recent interview on radio station KPFA in Berkeley, Calif., Lelyveld described apartheid succinctly as "paternalism gone out of control." Thus, in the author's estimation, apartheid—and racial oppression in general—appear to have grown like Topsy, with no apparent reason.

The analysis put forth by Marxists that apartheid was instituted to safeguard the profits of the capitalist class is not considered. "I'm not a Marxist," this *New York Times* reporter states briefly, ignoring the question of which class shall rule in a "free" South Africa—workers or capitalists.

Lelyveld is left with a reluctant prognosis, expressed in his radio interview, that "chaos will prevail." But despite its overly pessimistic and incomplete analysis, "Move Your Shadow" contains great insights. It is both compassionate and surprisingly lyrical. I would highly recommend the book.

## ...Aquino/U.S.

(continued from page 1)

in Washington, the governmental marriage of convenience forged during the "February revolution" has begun to fall apart. The center of the dispute lies over the attitude the government should take toward the CPP-NPA insurrection.

Both Enrile and Laurel have also demanded that several "left-oriented" ministers in Aquino's cabinet be dismissed. The issue of how far the regime should go

in purging the state and economy of pro-Marcos holdovers is in dispute as well.

Enrile has successfully opposed any "outside" investigation of army abuses under the dictatorship. Meanwhile, Vice President Laurel sees a potential base for his UNIDO party among the local-government officials held over from the Marcos regime.

Enrile—perhaps one of those who most enriched themselves under Marcos—was incensed when the Commission on Good Government ended the coconut monopoly he controlled and froze his stock in the monopoly. The defense minister ultimately forced the commission to back down. Unlike other cronies of Marcos, his property remains untouched.

Anxious to limit Aquino's political base, both Enrile and Laurel opposed the Constitutional Commission's proposal that Aquino remain president until 1992. UNIDO and Enrile's Nacionalista Party are seeking an alliance with the ex-Marcos politicians led by Blas Ople to compete with the Aquino bloc in the upcoming May local elections.

### The People's Party

The Philippine left, meanwhile, has not dropped its illusions in Aquino and the liberal wing of her government.

A new Partido ng Bayan (People's Party) has been formed independent of the government by forces including CPP founder Jose Maria Sison and ex-NPA leader Bernardo Buscayno.

The new organization hopes to recruit from the workers, peasants, and urban lower middle class. Its nationalist program is centered around the dismantlement of U.S. bases, ending foreign control of the economy, and land reform.

According to Sison, the new party "must also be ready for a realignment of forces in case the Aquino government capitulates to U.S. imperialism and local reaction" (*Philippine News*, Sept. 3-9, 1986).

The People's Party has a potential ready-made base in such formations as the May First Movement labor federation and the Peasant Movement of the Philippines.

Since the overthrow of Marcos, there has been a tremendous growth of the trade unions and of community-based groups representing the poor. On Oct. 21, some 20,000 peasants rallied outside the presidential palace and the U.S. Embassy demanding land reform.

But by giving "support and principled criticism" to Aquino, the People's Party fails to understand the pressing need for the mass movement to maintain its independence from a ruling class that is incapable of ending land hunger, unemployment, and poverty.

### Military obstructs ceasefire

Meanwhile, the hopes that the CPP-NPA pinned on the liberal wing of the government have dampened. "The prospects of political settlement are getting narrower," one of the NPA's spokespersons, Saturnino Ocampo, told the Sept. 25 *New York Times*.

"The president has been drawn to rely on the military for support," Ocampo pointed out, "and it seems the liberals in her government are losing by default. Such a drift does not work in favor of a comprehensive political settlement."

According to Ocampo, such a settlement would have to address "land reform, human rights, economic development, and the American bases."

The prospects for a ceasefire were further

obstructed on Oct. 1, when the government captured Rudolfo Salas, alleged head of the NPA and former CPP chairman—who was removed from that post for backing a CPP boycott of the February elections.

Salas' arrest appeared to have been deliberately plotted by the armed forces to scuttle the peace talks. Military heads have expressed fear that "Communist-backed" candidates could win 20 percent of local offices during the elections scheduled for next spring. They hope to gain a major armed victory over the NPA before the elections.

Aquino herself congratulated those responsible for apprehending Salas for their "commendable achievement." This prompted the NPA to comment that Salas' arrest "brings to the fore the inability of the civilian authority to make the military toe the official government line" (*Philippine News*, October 8-14, 1986).

The stalemate over a ceasefire parallels the unstable political equilibrium in the country as a whole. The government's negotiators cannot satisfy the NPA without meaningful reforms they cannot deliver, and they cannot appease the armed forces without eliminating the NPA.

This seemingly untenable situation can persist only because of the widespread popular support enjoyed by Aquino, a factor which has drawn the NPA to the bargaining table and forced the army to acquiesce to the talks.

But as the political threads binding together the government factions wear thin, as mass illusions born of the euphoria of "people power" begin to wilt—and hence, as the usefulness to the U.S. government of Aquino's mild "independence" wanes—the Philippine balancing act will be difficult to sustain.



**Free Holiday offer!  
A special gift for  
yourself and a  
friend.**

Get a new one-year subscription or renew your old one. Enclose the name of your friend and we'll send him or her a free six-month subscription.

Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA. 94110



## Drug war

Dear editor,

Sylvia Weinstein's column in the October *Socialist Action* pointed out some of the ways the current drug "war" is being used against working people.

Little publicized changes in the Ohio workers' compensation law enacted this year show another way this hysteria is being used to undermine workers' rights. This revision excludes "injury caused by the employee being intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance (drug) not prescribed by a physician."

Unlike laws prohibiting drunk driving, this law provides no definition of the amount of drugs or alcohol necessary to be considered "under the influence." Since employers' workers' compensation rates are based on accident frequency, many bosses can now be expected to demand a drug test whenever a worker reports an on-the-job injury.

Many "minor" accidents will now go unreported as workers fear the couple of beers they had on the way to work may get them fired. In other cases, workers—or the families of deceased workers—will be tied up in costly legal actions for years before the injured worker can collect a penny—all because of the results of an unreliable drug test.

Shirley Pasholk,  
Cleveland, Ohio

## Campaign

Dear editor,

The arrival of *Socialist Action* today reminded me that I have not yet sent you a contribution for Sylvia Weinstein's worthy campaign for the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco.

I have enjoyed Sylvia's articles in *Socialist Action* for many months—and send this check with great hopes that San Franciscans will elect her. I only wish I lived in the area so that I could actively participate in Sylvia's campaign.

Dorothy Hardin,  
Eugene, Ore.

## Wrong again

Dear editor,

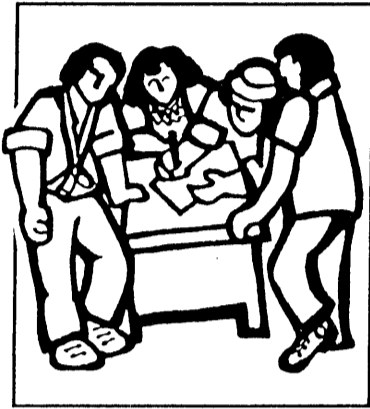
Once again you have managed to misrepresent the *Progressive's* political stance, and once again I must ask you to set the record straight.

In your October issue, replying

to my letter and several others about the West Coast Conference on Socialism and Activism, you referred to "middle-class oriented, third-party formations like the Citizens Party, which the *Progressive* campaigned for in 1980 and 1984..."

The *Progressive* did not campaign for the Citizens Party in 1980 or 1984. I have been editor of the *Progressive* since 1973, and in that period the *Progressive* has endorsed no candidate for electoral office, nor has it campaigned for any party, major or minor.

Erwin Knoll,  
Editor, the *Progressive*,  
Madison, Wisc.



## Response

Dear Mr. Knoll,

In our October issue, in response to your previous objection, we documented the *Progressive's* past endorsements of Democratic Party presidential candidates.

Among the various examples we provided was the *Progressive's* endorsement of George McGovern in 1972. McGovern was characterized by a *Progressive* editorial (March 1972) as a candidate with "great courage...and deep wisdom... [who] has earned our support [and] deserves yours too."

You now claim that the *Progressive* did not campaign for the Citizens Party. My formulation in the October issue was based on the fact that Sid Lens, the senior editor of the *Progressive*, was the Citizens Party candidate for the U.S. Senate from Illinois in 1980. Numerous articles in the *Progressive* plugged his campaign.

For example, in a September 1980 article, Lens stated: "I am the Citizens Party candidate for U.S. senator from Illinois and I will vote for Barry Commoner, the party's presidential candidate."

In a September 1984 article in

the *Progressive Lens* encouraged activists to "use the [election] campaign period...to promote our own agenda." Among the acceptable things to do during this period, Lens listed "join[ing] Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, or work[ing] for the Citizens Party or one of the socialist parties."

Lens made it clear that he was not opposed in principle to supporting the Democratic Party. "Which candidate we vote for is far less important, ultimately, than what we do to pull the political pendulum to the left," Lens wrote. "When we support the 'lesser evil' without aggressively emphasizing our own position, we may, in fact, be helping the pendulum swing to the right."

Lens continued, "If you have time to spare, there's no harm in ringing doorbells for Mondale, too. But don't hesitate to talk to the voters about your reservation regarding Mondale's program."

These articles by the then-senior editor of the *Progressive* cannot simply be dismissed as the author's personal views. To the contrary, they appear to be representative of the *Progressive's* eclectic views on independent political action.

We in *Socialist Action* worked closely with Lens in building a mass movement in opposition to U.S. involvement in Vietnam. We also collaborated with Lens in the current movement against U.S. intervention in Central America.

But we have always strongly disagreed with Lens and the *Progressive* on electoral politics. We are opposed to ringing doorbells for Mondale or joining the Rainbow Coalition, which functions inside the Democratic Party. These activities miseducate working people about the true role of the Democratic Party.

We are also opposed to support for the Citizens Party, which fails to offer a working-class alternative to the twin capitalist parties.

This is the heart of our current disagreement with the *Progressive*, which has endorsed and promoted conferences that provide a forum to help channel socialists and activists back into the Democratic Party via the Rainbow Coalition.—The editor

## Milton

Dear editor,

I'd like to compliment you on the excellent interview with Harry Milton (July 1986 *Socialist Action*). I was taken by Ray Sparrow to meet Milton a few years ago, hoping to interview him for the *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*. Keep up the good work.

Pierre Broué, Director  
Leon Trotsky Institute,  
Grenoble, France

## Cartoons

Dear editor,

Enclosed is a money order for \$6.00 for a subscription to *Socialist Action*. I have heard that you could use some cartoons and/or graphics, and I would be interested in contributing, but would like to get a better idea of the paper, hence the subscription.

C. R.,  
Vancouver, B.C.

## Response

Dear reader,

We are pleased to welcome a new reader and subscriber to *Socialist Action*, particularly one who would like to contribute to our newspaper. We are always glad to receive articles, graphics, cartoons—or just simply interesting press clippings—from our readers and supporters. We hope you enjoy the paper and look forward to receiving your contributions.—The editor

## Baseball

Dear editor,

The Nicaraguan national baseball team just completed a successful tour of various U.S. cities.

The success does not stem so much from the fact that the baseball team won all its games in this country, but from the

solidarity between Nicaraguan and North American working people that was forged during this brief visit.

The tour was able to promote a positive image of Nicaragua and its revolution and to demonstrate the high level of competence and sportsmanship of our national baseball team.

The tour was a success thanks to the efforts of organizations like Athletes United For Peace and of its director, Guy Benjamin. The various Nicaragua solidarity organizations and the city officials in Berkeley, Calif., also went out of their way to help our national team.

We hope that U.S. baseball teams will, in turn, come to Nicaragua to play some exhibition games and to enjoy our hospitality.

Emigdio Quintero-Casco,  
Representative of the  
Embassy of Nicaragua,  
San Francisco, Calif.



Nicaraguan national baseball team.

Iris Schneider

## Fans chant "No Pasarán!"

BERKELEY, Calif.—Last month, as sports fans turned their eyes toward the World Series, a "world series" of a different sort was played in several West Coast ballparks. The Nicaraguan amateur all-star baseball team took on teams from four California cities during a 10-day "Bats Not Bombs" tour.

The anti-contra slogan, "no pasaran!" swept through the stands as Nicaragua defeated the University of California at Berkeley team on Sept. 28.

The all-stars went on to sweep the series, downing teams from California State University/Long Beach, from Santa Monica College, and from Newhall, Calif.

The tour was organized to promote a better understanding between the people of the United States and those of Nicaragua. "We're just bringing people together, and why shouldn't we?" said Guy Benjamin, director of Athletes United for Peace and one of the organizers of the tour.

Benjamin compared "baseball diplomacy" with the "ping-pong diplomacy" that helped open up U.S. relations with China in the 1970s.

Emigdio Quintero-Casco, representing the Nicaraguan Embassy, told *Socialist Action* that the tour was a great success. "We were able to break through the news blockade that the U.S. press has placed on covering life in Nicaragua," he said.

Quintero said that a second U.S. baseball tour—of players of high-school age and younger—is in the works for next year.

In addition, the Nicaraguan adult team plans to participate in the next Pan-American Games, which will take place in Indianapolis, Ind.—MICHAEL SCHREIBER

## Calendar of events

### Boston

Conflicting Strategies for Revolution in Central America Today

Speakers: Ralph Schoenman, author; Jeff Mackler, Nat'l Secretary, Socialist Action; Sat., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 169 Massachusetts Ave. \$2.50 donation Tel. (617) 332-9016

### Los Angeles

Film: Eugene V. Debs and the American Labor Movement

Speaker: Dave Campbell, member, OCAW 1-547; Friday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m. ILGWU Hall 675 S. Parkview, L.A. (1 block west of Alvarado) \$3 donation \$1 unemployed Tel. (213) 250-4608

### San Francisco

Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: Is Marxism Relevant Today?

Speaker: Joe Ryan, staff writer, Socialist Action newspaper; Friday, Nov. 7, 8 p.m. 3435 Army St., Rm. 308. \$3 donation \$1.50 for unemployed Tel. (415) 821-0458

### New York

Conflicting Strategies for Revolutions in Central America and the Middle East

Speakers: Ralph Schoenman, author; Jeff Mackler, Nat'l Secretary, Socialist Action; Thursday, Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m. Hunter College, West Bldg., Lexington Ave. & 68th St. \$2.50 donation \$1 unemployed

# Profits erode safety in crowded airways

By HAYDEN PERRY

When scheduled airlines began to be widely used in the 1920s, parents often traveled in separate aircraft because "they did not want to leave their children orphans if their plane went down." Fifty years later, mid-air collisions and other airplane disasters cause travelers to once again view the most routine flight as a possible brush with death.

At the Los Angeles airport, where an Aeromexico DC-9 crashed on Aug. 31, an average of 80 planes take off or land every hour. When landing planes are hurtling toward a runway at 200 miles an hour, pilots cannot see a plane below or behind them. They must depend on a controller on the ground to be their eyes and ears.

A controller is like a traffic cop trying to direct traffic at a busy intersection where the cars criss-cross from all directions at tremendous speeds. Even a moment's distraction by a controller puts the planes under his or her guidance at serious risk.

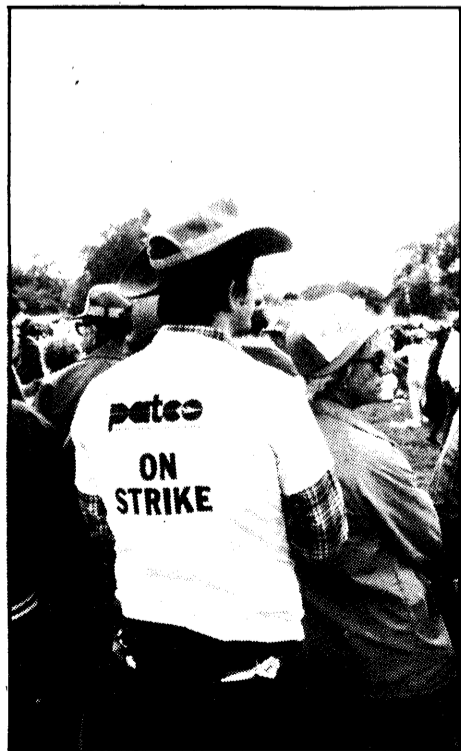
Over 200 near mid-air collisions were reported in the first six months of this year. Many more go unreported. A near collision is an incident where two planes traveling at least 200 miles an hour come within 500 feet of each other. A controller has to have iron nerves, split-second reflexes, and years of experience to avert near disasters like these.

## Reagan fires controllers

In August 1981, President Reagan abruptly stripped the air-control system of 80 percent of its experienced controllers. Over 11,400 were fired because they had gone on strike. They had not struck for higher pay, but to alleviate intolerable working conditions and stress that were wrecking their health and endangering the life of every air traveler.

Now 14,000 controllers, many of them trainees or inexperienced operators, are attempting to cope with an air-traffic flow at least 10 percent greater than five years ago when 16,000 experienced controllers had problems. The result is the same stress and tension that drove the former controllers to strike.

At busy airports a six-day workweek is common. One controller is often told to perform the duties of two. Trainees often complain that they are given heavy



Reagan fired 11,000 controllers because they struck over working conditions and unsafe skies.



responsibilities before they are fully prepared. Most confess that they have made at least one "operational error" where they have put two aircraft perilously close together.

## The FAA bureaucracy

The controllers all agree that their boss, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), has no sympathy for their problems and is concerned only with squeezing maximum production out of them. The FAA has been designated by one congressman as "the most encrusted bureaucracy of any I have found."

The FAA was set up in 1958 after two planes collided over the Grand Canyon. Its task is to raise safety standards in the industry. But the agency has repeatedly failed to enforce safety rules that put a burden on the profits of the airline companies.

Rodney Stich, an FAA jet air-carrier inspector, found that his reports of safety violations by United Airlines were ignored by FAA headquarters. At a meeting to discuss these violations, Stich was told, "If we push this, United will buck us and not do anything." Stich was also warned, "United had your predecessor removed and they can do the same to you."

As related in his book, "The Unfriendly Skies," Stich faced a barrage of lies and evasions when he carried his fight to compel the FAA to enforce safety standards all the way up to Congress. Ultimately, he was forced out of the FAA.

## New union drive

Control-tower personnel have responded to the FAA by organizing a new union, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA). Over 4000 authorization cards have been signed, enough for a representation election. This will put the FAA almost back to square one—1981—when it confronted the old PATCO union.

The FAA says its difficulties are due to a shortage of help. FAA officials complain that too many controllers are retiring or quitting, and bright young people are not attracted to the profession. Their proposal for recruitment is to lower the standards for applicants.

Meanwhile over 11,000 fully qualified, experienced controllers are standing by. A vindictive administration and FAA say these controllers will never work at their profession again. They would rather

endanger the flying public than put these experienced workers back in the control towers where they are so sorely needed.

## Aircraft-collision device

When the Aeromexico jet collided with a small plane over Los Angeles, the controller was distracted for two minutes by a third plane asking instructions. In those

two minutes a near miss became a fatal collision.

If the two planes had been equipped with a relatively cheap electronic device both pilots would have been warned of the danger, and the accident would never have occurred. This device, known as the Aircraft Collision Avoidance System (ACAS), developed by Honeywell Corporation, has been available since 1975.

In 1976, a study commissioned by the FAA determined that ACAS would have prevented all mid-air collisions and near misses of the past several years. But the FAA did not order ACAS installed in all planes. It did not even inform a Congressional committee on air safety that such a device was available.

When an FAA employee, James Pope, chief of the Industry and Liaison Division, pushed too vigorously for adoption of ACAS he was assigned to Seattle—as far from Washington as possible.

In an interview on the TV show "Sixty Minutes," James Pope explained the reason for these irrational actions by officials responsible for air safety. A segment of the interview went as follows:

Mike Wallace: "You are saying that ACAS five years ago, six years ago was proven workable, effective, do-able?"

Pope: "That is exactly what I am saying."

Wallace: "The FAA itself acknowledged that...and then turned thumbs down? The question is 'Why?'"

Pope: "The question is answered by an acronym NIH, 'not invented here.' If the FAA did not invent it they are not going to

use it."

Pope explains that adoption of ACAS would obviate the need for the FAA's long-term research budget, which has consumed \$160 million on inferior alternatives since 1975.

In fact, the FAA has been working on its own system, the Threat Alert Collision Avoidance System (T/CAS), for the last 20 years. But the agency says now that it may be two more years before T/CAS is ready for widespread use.

One serious problem with T/CAS is that it interferes with radar signals and must be turned off at busy airports—just when it is needed most. The FAA is planning prototype tests, but these are a year behind schedule now, and critics say there is no assurance against further delays.

Rep. Dan Glickman (D-Kan.), who headed up a subcommittee on air safety, says he was assured five years ago by the FAA that a collision avoidance system was all ready to go. "Nothing has happened," he says. "Frankly, it hasn't happened because the FAA has not pushed it and because some folks in the aviation industry don't want to deal with the cost of it."

## Executive jets

The blind arrogance of some of the richest men in America is another obstacle to air safety. The owners of private aircraft fly in and out of our major airports virtually uncontrolled. When the Aeromexico plane went down, two private planes were trespassing on its airspace.

After the San Diego crash in 1978, also involving a private plane, proposals were

**"FAA and air industry don't want to deal with the cost of a collision avoidance system."**

made to bar unscheduled aircraft from busy airports, at least at rush hours. The proposal was met with a storm of opposition from the 260,000-member Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA).

Like the National Rifle Association (NRA), AOPA wields heavy political clout. Owners of private planes are scarcely candidates for food stamps. Among its members are the major corporations, which own executive jets.

When these people spoke, the FAA listened and halted attempts to further control private planes. "After all," one observer asked, "how can you tell the chairman of the board of General Motors he can't fly his executive jet wherever and whenever he likes?"

## Workers' control

Meanwhile, the recruiting of equipment-maintenance technicians has been slowed by federal budget cuts. The FAA has 6500 technicians nationwide, down from 11,800 in 1978. Cut-throat competition has caused the airline companies to likewise skimp on maintenance.

Our airways must be taken out of the hands of both the FAA and the airline corporations. Control must be lodged in a democratically elected commission of representatives of flight crews, controllers, other unions in the airline industry, and the flying public.

So long as profit-seeking anarchy prevails, the traveling public will face death in the skies. Only when the airlines are nationalized under control of the workers will rational and safe air travel be assured. ■



# The struggle for socialism in America

By CARL FINAMORE

The writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and the example of the Paris Commune in 1871, gave rise to a tremendous vision opening up the 20th century.

The Commune was the first state to inaugurate universal suffrage, the eight-hour day, and the immediate recall of elected officials. It was the first government genuinely controlled by the majority of its citizens.

With the Russian and Chinese revolutions and the overturn of capitalist property relations in over one-third of the world, the central question of the 20th century has indeed become—socialism or capitalism.

A majority of the world's population undoubtedly consider themselves socialist-minded. Yet the ideas of socialism are considered foreign and alien to the American experience.

The same scholarly institutions that have neglected to teach the truth about the history of Blacks, women, and Latinos are still lying about the history of labor and socialism.

Socialists were in the abolitionist movement, the suffragist movement, and the fight for the eight-hour day. Socialists fought for child-labor laws, public education, and socialists were instrumental in forming unions in this country.

The rulers in this country deceive the American people about the real history of working people and about the ideas of socialism. This conscious neglect of the truth promotes the false underestimation of the power of mass protests, thus discouraging independent political activity by the majority.

### Private property—natural law?

Charles Darwin provided ample scientific evidence that everything in nature evolves. Marx applied the same scientific method to demonstrate that society has also evolved, striving for successively more productive social systems.

For the capitalists, evolution of society stopped with capitalism. "Private property rights" have replaced the "Divine Right" of the feudal lords as the highest "law of nature."

This self-serving philosophy must be rejected. Socialism places human rights above property rights by replacing production for profit with production according to human need.

### System outlives usefulness

Humans are distinguished from animals by our method of consciously socializing and cooperating to aid ourselves in improving our environment. Yet under capitalism, personal, narrow, and competitive motivations substitute for human values mutually shared by us all.

It is only the narrow objectives which are rewarded in this society—to make this particular company a more profitable product, or that particular country a better bomb.

Capitalism cannot be the inspiration for those who wish for a promising future of peace, jobs, and justice. There have been no mass demonstrations, pickets, or revo-



lutions anywhere in the world demanding more big business or more capitalism.

On the contrary, these policies are imposed on the majority of people of the world by military dictators financed by the U.S. government. Capitalism has exhausted its ability to initiate reforms in the interests of the majority.

Even during its most prosperous and dynamic period of development, the rights of Blacks and women were not recognized by "democratic capitalism." Today, Blacks are no longer slaves, and women are at least permitted to vote. Yet institutionalized discrimination still exists against more than half the population.

It remains highly profitable to discriminate against the majority of the human race. The capitalists receive huge profits as a result of the large wage differentials existing among the working class.

The myth of Black and women's inferiority establishes a socially acceptable explanation of the most severe aspects of wage-labor exploitation.

### Worldwide impoverishment

In the United States, the veneer of higher consumption for some, conceals the inequalities inherent in the worldwide capitalist system. In fact, the impoverishment of the underdeveloped capitalist countries has steadily worsened.

For example, growing monopolization and concentration of wealth in the capitalist world has altered the nature of agricultural production in the semi-colonial countries. "Food crop" oriented production of corn and wheat, which had sustained millions of peasants and small farmers for centuries, has been converted to "cash crop" production of coffee, sugar, and cotton.

This orientation to the export market, which is controlled by wealthy Wall Street food barons, is responsible for the increase in hunger and famine in the underdeveloped nations. Famines are now primarily caused by *human decisions*—not nature.

One-half of the world's crop land is

owned by only 0.23 percent of the world's population, with one-half to one-third of rural dwellers owning no land.

Indeed, capitalism must expand to survive. It must form cartels and monopolies to control market fluctuations. The concentration of power and wealth in the semi-colonial world is a mirror reflection of the power relationship which exists in this country.

### Capitalism in America

In this country, less than 1 percent of the population owns one-third of all capital and 22 percent of all wealth.

Between 1954 and 1981 the top 500 corporations in America swallowed up 4500 other companies, including 166 which were also among the largest 500. Since 1980 another 62 of the top 500 companies have also merged.

These monopoly class relations lead to increasing social misery for the majority.

The rich are growing richer. Despite the tremendous advances in technology and increased productivity, Americans face a long-term, steady deterioration in their standard of living.

Individual capitalists exercise complete ownership and control over the great mass of products resulting from the efforts of the bulk of humanity.

As a result, there is increased distance between our labor and our ability to own or control the product of our labor. We do not even individually or collectively determine what the product of our labor will be.

Working people neither own, control, nor possess the capital necessary to even lease the tools and equipment necessary in large production operations. These are all privately owned by major capitalists.

Working people derive neither satisfaction nor profit from the product of their labor. They must sell their labor power or face impoverishment.

### "We shall be all"

For the first time in history, there is a class—the working class—whose interests

converge with the interests of the overwhelming majority of society.

The socialized nature of production compels the workers to cooperate and to share the fruits of their labor. Solidarity is essential to a worker seeking maximum bargaining power.

Greed, racism, sexism, and a divided labor force are profitable only for the capitalists.

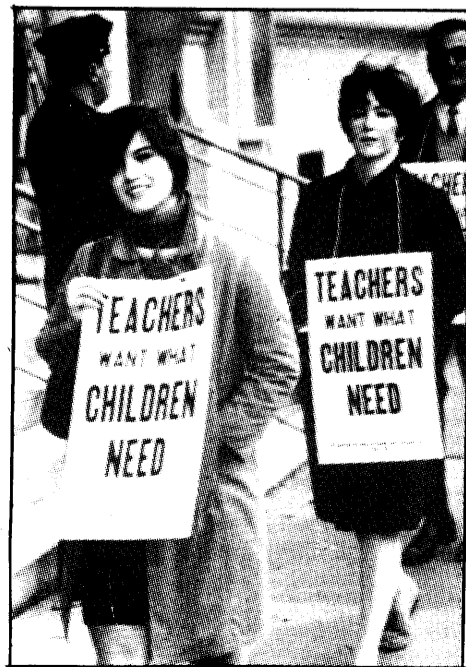
The working class is the only class in history whose genuine interests require cooperation among all, with justice for all.

Only socialist economic and political conceptions can extend democratic control by the mass of humanity over nature and eliminate the currently enforced control of the majority by a small minority.

This is the fight for a socialist future that Socialist Action is committed to carrying out.

Please join us to help build the antiwar and women's liberation movements. Help us support union strikes, student protests, and more.

Together we can make the international song of the working class a reality—"We have been naught, we shall be all." ■



By ROLAND SHEPPARD

# What we stan

Socialist Action is a political organization of workers, students, and activists that fights in the interests of the working class every day of the year.

Members of Socialist Action play leading roles in the fight against U.S. intervention in Central America and are active participants in the fight for racial and sexual equality.

Socialist Action members and supporters are part of the developing fightback by organized workers against capitalist austerity and takebacks.

Socialist Action stands in solidarity with the struggles of working people throughout the world. We support the revolutionary struggles for freedom in South Africa and in the rest of the capitalist world. We are opposed to the regimes of capitalism and their political agents wherever they may be.

At the same time we support the revolutionary struggle of Solidarnosc for workers' democracy in Poland and similar struggles in the other misnamed "socialist" countries where capitalist profit has been abolished but the working class still does not rule society through its own democratic organizations.

We are uncompromising opponents of the self-serving Stalinist bureaucratic regimes, which obstruct the real development of socialism.

We champion the rights of all workers to democratically control their own organizations—from their unions, to their political parties, to the institutions of the state itself.

Socialist Action sees the extension of democracy everywhere, including into the workplace, as completely consistent with our socialist goals. Socialism, in our view, is a world system in which all basic social, political, and economic decisions are truly democratic and based on the principle of production for human needs, not profit.

Based on this strategic outlook, Socialist Action is organized on the principle of majority rule, with the rights of minorities guaranteed within that framework.

Socialist Action stands in political solidarity with the Fourth International, a world party founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938 that is committed to socialist revolution.

## Crisis of capitalism

Today all of humanity is faced with a future clouded by hunger, disease, racism and sexism, unemployment, and the threat of nuclear destruction. These blights, including the threat of war and atomic annihilation, can be eradicated only by the elimination of capitalism and its replacement by a socialist society.

In the United States, for instance, farmers are going bankrupt because their hard work has resulted in abundant harvests that cannot be sold. These unsold surpluses rot in storage while the world's people face hunger and outright mass starvation.

This absurd situation vividly exemplifies the conflict between the profit system and human needs.

More generally, automation and other forms of technological progress, instead of advancing the human condition, only increase profits for capitalists at the cost of increased unemployment and misery for millions of working people.

The worldwide capitalist drive to maximize profits at the expense of the world's workers is intimately connected with routine international imperialist aggression and ultimately another—and final—world war.

Capitalist profit-making is impaired, and the system threatened, when the world's people take their destiny into their own hands.

From the time of the Russian Revolution in October

1917 to the present, U.S. capitalism—headed by Democrats and Republicans alike—has employed economic and military force to destroy any effort by an exploited people to determine their own fate and take the road toward socialism.

Socialist Action unequivocally supports the right of exploited and oppressed nations to self-determination and stands opposed to U.S. imperialist intervention.

## A class-struggle strategy

In the anti-intervention movement Socialist Action struggles against illusions that war can be stopped by relying on capitalist politicians. We have consistently fought to maintain the independence of this movement from Democratic and Republican representatives of U.S. imperialism.

Socialist Action members strive to involve the unions in this movement. In the long run only a political movement based on the mass workers' organizations can put an end to imperialist intervention.

The current austerity drive against working people is designed to reverse the falling rate of capitalist profit and to make the workers pay for the crisis engendered by competition and overproduction.

Socialist Action is committed to forging a new trade-union leadership committed to union democracy and a class-struggle strategy. Such a leadership, which would arise out of struggle, would mobilize workers in their own interests and revive the best traditions of working-class solidarity to face the current onslaught by the employing class and its government.

A class-struggle leadership in the unions would break with the twin parties of capitalism in this country and form a labor party based on the unions and open to all the oppressed. Its goal would be to establish a workers' government committed to the construction of a socialist society.

## Black and women's liberation

Socialist Action supports the struggles of Blacks, women, and other minorities for equal rights. We are advocates of affirmative action to redress years of economic and social injustice.

Socialist Action supports the independent organization of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities. This will advance both their own struggles for self-determination and the struggle of the working class as a whole.

The coming American revolution will have a combined character. It will be a socialist revolution by the working class and its allies against the capitalists. At the same time, it will be a revolution of national liberation by Blacks and other oppressed nationalities.

The struggle for women's liberation emerged in the late 1960s with a political character and social depth that firmly established that the fight for women's rights would be one of the driving forces in the struggle against capitalism.

Socialist Action members are active in the National Organization for Women, where they helped organize the massive pro-choice demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles in early 1986.

## Socialism or barbarism

The U.S. capitalist class is the chief obstacle to world peace and prosperity. This reactionary social layer is the most destructive force in world history. The U.S. capitalist government was the first and, so far, the only power to drop atomic bombs on defenseless and innocent

people—destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This act of barbarism helps reveal the U.S. government's current primary-responsibility for the threat of atomic war.

If capitalism is permitted to persist, the apocalyptic ending of human life on earth is inevitable.

We ask you to join with us in Socialist Action to help build a mass revolutionary workers' party capable of



Socialist Action/Tina Beacock

# Workers can c bosses and b

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The strategy of the current "leaders" of the unions—the labor bureaucracy—is based on systematic class collaboration. This is the scientific term for the view that a partnership exists between workers and employers.

The bureaucracy peddles this false notion to justify a policy of subordinating wages, hours, benefits, and working conditions to profitability.

Official AFL-CIO policy, firmly based on this concept of "partnership," has led working people into its current morass. Disarmed by this concept, labor is unable to effectively resist accelerating employer takebacks.

To the extent a partnership does exist, it is between the bosses and the bureaucrats and is necessarily directed against the class interests of working people. Collaboration between bosses and bureaucrats can only be established on the basis of joint efforts to guarantee the capitalist "right" to make a profit.

Such a "partnership," in principle, is similar to that between slaveowner and slave. The slave owner, like the capitalist, must have the "right" to expropriate the surplus produced by the slave—otherwise the slave system would die.

Class collaborators in the unions are under pressure, however, to show results to their membership. They worry that if they are not able to appear to make gains for the membership they can be ousted. Thus to get wage increases they tend to bargain away previously won gains or accede to conditions which are detrimental to the working class as a whole.

The "no-strike" clause in most union contracts is a particularly onerous result of this method of bargaining. It ties the workers' hands when the boss violates the contract and compels workers subject to this clause to cross the picket lines of other unions.

Before we can begin an effective defense of living standards we must refute this myth of class partnership.

## Workers vs. capitalists

Ask workers which class they are members of and most will confidently answer, "middle class." In a sense, this is not wrong. They generally mean to say they are neither rich nor poor. But this sense of the term "class" is not adequate for perceiving and understanding the underlying material conditions dividing society into warring camps.

## Subscribe to Socialist Action!



Socialist Action is a monthly newspaper with top-flight news and commentary on the issues of the day from a working-class perspective. You can receive *Socialist Action* at your home for only \$6 for one year.

[ ] 12 months for only \$6.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Union/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110



# and for

leading the working class and the whole human race forward to socialism and a world free of injustice and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

John Lennon's lyrics express a vision of the future that we in Socialist Action agree with and work for.

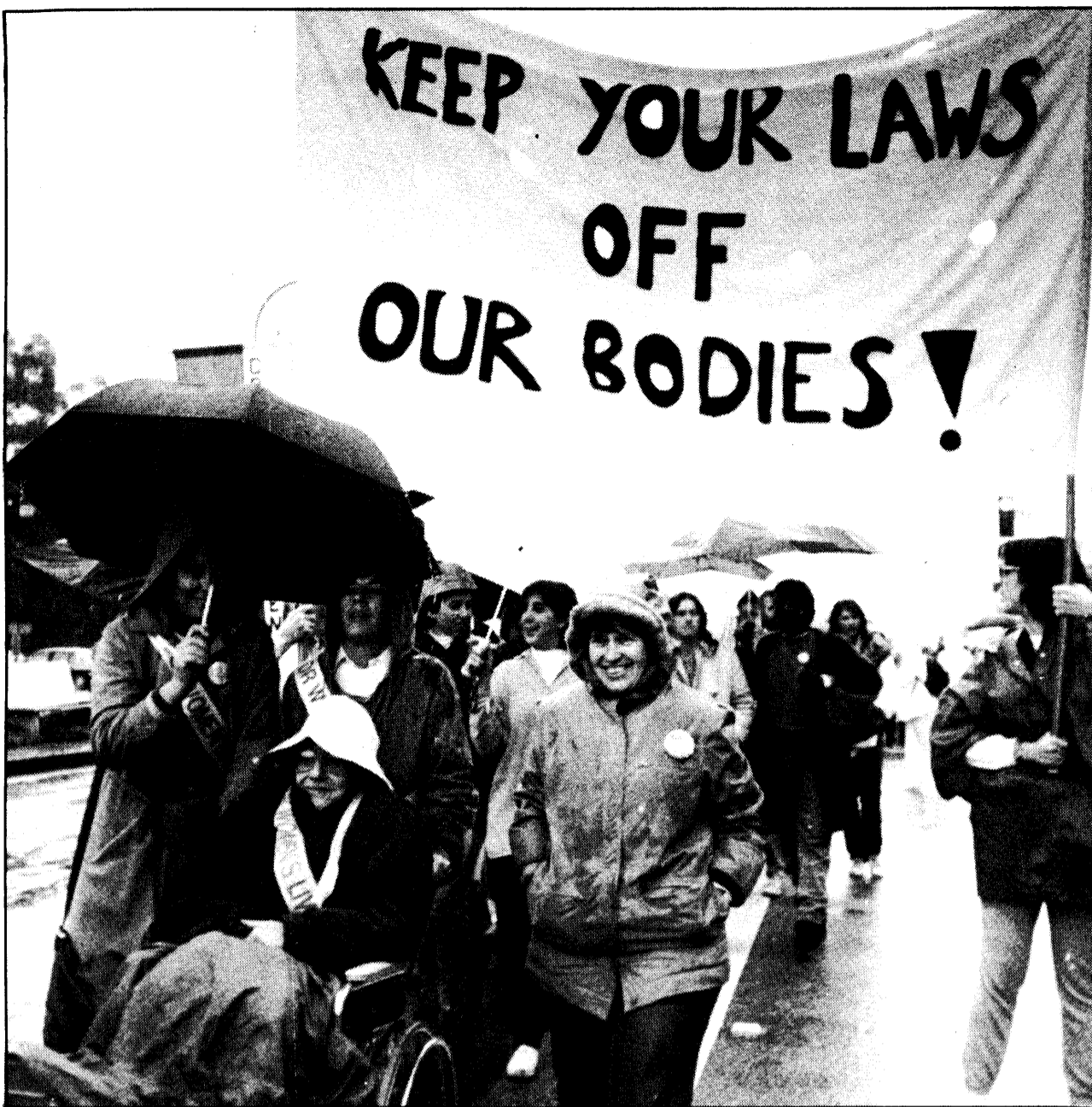
*Imagine there's no heaven  
it's easy if you try  
no hell below us  
above us only sky  
imagine all the people  
living for today...*

*imagine there's no countries  
it isn't hard to do  
nothing to kill or die for  
and no religion too  
imagine all the people  
living life in peace...*

*imagine no possessions  
i wonder if you can  
no need for greed or hunger  
a brotherhood of man  
imagine all the people  
sharing all the world...*

*you may say i'm a dreamer  
but i'm not the only one  
i hope some day you'll join us  
and the world will be as one*

—imagine, John Lennon



Kathy Seltan

# an overcome d bureaucrats

(Social) class refers to the basic division in society between those who own the factories, mines, systems of transportation, communication, etc., and those that do not own the basic means of production—only their capability to sell their labor power for wages.

The opposition between these two basic social classes over the division of the product of human labor is the source of perpetual economic, social, and political conflict in modern society. It is in the nature of the system. Profit rates can only be increased at the expense of working people, because profit—to get to the heart of the matter—is derived from unpaid labor.

## How capitalism works

Workers in capitalist production sell their labor power for a given time for a price (wage). In one sense this is a "fair" exchange since the value of labor power, like all other commodities, is determined by the labor time necessary for its production (and in this case, its reproduction).

But labor power is different from any other commodity in that its value increases during its consumption. That is, the laborer normally produces new value for the capitalist in the course of a day's work that is greater than the wages paid that worker for that day.

Thus, an average worker may produce new value equal to his or her wages in the first four hours of a typical eight-hour day. But the work-day doesn't end at this point. The worker must continue to work "the full day." The value produced by this average worker in the second four hours is *surplus value*, i.e., unpaid labor—profit.

The capitalist persistently strives to expand surplus value in a variety of ways, including speedup, extending the work day, and reducing wages.

All who have nothing to sell except their labor power are objectively part of the working class, and all who live by exploiting workers are objectively part of the capitalist class. The interests of these two classes are diametrically opposed: Improvement in wages, hours, and working conditions tends to depress profits, and an opposite movement in wages, hours, and working conditions tends to raise profits.

## Class struggle vs. class collaboration

The dominant economic position of the capitalist class is rooted in the entire legal and political structure of the capitalist state. This dominance was reinforced in the course of hundreds of years of class struggle. The

capitalists have assiduously applied the lessons they learned from this experience in order to maintain their class rule.

Today, when workers strike in defense of their living standards, the bosses consciously draw on their accumulated experience to undermine the position of their worker adversaries. The capitalist-controlled press, radio, and TV—the entire mass media—systematically distort and slander workers to undercut the possibility of sympathetic action by potential supporters.

Rival capitalists put aside their differences to provide material aid for the struck capitalist. In the event their greed overcomes their class interest, the capitalist government may step in to keep the capitalist who breaks ranks in line.

The entire state machinery can be brought into action, when necessary, to tip the balance in favor of the bosses. Judges invariably issue injunctions which abrogate constitutionally protected rights to free speech and assembly. Police attacks on strikers with clubs, tear gas, and bullets are commonplace. Brutal repression is backed up by court-ordered "criminal" indictment, prosecution, and jailing of the victims—usually the most courageous worker militants.

In all key confrontations between workers and bosses, the bosses unite to mobilize their entire class, win over the middle class, and neutralize those workers who can be misled into believing that it's not their fight.

The capitalists are highly class conscious. They rarely deceive themselves. They act according to the principle: An injury to one [capitalist] is an injury to all. The capitalist government, Democratic and Republican alike,

functions in effect as the executive committee of the ruling capitalist class. It can be counted on to use any means necessary to organize the attack on workers in defense of profits.

The capitalists' strategy is based on class struggle. Workers also should recognize these facts of life. But the labor bureaucrats' strategy of class collaboration plays right into the hands of the bosses. It disorients and disarms the working class, undermines its power, and sets it up for big setbacks such as those suffered in recent years.

It wasn't always this way. The labor upsurge that began during the Great Depression of the 1930s won historic victories. These gains in living standards were won by American workers through class-struggle methods.

The labor victories were so far-reaching that it took 40 years of the most servile class-collaborationist misleadership to dissipate the momentum of the great working-class upsurge.

One of the major tasks of revolutionary socialists is to keep alive the lessons learned from victories and defeats experienced in the history of class struggle. In this role, socialists serve as the "memory" of the working class.

Armed with these lessons, the 100 million-member American working class would be the most powerful force on earth. It would do more than merely stop the takebacks. It would establish a workers' government and lead all humanity forward to a higher stage of civilization.

Human needs, not profits, would then govern social relations between human beings. ■

## Where To Find Us:

**Boston Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 1046 GMF  
Boston, MA 02205  
(617) 389-4075

**Chicago Socialist Action**  
Box 80B, 2520 N. Lincoln  
Chicago, IL 60614

**Cincinnati Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 27053  
Cincinnati, OH 45227  
(513) 242-9043

**Cleveland Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 6151  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
(216) 429-2167

**Detroit Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 19613  
Detroit, MI 48219

**Grand Rapids Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 3505  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

**Los Angeles Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 60605  
Terminal Annex  
Los Angeles, CA 90060  
(213) 250-4608

**Minneapolis Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 14087  
Dinkytown Station  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

**New York Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 20209, Ca. Finance  
693 Columbus Ave.  
New York, NY 10025

**Phoenix Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 5161  
Phoenix, AZ 85010  
(602) 263-5190

**San Francisco Socialist Action**  
3435 Army St., Suite 308  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 821-0458

# What we stand for

1917 to the present, U.S. capitalism—headed by Democrats and Republicans alike—has employed economic and military force to destroy any effort by an exploited people to determine their own fate and take the road toward socialism.

Socialist Action unequivocally supports the right of exploited and oppressed nations to self-determination and stands opposed to U.S. imperialist intervention.

## A class-struggle strategy

In the anti-intervention movement Socialist Action struggles against illusions that war can be stopped by relying on capitalist politicians. We have consistently fought to maintain the independence of this movement from Democratic and Republican representatives of U.S. imperialism.

Socialist Action members strive to involve the unions in this movement. In the long run only a political movement based on the mass workers' organizations can put an end to imperialist intervention.

The current austerity drive against working people is designed to reverse the falling rate of capitalist profit and to make the workers pay for the crisis engendered by competition and overproduction.

Socialist Action is committed to forging a new trade-union leadership committed to union democracy and a class-struggle strategy. Such a leadership, which would arise out of struggle, would mobilize workers in their own interests and revive the best traditions of working-class solidarity to face the current onslaught by the employing class and its government.

A class-struggle leadership in the unions would break with the twin parties of capitalism in this country and form a labor party based on the unions and open to all the oppressed. Its goal would be to establish a workers' government committed to the construction of a socialist society.

## Black and women's liberation

Socialist Action supports the struggles of Blacks, women, and other minorities for equal rights. We are advocates of affirmative action to redress years of economic and social injustice.

Socialist Action supports the independent organization of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities. This will advance both their own struggles for self-determination and the struggle of the working class as a whole.

The coming American revolution will have a combined character. It will be a socialist revolution by the working class and its allies against the capitalists. At the same time, it will be a revolution of national liberation by Blacks and other oppressed nationalities.

The struggle for women's liberation emerged in the late 1960s with a political character and social depth that firmly established that the fight for women's rights would be one of the driving forces in the struggle against capitalism.

Socialist Action members are active in the National Organization for Women, where they helped organize the massive pro-choice demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles in early 1986.

## Socialism or barbarism

The U.S. capitalist class is the chief obstacle to world peace and prosperity. This reactionary social layer is the most destructive force in world history. The U.S. capitalist government was the first and, so far, the only power to drop atomic bombs on defenseless and innocent

people—destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This act of barbarism helps reveal the U.S. government's current primary-responsibility for the threat of atomic war.

If capitalism is permitted to persist, the apocalyptic ending of human life on earth is inevitable.

We ask you to join with us in Socialist Action to help build a mass revolutionary workers' party capable of



leading the working class and the whole human race forward to socialism and a world free of injustice and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

John Lennon's lyrics express a vision of the future that we in Socialist Action agree with and work for.

*Imagine there's no heaven  
it's easy if you try  
no hell below us  
above us only sky  
imagine all the people  
living for today...*

*imagine there's no countries  
it isn't hard to do  
nothing to kill or die for  
and no religion too  
imagine all the people  
living life in peace...*

*imagine no possessions  
i wonder if you can  
no need for greed or hunger  
a brotherhood of man  
imagine all the people  
sharing all the world...*

*you may say i'm a dreamer  
but i'm not the only one  
i hope some day you'll join us  
and the world will be as one*

—imagine, John Lennon

## Workers can overcome bosses and bureaucrats

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The strategy of the current "leaders" of the unions—the labor bureaucracy—is based on systematic class collaboration. This is the scientific term for the view that a partnership exists between workers and employers.

The bureaucracy peddles this false notion to justify a policy of subordinating wages, hours, benefits, and working conditions to profitability.

Official AFL-CIO policy, firmly based on this concept of "partnership," has led working people into its current morass. Disarmed by this concept, labor is unable to effectively resist accelerating employer takebacks.

To the extent a partnership does exist, it is between the bosses and the bureaucrats and is necessarily directed against the class interests of working people. Collaboration between bosses and bureaucrats can only be established on the basis of joint efforts to guarantee the capitalist "right" to make a profit.

Such a "partnership," in principle, is similar to that between slaveowner and slave. The slave owner, like the capitalist, must have the "right" to expropriate the surplus produced by the slave—otherwise the slave system would die.

Class collaborators in the unions are under pressure, however, to show results to their membership. They worry that if they are not able to appear to make gains for the membership they can be ousted. Thus to get wage increases they tend to bargain away previously won gains or accede to conditions which are detrimental to the working class as a whole.

The "no-strike" clause in most union contracts is a particularly onerous result of this method of bargaining. It ties the workers' hands when the boss violates the contract and compels workers subject to this clause to cross the picket lines of other unions.

Before we can begin an effective defense of living standards we must refute this myth of class partnership.

### Workers vs. capitalists

Ask workers which class they are members of and most will confidently answer, "middle class." In a sense, this is not wrong. They generally mean to say they are neither rich nor poor. But this sense of the term "class" is not adequate for perceiving and understanding the underlying material conditions dividing society into warring camps.

(Social) class refers to the basic division in society between those who own the factories, mines, systems of transportation, communication, etc., and those that do not own the basic means of production—only their capability to sell their labor power for wages.

The opposition between these two basic social classes over the division of the product of human labor is the source of perpetual economic, social, and political conflict in modern society. It is in the nature of the system. Profit rates can only be increased at the expense of working people, because profit—to get to the heart of the matter—is derived from unpaid labor.

### How capitalism works

Workers in capitalist production sell their labor power for a given time for a price (wage). In one sense this is a "fair" exchange since the value of labor power, like all other commodities, is determined by the labor time necessary for its production (and in this case, its reproduction).

But labor power is different from any other commodity in that its value increases during its consumption. That is, the laborer normally produces new value for the capitalist in the course of a day's work that is greater than the wages paid that worker for that day.

Thus, an average worker may produce new value equal to his or her wages in the first four hours of a typical eight-hour day. But the work-day doesn't end at this point. The worker must continue to work "the full day." The value produced by this average worker in the second four hours is *surplus value*, i.e., unpaid labor—profit.

The capitalist persistently strives to expand surplus value in a variety of ways, including speedup, extending the work day, and reducing wages.

All who have nothing to sell except their labor power are objectively part of the working class, and all who live by exploiting workers are objectively part of the capitalist class. The interests of these two classes are diametrically opposed: Improvement in wages, hours, and working conditions tends to depress profits, and an opposite movement in wages, hours, and working conditions tends to raise profits.

### Class struggle vs. class collaboration

The dominant economic position of the capitalist class is rooted in the entire legal and political structure of the capitalist state. This dominance was reinforced in the course of hundreds of years of class struggle. The

## Socialist Action!

Socialist Action is a monthly newspaper with top-flight news and commentary on the issues of the day from a working-class perspective. You can receive *Socialist Action* at your home for only \$6 for one year.

[ ] 12 months for only \$6.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Union/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Box 308, San Francisco, CA 94110





## James P. Cannon speaks:

# "Socialism is the ever-expanding democracy of the workers"

By JAMES P. CANNON

The following are major excerpts from a speech given by James P. Cannon, the founder of the American Trotskyist movement, on Sept. 1, 1957.

I am glad to be here with you today and to accept your invitation to speak on socialism and democracy.

Strange as it may seem, an agreement on these two simple, elementary points, as experience has already demonstrated, will not be arrived at easily. The confusion and demoralization created by Stalinism, and the successful exploitation of this confusion by the ruling capitalists of this country and all their agents and apologists, still hangs heavily over all sections of the workers' movement....

At every step for 30 years, the Stalinist work of befuddlement and demoralization, of debasing words into their opposite meanings, has been supported by reciprocal action of the same kind by the ruling capitalists and their apologists.

They have never failed to take the Stalinists at their word, and to point to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union, with all of its horrors, and to say: "That is socialism. The American way of life is better."

They describe the United States, where the workers have a right to vote every four years, if they don't move around too much, but have no say about the control of the shop and the factory; where all the means of mass information and communication are monopolized by a few—they describe all that as the ideal democracy for which the workers should gladly fight and die.

### The task of the workers

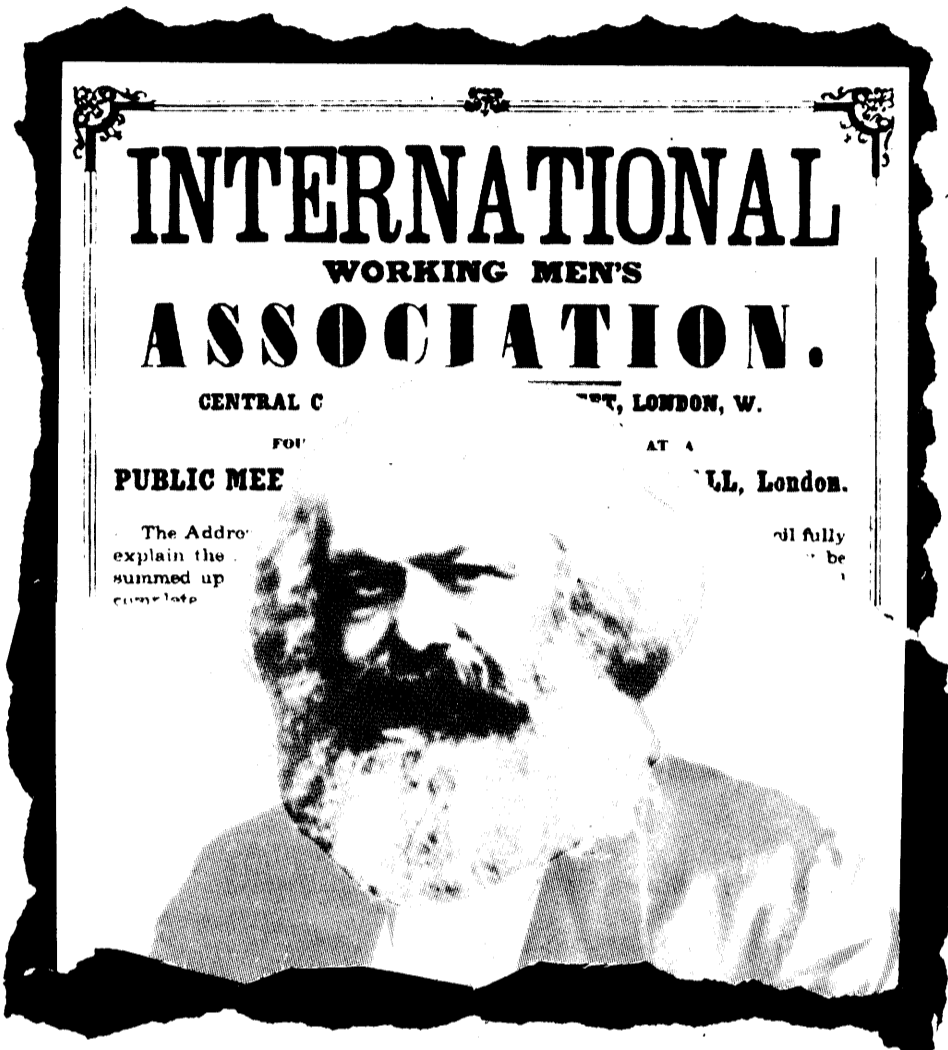
The authentic socialist movement, as it was conceived by its founders and as it has developed over the past century, has been the most democratic movement in all history. No formulation of this question can improve on the classic statement of the *Communist Manifesto*, with which modern scientific socialism was proclaimed to the world in 1848. The *Communist Manifesto* said:

"All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority."

The authors of the *Communist Manifesto* linked socialism and democracy together as end and means. The "self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority" cannot be anything else but democratic, if we understand by "democracy" the rule of the people, the majority.

The Stalinist claim that the task of reconstructing society on a socialist basis can be farmed out to a privileged and uncontrolled bureaucracy, while the workers remain without voice or vote in the process, is just as foreign to the thoughts of Marx and Engels and of all their true disciples as the reformist idea that socialism can be handed down to the workers by degrees, by the capitalists who exploit them.

All such fantastic conceptions were answered in advance by the reiterated



## "The emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves"—Karl Marx

statement of Marx and Engels that "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves."

That was another way of saying—as they said explicitly many times—that the socialist reorganization of society requires a workers' revolution. Such a revolution is unthinkable without the active participation of the majority of the working class, which is itself the big majority of the population. Nothing could be more democratic than that.

### Workers must rule

Moreover, the great teachers did not limit the democratic action of the working class to the overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy. They defined democracy as the form of governmental rule in the transition period between capitalism and socialism.

It is explicitly stated in the *Communist Manifesto*—and I wonder how many people have forgotten this in recent years: "The first step," said the *Manifesto*, "in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy."

That is the way Marx and Engels formulated the first aim of the revolution—to make the workers the ruling class, to establish democracy, which, in their view, is the same thing.

From this precise formulation it is clear that Marx and Engels did not consider the limited formal democracy under capitalism, which screens the exploitation and the rule of the great majority by the few, as real democracy. In order to have real democracy,

the workers must become the "ruling class."

Only the revolution which replaces the class rule of the capitalists by the class rule of the workers can really "establish democracy," not in fiction but in fact. So said Marx and Engels.

They never taught that the simple nationalization of the forces of production signified the establishment of socialism. That's not stated by Marx and Engels anywhere. The nationalization only lays the economic foundations for the transition to socialism.

Still less could they have sanctioned, even if they had been able to imagine, the monstrous idea that socialism could be realized without equality; that nationalized production and planned economy, controlled by a ruthless police dictatorship, complete with prisons, torture chambers, and forced-labor camps, could be designated as a "socialist" society. That unspeakable perversion and contradiction of terms belongs to the Stalinists and their apologists.

All the great Marxists defined socialism as a classless society—with abundance, freedom, and equality for all: a society in which there would be no state, not even a democratic workers' state, to say nothing of a state in the monstrous form of a bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority.

### Workers' democracy

The Soviet Union today is a transitional order of society in which the bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority, far from serving as the agency to bridge the

transition to socialism stands as an obstacle to harmonious development in that direction.

In the view of Marx and Engels, and of Lenin and Trotsky who came after them, the transition from capitalism to the classless society of socialism could only be carried out by an ever-expanding democracy, involving the masses of the workers more and more in all phases of social life, by direct participation and control.

And, in the course of further progressive development in all fields, as Lenin expressed it, even this democracy, this workers' democracy, as a form of class rule, will outlive itself. Lenin said: "Democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally wither away," since democracy itself, properly understood, is a form of state, that is, an instrument of class rule, for which there will be no need and no place in the classless socialist society.

Forecasting the socialist future, the *Communist Manifesto* said: "In the place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association."

Mark that, "an association," not a state—"an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

Trotsky said the same thing in other words when he spoke of socialism as "a pure and limpid system which is accommodated to the self-government of the toilers....and uninterrupted growth of universal equality—all-sided flowering of human personality....unselfish honest and human relations between human beings."

And I say we will not put the socialist movement of this country on the right track, and restore its rightful appeal to the best sentiments of the working class of this country, and above all to the young, until we begin to call socialism by its right name as the great teachers did.

Until we make it clear that we stand for an ever-expanding workers' democracy, as the only road to socialism. Until we root out every vestige of Stalinist perversion and corruption of the meaning of socialism and democracy, and restate the thoughts and formulations of the authentic Marxist teachers. ■

## If you support...

- The antiwar movement
- The Nicaraguan Revolution
- The fight against racism
- A woman's right to choose
- An end to apartheid
- The fight for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe
- An end to union concessions
- A socialist America

## ...then you belong in Socialist Action!

For more information, write or call the Socialist Action branches listed on the inside pages of this supplement.