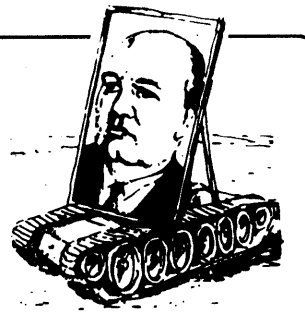


A Socialist ACTION

Gorbachev and
the Oppressed
Nationalities
in the U.S.S.R.
See page 13.



DECEMBER 1988 VOL. 6, No. 12 50 CENTS

Elections are over, austerity lies ahead

By JOSEPH RYAN

On Nov. 8, 1988, millions of Americans must have sighed with relief as one of the most loathsome presidential election campaigns in U.S. history finally came to an end.

The fact that Republican Vice President George Bush beat Democratic Governor Michael Dukakis was almost anti-climactic. Bush was leading in the polls right up to election day. And Dukakis, despite a last-minute campaigning surge, seemed to go out of his way to lose the election.

Both capitalist candidates refused to address

Anti-racist protests, See page 4.

the issues of most concern to American working people, relying instead on what has become known as "negative campaigning," that is, slick TV ads where slanderous charges are hurled back and forth and candidates are canned like a dog-food commercial. It became obvious to many people that no matter which candidate won, the working class would be the big losers.

The majority of eligible voters expressed their disgust by staying away from the polls in record numbers. Despite the best efforts of the TV and news media to play up the importance of the elections, 51 percent declined to vote. Ninety million American voters believed it made no difference who won the election.

In short, George Bush was elected by receiving only 27 percent of the votes from eligible voters—hardly a glowing mandate! In fact, it was the lowest voter turnout since 1924. Outside of the South, turnout at the polls was the lowest in 164 years.

But even before election day, many potential voters were already holding their noses. In an October 1988 *New York Times* poll, over 58 percent said they would prefer to vote for someone else—indeed, *anyone else*.

Millions of working people, the unemployed, and the poor saw no political alternatives in this election. Significantly, Jesse Jackson was unable to stampede Black voters, who were crucial to a Dukakis victory, to the polls. The lowest voter turnout in the country was in Washington, D.C., an overwhelmingly Black city.

No alternatives

Following Bush's election victory, many of the post-mortems and analyses in the liberal and left-wing press were filled with a certain despair. After all, many of them said, Bush's victory will mean four more years of Ronald Reagan's policies.

Publications like the left-wing magazine *the Progressive* found the elections "particularly disturbing." In its December 1988 issue, the editorial board of *the Progressive* noted disappointedly: "The hapless campaign of Michael Dukakis provided no inspiration and leaves no solace. He failed to uphold the faded banner of liberalism, let alone to articulate a vision of a better America freed from the shackles of the Cold War and runaway capitalism [sic]."

In its November 1988 pre-election editorial, *the Progressive* correctly pointed out that Dukakis offered "only the palest of
(continued on page 5)



Homeless mother and child outside a mission in Venice, Calif. Bipartisan austerity policies will mean more pauperization.

Mary Ellen Mark

Palestinian state declared, but Zionist troops remain

By ADAM WOOD

On Nov. 15, the Palestine National Council (PNC) announced the creation of an independent state of Palestine. The capital of the new state is to be Jerusalem. The definition of its borders will be left to the decision of an international peace conference the PNC hopes will be convened in the near future.

The PNC also voted to accept United

Nations Security Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for any international negotiations. This is a historic concession from the Palestinian movement.

Resolution 242 calls for Israeli withdrawal from lands occupied during the 1967 war while "guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state [including Israel] in the area." Resolution 338 is basically a repeat of 242.

These resolutions essentially legitimize the

Israeli occupation of Palestine in 1947-48. The PNC and the Palestine Liberation Organization have historically refused to recognize the Israeli state or to accept any negotiations which would compromise self-determination for all of Palestine.

The PNC also approved a resolution condemning terrorism in all its forms, "including state terrorism."

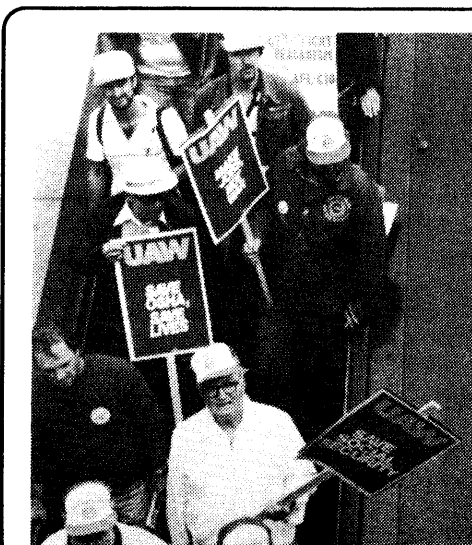
U.S. reaction

The U.S. State Department raised the idea of an international conference to solve the Palestinian problem a few months after the Intifada, the mass uprising, began in the West Bank and Gaza Strip last December. The conference would be a prelude to regional negotiations.

Last March Secretary of State George Shultz sent a letter to the leaders of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in which he set the conditions for such a conference. Shultz stated that "All participants in the conference must accept U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and renounce violence and terrorism." (*New York Times*, Nov. 13, 1988)

Yasir Arafat, chairman of the P.L.O., was the guiding force behind the PNC's decision on Nov. 15. He and his co-thinkers correctly see the United States as the dominant force in the Mid-East and hope to convince the United States to put pressure on Israel to negotiate.

"Mr. Arafat's strategy is to bring the
(continued on page 11)



An
Introduction
to the
Study of the
'Transitional
Program'
See pages 8-10.

What makes the TV preachers run?



By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

The other night I saw the Rev. Jerry Foulmouth (Falwell) on TV urging his listeners to join "Operation Rescue." That's the bunch of fundamentalist potential fascists who are trying to shut down abortion clinics all over the country by terrorist means.

They come to the clinics in droves—violating the civil rights of women who need to use the clinic. They close the doors to the clinics with their bodies. The police take their sweet time (several hours) before removing these leeches from

blocking the clinic doors.

Several weeks ago, I joined hundreds of other women and men who support women's rights by defending the clinics. I went over to a clinic in Oakland and was greeted by others who had also traveled before sunrise to defend women's rights.

By 9:30 in the morning, over 65 women had their unwanted pregnancies ended and were able to return to their families, jobs, or schools. They did not have to go to a back-alley butcher or fly to another country to have an abortion. They will not be charged with a crime or jailed for having had an abortion—as is done in many countries where abortion is illegal.

First-class Scrooges

What is this anti-choice movement all about? It's *not* a moral movement. The leaders of this movement, the TV evangelists and other such creatures, are as moral as rattlesnakes.

Virtually every one of the anti-choice advocates supports the death penalty, supports whichever war the capitalist class is engaged in at the

moment, and is for increasing the war budget at the expense of schools, food programs, and social services for the needy.

They are first-class Scrooges when it comes to the children and families of the poor, and they are the first to fight increases in welfare that would reduce the high infant-mortality rate in this wealthy country.

What is their real motive?

The Rev. Jimmy Swaggart, the crying TV evangelist, was paid \$85,000 in 1986, and \$86,000 in 1987. On top of that, he got a house worth \$1.5 million and one worth half that much for his son. He also received a Palm Springs condo, a private jet, and an air-conditioned tree house for his grandson.

They have a *class* morality. They are for the rich and against the poor. Their aim is to mobilize discontented workers and middle-class people to defend the status quo which serves them and their capitalist friends so well. They can't do this openly. They need to use phony moral issues to corral discontented and confused people in defense of the ruling rich.

In this country today, the top 10 percent of income earners control 56 percent of the wealth. The wealthiest 2 percent hold more than two-thirds of all corporate stock. (In 1910 the top fifth of the population received about 46 percent of the nation's income, while the bottom fifth received 8 percent.) In 1986 the bottom fifth received only 5 percent.

The total estimated wealth of the *Forbes* 400 richest Americans is \$156 billion—equal to the entire Gross National Product of Mexico. The total U.S. budget for welfare, food stamps, unemployment benefits, and housing is likewise \$151 billion.

Slim pickin's

The haves are getting theirs and the have-nots are getting slim pickin's.

T. Marshal Hahn Jr., chairman of Georgia-Pacific in Atlanta, Ga., earned \$900,000 in 1987—and his company made \$8.6 billion. Mary Jenkins, who cleans Hahn's office after he's gone home, makes \$3.50 an hour, which comes to about \$3640 a year. Jenkins, who is the sole support of her grandson, is not

covered by a health or pension plan. Mary Jenkins is not alone. More than 2 million women are working fulltime in jobs that pay wages below the poverty line. (In 1987, for a family of three, the poverty line was about \$9100.) In 1985, two-thirds of all women were either the sole support of their families or had husbands earning \$15,000 or less per year.

Get the drift? The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. And things are about to get much worse. The capitalists of the world are in deep doo-doo. The world capitalist economy is about to go down the tubes. Discontent will grow. Working-class consciousness will radicalize. Mass strikes and demonstrations will break out.

That's what the Foulmouths and Swaggarts are preparing for. They need to set up false devils so that these poor fools, mobilized around phoney moral issues such as abortion, will do their dirty work for them.

[My thanks to Ann Hornaday of *Ms.* magazine for the statistics quoted above.]



Bush to get lip surgery

"There is a little nervousness out there," incoming White House Chief of Staff John Sununu recently admitted. That was a bit of an understatement, as the "Nervous Nellies" of the exchange markets sent the dollar skidding to an all-time low.

George Bush tried to reassure the capitalists of the world that he'll drastically cut back the federal budget. Medicare, retirement benefits, environmental protection, mass transportation, and community-development programs are all candidates for the chopping block.

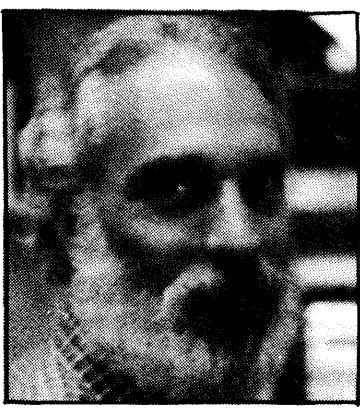
Nothing is said about cutting defense spending—the major cause of the federal deficit. Reagan wants a 6-percent hike, Bush says "4 percent maybe," and the Democrats are demanding "a freeze." Whoever wins, the military budget will remain at an unprecedented level of over \$2 trillion per year.

And, now that the election is over, the word "taxes" can be spoken. Speakers before the bipartisan National Economic Commission have recommended a federal sales tax and a boost of the gasoline tax as starters.

What about Bush's "read my lips/no new taxes" promise? As economist Ken Rosen told a San Francisco symposium last month, one of the first things George Bush's economic advisers need to do "is to advise him to get lip surgery."—M.S.

BEHIND THE LINES

Why such a fuss about the dollar?



By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

What is the great to-do about the dollar? To most of us, the almighty dollar is something we *spend*, and we get precious little for it at that. A dollar can get us a gallon of gas, a ride on the subway, or a glass of beer—if we're lucky.

But to the big banks and investment houses, the dollar is something that they buy and sell. Like all commodities, it has a price. Last month, more dollars were generally being sold than before, and the price of the dollar (expressed as its

exchange value against other currencies) dived.

The falling dollar reflects the move of capital away from investments in U.S. production and government bonds into short-term speculative ventures and stronger economies overseas. In July and August, for example, Japanese investors placed only 24.3 percent of their net-equity purchases into dollar-dominated assets—down from a high of 69.6 percent in 1987.

Why are the Japanese and others investing their capital elsewhere? Economist David Hale notes in the Nov. 21 issue of *Business Week*, "Falling U.S. profits are lessening the attractiveness of dollar investments vis-a-vis foreign alternatives."

Lazy workers?

The bosses charge that profits are falling off because American workers don't work hard enough. They point out that productivity (output per hours worked) in both Britain and Germany exceeded the U.S. rate by almost double last year. Japan had almost triple the rate. Those countries can thus sell

more and better-quality products at a lower cost than the United States.

But the low rate of productivity is not because American workers are lazy. It's derived largely from the fact that the government and the capitalist class are spending much less than in previous years to renew this country's plants and resources—and to educate people to design and operate new equipment.

During the last six years, for example, some \$700 billion was taken out of equity (factories, real estate, etc.) and put into corporate debt (i.e., for company buyouts).

Self-mutilation

The world's bankers and traders have little confidence that American capitalism will soon pull out of its self-mutilating course. Investors will continue to put their money into corporate takeovers and foreign stocks and bonds—and U.S. exports will remain uncompetitive in the marketplace.

The U.S. government, unable to raise sufficient revenue from the sluggish U.S. economy, will have to continue to borrow vast sums of money—expanding the budget

deficit and raising inflation.

Ultimately, interest rates could be forced up. While bondholders would get a windfall, the profit margin in manufacturing would decline even

more, and a recession could be hastened. The capitalists are scared. Many of them are running like rats leaving a sinking ship. The dollar is crumbling in their wake.

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Women need to remobilize to defend abortion rights

By SANDY DOYLE

The recent offensive by Operation Rescue, an activist component of the broader "Right-to-Life" network based in Binghamton, N.Y., has visibly challenged a woman's right to obtain a safe and legal abortion.

Beginning with their demonstrations in Atlanta during the Democratic Party National Convention, thousands of Operation Rescue members have been arrested as they barricade abortion clinic entrances, seeking to prevent women from exercising their constitutional rights. They have the effrontery to liken their tactics to those used by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which fought to ensure—not deny—equal rights for Black Americans.

Operation Rescue continued to test the response in various cities, culminating in their Oct. 29 target date, when they threatened to show up in some 30 cities to prevent women from obtaining abortions. Police and other authorities in every city were uniformly slow to move against the Operation Rescue people even after they began to block entrances to the clinics.

These anti-choice forces were temporarily successful in their efforts in a couple of cities, but in most places abortion-rights groups organized defense or escort services and kept the clinics open and functioning.

The most effective effort by pro-choice groups took place in Boston, where over 2000 people were mobilized by the National Organization for Women (NOW). These demonstrators were stationed along a street where several clinics perform abortions. Their mass presence deterred the Operation Rescue caravan from entering Boston.

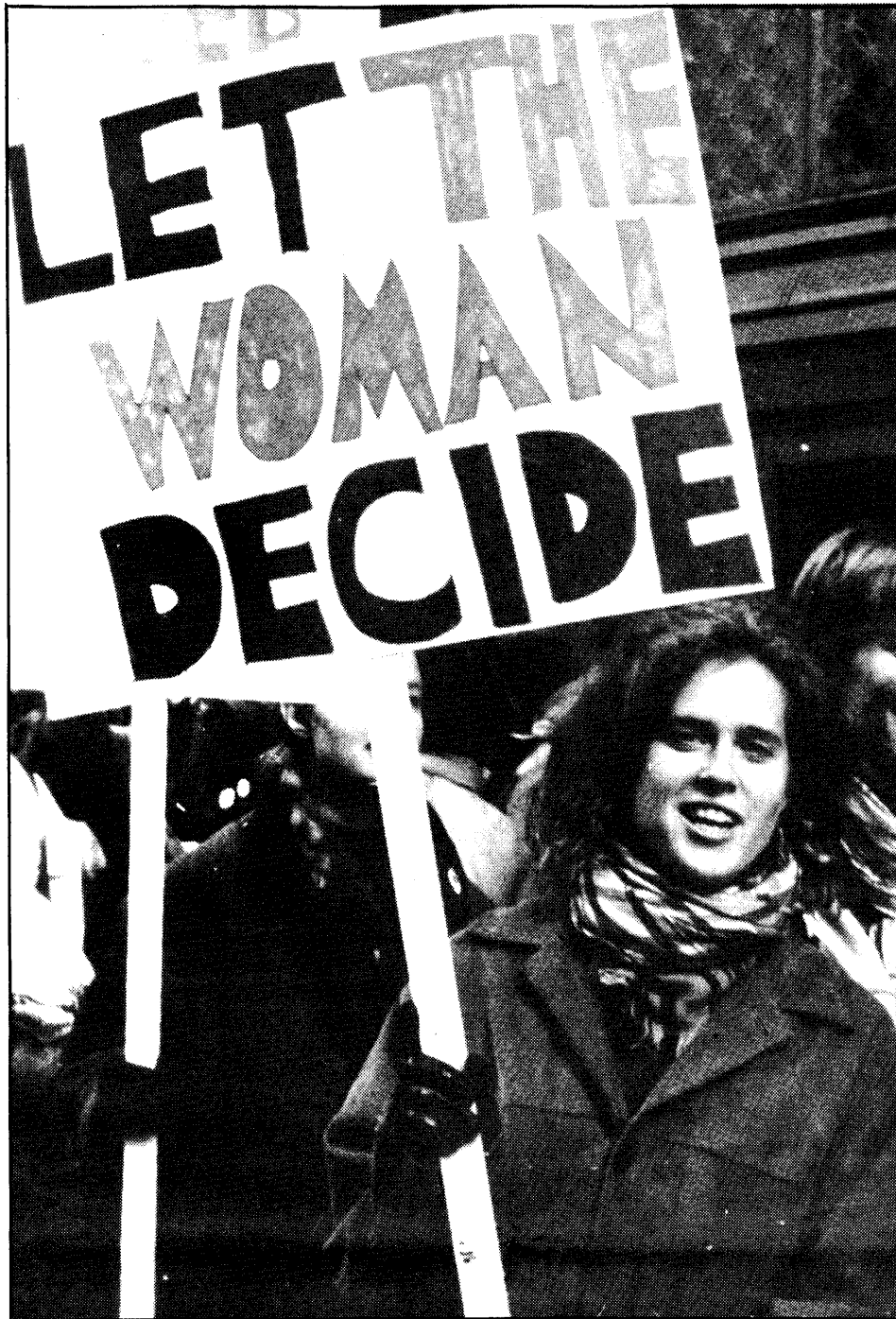
Ruling-class attacks

Since the historic 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in this country, forces opposed to a woman's right to control her body have taken every possible opportunity to reverse this decision and make abortion illegal.

The activities of Operation Rescue are but a part of broader attacks against women's rights initiated at the top levels of government and supported by both parties, Democrats and Republicans alike.

These parties, which represent the capitalist class, are in the process of pushing forward an austerity drive designed to drive down real wages and break the back of the union movement. The accompanying attacks on women's rights are, in the last analysis, designed to drive women back into the home and out of the job market, which would make the task of lowering all wages easier.

In addition to clinic bombings and other acts of terrorism very lackadaisically investigated by authorities, various "Right-to-Life" organizations have spearheaded efforts to introduce parental-consent provisions limiting teenagers' access to abortions.



Oct. 29 pro-choice picketline defends abortion clinic in Chicago, Ill.

In addition, so-called "father's rights" advocates have sought to reverse the victory won in 1973 by claiming the father has an equal right to decide on abortion. Anti-choice groups have also begun campaigning against the use of a pill, not yet cleared for use in this country, which induces abortions.

On election day, referendums ending Medicaid funding of abortions were passed in Michigan, Arkansas, and Colorado. This brings to 37 the number of states that deny poor women the right to choose.

To make the current danger to women's lives graphically clear, two days after the national elections, the Justice Department

submitted a "friend-of-the-court" brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the appeal of a Missouri case which asks the court to reverse the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

Militant response needed

The immediate response by the pro-choice groups to the activities of Operation Rescue has been designed to counter the direct threats posed at the abortion clinics. But a more far-reaching and consistent remobilization for women's rights is needed.

Along with clinic defense efforts, the type of broad, independent mobilizations which occurred in Washington, D.C., and Los

Angeles in January 1986 are vitally needed. National and local mobilizations of all supporters of women's rights are required to put the anti-abortion forces on the defensive.

Despite the well-financed campaigns by all of the anti-choice groups, backed by the Catholic Church hierarchy and other reactionary forces, the majority of the population continues to support a woman's right to control her body. The pro-choice demonstrations organized by NOW in 1986 were the largest in U.S. history.

But most of the attacks on abortion rights over the past several years have not been met with large protests despite the wider acceptance of the demands of the women's movement. With only some exceptions, the women's movement became largely demobilized following the defeat of the ERA.

Along with many participants in other social protest movements, large numbers of pro-choice activists perceived the elections of Reagan (and now Bush) as an indication of a shift to the right on the part of the U.S. population. This incorrect perception made those who support freedom of choice feel isolated and powerless.

Pro-choice campaigns

The recent ruling-class attacks on abortion rights have begun to change this situation, however. As Molly Yard, president of NOW, stated at a Nov. 15 press conference: "We have been much too polite. The nice days are over. Women are outraged by what's happening, and they will be with us in the streets. ... We are going to turn up the heat everywhere."

Responding to the government's post-election filing of the "friend of the court" brief, Yard pointed out: "They (Reagan and Bush) couldn't have done anything more startling or dramatic to galvanize the women of America. We will not tolerate the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*."

Joining Yard at the press conference was former NOW president, Eleanor Smeal, who stated: "There is going to be far more direct action. The sentiment is not just to sit there and let a small group terrorize clinics and health-care officials. The majority has been far too quiet."

In a mailing to NOW's 160,000 members, Yard stressed the necessity "to mobilize a massive public outcry against any move to outlaw and criminalize abortion." The letter announced the launching of a 120-day Campaign to Save *Roe*, stating that abortion-rights supporters must let all branches of the government know in no uncertain terms that "there aren't enough jails in America to hold the women who will defy this fundamental assault of individual liberty if *Roe* is reversed."

NOW's 120-day campaign of action will culminate in an April 9 National March for Women's Equality, Women's Lives. The April 9 march is directed at the government, which emboldens forces like Operation Rescue. It is precisely what is needed to put advocates of women's rights on the offensive again.

The march has the potential to be a huge outpouring of all supporters of women's rights—primarily a woman's right to control her body. All Out for April 9!

By BRAD WIEDMAIER

LOS ANGELES—Hundreds of AIDS activists and lesbian and gay-rights supporters blocked intersections in San Francisco and West Hollywood as the election results became known on Nov. 8. The protests were sparked by the passage of California state ballot Proposition 96. A second measure purporting to deal with the AIDS crisis, Proposition 102, was defeated.

Prop 96, reinforcing the false fear that AIDS can be transmitted by casual contact, will allow the police to force people in their custody to take an AIDS test if it's even remotely possible that they coughed or sneezed at a cop.

Prop 102 would have banned anonymous AIDS testing and destroyed confidentiality by requiring public reporting of anyone who tested positive for exposure to the HIV virus. The names of HIV carriers would have been made available to state health authorities but could also have been turned over to employers and insurance companies.

Both ballot propositions, while purporting to address the AIDS crisis, in fact threatened the minimal fight against AIDS that has been mounted by the government and the corporations.

These ballot propositions were opposed almost unanimously by the healthcare pro-

Calif. AIDS initiatives:

Confused strategy leads to passage of Prop 96

feccion, including the Calif. Medical Assoc.; Calif. Nurses Assoc.; Health Officers Assoc. of Calif.; Dr. Marcus Conant, chairman, Health Services Task Force on AIDS; Dr. Paul Volberding, Head of AIDS Programs, San Francisco General Hospital; and U.S. Surgeon General Everett Koop.

The sponsors and backers of the two measures were not the slightest bit concerned with healthcare and the AIDS epidemic. Their objective was to fuel antigay homophobia by making gays a scapegoat for the disease.

The most prominent among them, people like Lyndon LaRouche and William Dannemeyer, are widely known for their attacks on the gay community. In 1986, California voters soundly rejected the LaRouche-sponsored Prop 64, which called for quarantining all AIDS victims.

Similarly, in this election the majority of Californians rejected the idiocies and pseudo-medical superstitions of Prop 102, but Prop

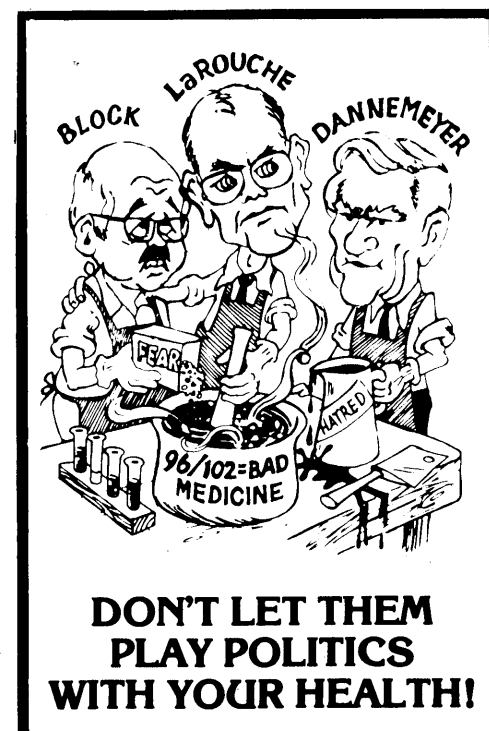
96 passed because of the false belief that it was a victims' rights measure—the victims, in this case, being the cops.

Whereas grassroots community activists had fought to defeat both propositions, state and local leaders in the lesbian and gay rights movement, who are tied to the Democratic Party, moved to separate the ballot measures and concede the defeat of Prop 96 even before the campaign began. They argued that opposing Prop 96 could, in fact, lead to the passage of Prop 102.

The main newspapers in the gay community also took too long to attack Prop 96 while they immediately denounced Prop 102.

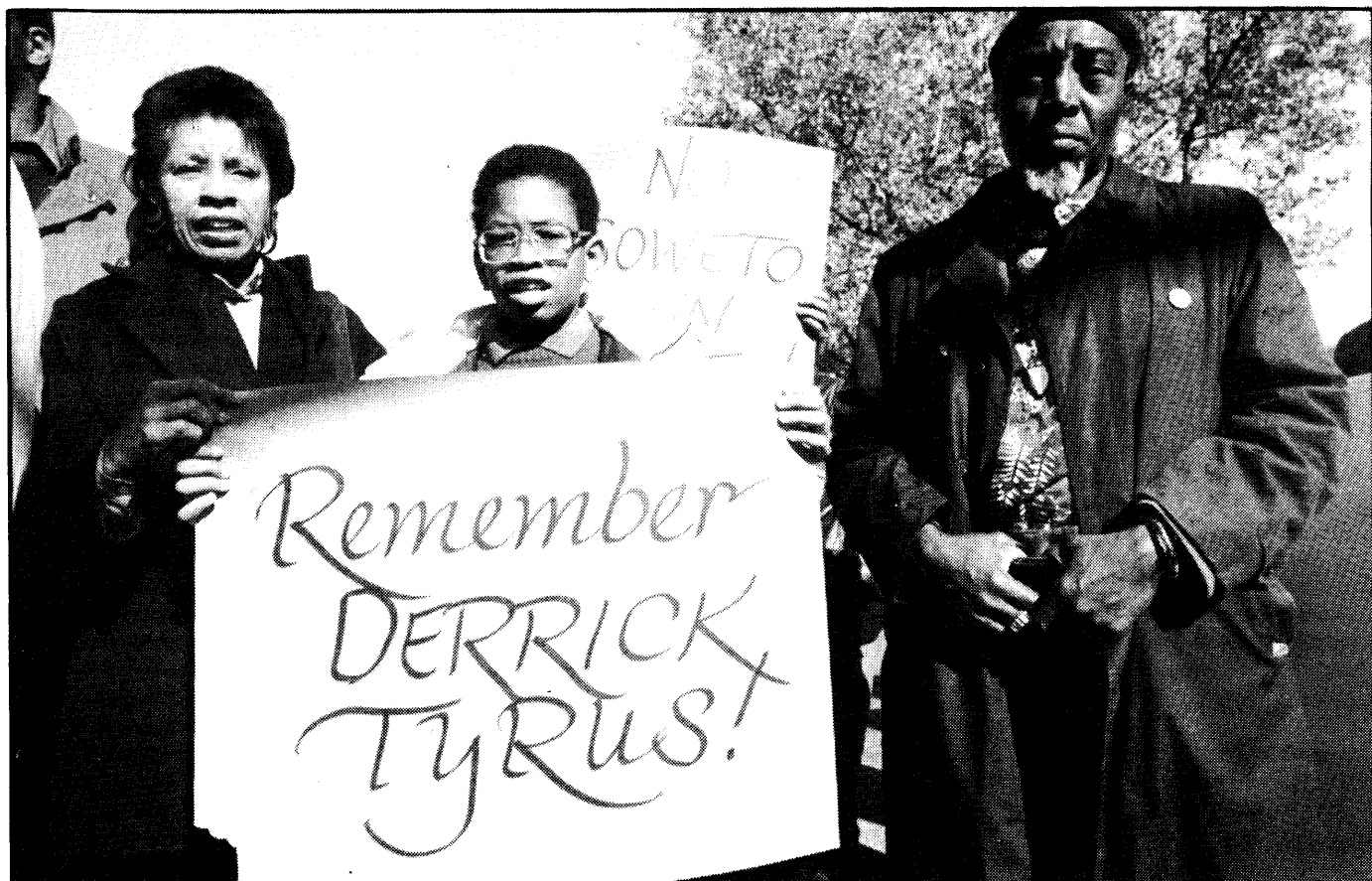
This flawed and insufficient leadership, which takes up only half the battle, must be surmounted if the fight for gay rights is going to advance against antigay bigotry. Those leaders who tell us to keep quiet so we can get our politically closeted "friends" elected must be replaced.

It is possible today to mobilize large



numbers of AIDS activists and their allies in other social protest movements around the demands of "No forced AIDS testing" and "Full AIDS care and funding now!"

Blacks demand justice in Staten Island killing



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

By CHRIS BIELER

NEW YORK—Michael Griffith in Howard Beach, 1986. ... Derek Tyrus in Staten Island, 1988. According to witnesses, it has happened again.

Derek Tyrus, 17, was struck and killed by a car in the lily-white Rosebank section of Staten Island on Oct. 7. Tyrus had been accosted by a group of whites who yelled racial epithets and chased the youth on foot and in cars to his death.

A month and a half after the incident, police report no arrests. The special NYPD "bias unit," established in the wake of the Howard Beach protests, is still "investi-

gating" if the incident was racially motivated.

New York has seen a rise in racist vigilante and police violence against minorities in the last several years. But it has also seen the reawakening of a movement against racist violence and a criminal-justice system that protects the racists.

"March for Decency"

On Oct. 29, over 350 people marched through the streets of Staten Island in a "March For Decency." After marching to the site of the death, demonstrators heard representatives from a variety of labor, church, and civil rights organizations call for the prompt arrest of the Rosebank residents responsible.

"Just as they claimed Michael Stewart strangled himself with a police baton, just as they claimed Eleanor Bumpurs threatened the lives of four armed policemen with a kitchen knife, forcing them to shoot her, so today they say Derek Tyrus was killed by a car due to horseplay in the street," said Colin Moore, attorney for the Tyrus family.

"We have descriptions of those who committed the acts," said Moore. "The police say they can't solve the case because the Black youths are not cooperating, when actually they have cooperated despite hostile grilling. We will not tolerate their excuses."

Norman Siegel, director of the New York ACLU, declared, "We must bring the civil

rights movements of the 1960s 'up-South' to the Northern cities." This was especially poignant since Derek Tyrus lived the first 16 years of his life in Selma, Ala. He died due to racist violence in his 17th year, when he moved to the "deep North."

New York is two cities

Nothing better illustrates the fact that New York is two cities—one for Blacks, one for whites—than to contrast the treatment of the white killers of Derek Tyrus with the Black teenagers who assaulted a white youth in Queens the week before the demonstration.

On Oct. 27, 15-year-old Kevin McAleen was assaulted on a bus by a group of Black teenagers, reportedly yelling racial epithets. (The teenagers were later halted by several other Black teenagers who said, "That's not right.")

Two days later the *New York Daily News* prominently featured a quote from an NYPD representative to the effect that the case was being classified as a bias case by the NYPD bias unit. The Black youths have since been booked for first-degree riot and second-degree assault.

Soon after, Mayor Koch invited McAleen and his father to City Hall, where they were given an "I LOVE NY" scarf at a press conference. The father, a retired police sergeant, took the occasion to blame the incident on Maddox, Mason, and Sharpton, the three advisers in the Tawana Brawley case. Their struggle for justice for Brawley, he claimed, "is causing some of them (Black people) to hate whites."

In a reference to the anti-racist protests in the City since Howard Beach, McAleen wailed about "a double standard in the police department. If several white boys beat up a Black kid, the Black leaders jump on it and the police react."

There is of course, a double standard in the NYPD, but it is not as McAleen portrays it.

In racially polarized New York City, there is occasional Black-initiated racial violence against whites, which meets with swift punishment—and press conferences at City Hall with the white victims. And there is racial violence initiated by whites against Blacks, which is sanctioned, if not by law, then by a complex of racist institutions—the cops, the courts, and the government.

Michael Griffith, Howard Beach ... Derek Tyrus, Staten Island. To receive even a shred of justice in New York City in 1988, Black people know they must organize and fight for it. No Justice, No peace! ■

S.F. Black students rally against campus racism

By ADAM WOOD

Acts of racism are becoming regular occurrences at colleges around the United States. San Francisco State University has been no exception to this trend.

On Sept. 21, Anifa Porter, a Black student at SFSU, was in her dorm room reading Malcolm X. Her white roommate walked in and, offended by Porter's reading material, called her a "nigger." A small fight broke out between the two students, and the dispute was taken to the Housing Office.

Amazingly, the office decided to sanction Porter for the incident. She was placed on administrative probation. Essentially, Anifa Porter had been penalized for being Black and studying her own history.

The Housing Office slowly began to realize the outrageous nature of this decision and

tried to make a tactical retreat. On Oct. 20, the office changed its decision. According to Assistant Director of Housing Mike Kleinberg, both students are "equally guilty and both should receive equal punishment." Both students were placed on administrative probation for the rest of the fall semester.

Imagine yourself reading a play of Shakespeare in the privacy of your own home. A visiting neighbor, not a Shakespeare fan, starts to verbally assault you. Would you be considered "equally guilty" for provoking your neighbor? Probably not!

"Black Friday"

Anifa Porter's victimization triggered a response from Black students at SFSU. The Black Student Caucus, along with other student organizations, called a demonstration on Oct. 25. Over 200 students rallied in front of the Student Union and marched around

campus protesting the dorm incident and demanding more faculty of color. The demonstration was reported on the front page of the *San Francisco Examiner*.

Friday, Oct. 28, was declared "Black Friday" by Black student organizations. Anti-racist educational activities were held on campus, and everyone was asked to wear black.

The demonstration brought the issue of racism to the attention of the whole campus, and some found the truth hard to bear. On Nov. 3, the *Golden Gater*, SFSU's campus newspaper, devoted its entire letters page to letters denouncing the demonstration and the Black Student Caucus.

The letters accused the Black students of being racist and intimidating. One letter said, "I couldn't help but draw a parallel between the black protestors marching on campus and the neo-nazi skin heads that parade around my neighborhood ... as they chant white power slogans and complain about how they are discriminated against."

While this letter was the most offensive, all of the letters faulted the Black students for organizing to defend their rights. The fact is that racism and discrimination against Blacks are not figments of insecure imaginations. Anifa Porter's case is just one example of Blacks being treated as second-class citizens in the United States.

Independent movements

Racism takes many forms, ranging from job discrimination to physical violence, and Blacks have every right to wage a fight against racism in all of its forms. Independent movements, such as the one Black students are trying to build at SFSU, are the only

force that proved effective in beating back the effects of racism in the past.

White students should support and help build the anti-racist movement. In this way they will strengthen the student movement as a whole.

The campus demonstration did more than just bring the issue of racism into the light. On Nov. 9, SFSU President Robert Corrigan established a commission to "investigate matters of racism" in faculty hiring. Corrigan reported that oppressed nationalities constitute 49 percent of the college's general population, but make up only 15 percent of the full-time faculty.

This is an important concession from the administration. To make sure this issue goes from the "commission" stage to the real world, and to free Anifa Porter from administrative probation, the students at SFSU will have to keep up the fight.

Ironically, SFSU was the scene of the country's longest student strike in 1968, which demanded an end to racism on campus and a Black Studies Department. Twenty years later, there is still a lot of work to do.

Malcolm X Forum

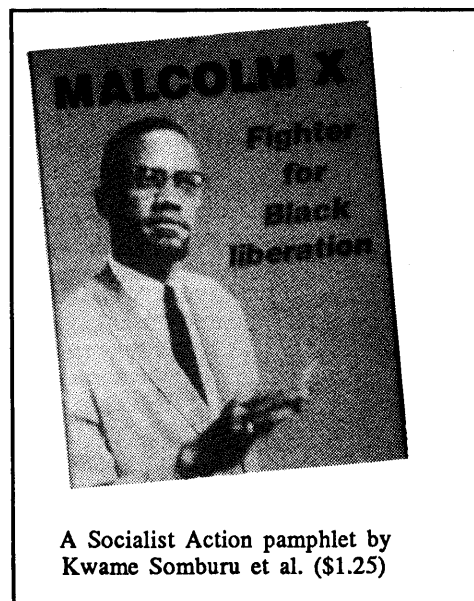


Kwame Somburu

On Nov. 21, Socialist Action member Kwame Somburu spoke to 21 people at San Francisco State University on "Malcolm X and the Fight Against Racism Today." Black students made up half the audience, and \$40 worth of literature by Malcolm X was sold.

Somburu suggested that Black students work with faculty and staff unions on campus to organize a speak-out against recent racist incidents there.

Somburu was one of the first to join the Organization of Afro-American Unity, founded by Malcolm X in 1964. He is co-author of the Socialist Action pamphlet, "Malcolm X: Fighter for Black Liberation."



A Socialist Action pamphlet by Kwame Somburu et al. (\$1.25)

S.F. socialist candidates heartened by vote totals

Despite the lowest voter turnout since 1924, Socialist Action candidates in San Francisco scored their biggest electoral vote total ever.

Joseph Ryan, candidate for Board of Supervisors, received over 11,000 votes while Sylvia Weinstein, candidate for Board of Education, received over 21,000. Weinstein more than doubled her vote total of 1986.

More than 9000 campaign brochures and 1500 posters were distributed during the course of the campaign. This happened at a time when interest in the city elections seemed to be at a low. Many community meetings attended by Ryan and Weinstein had fewer than 30 people.

Although San Francisco city elections are nonpartisan, Ryan and Weinstein ran openly as socialists and promoted a socialist program. Calling for a 30-hour workweek at 40 hours' pay to end unemployment and stabilizing rent at 10 percent of a person's income, Ryan and Weinstein tapped into the voters' growing dissatisfaction with the two-capitalist-party system.

Campaign under investigation

In a related event, Socialist Action remains under investigation by the District Attorney's office for non-disclosure of campaign contributors' names and addresses. Socialist Action contends that disclosure would expose their contributors to harassment, violating their rights to privacy, free speech, and free association. Socialist organizations have been exempt from disclosure laws following a Supreme Court decision in 1983.

The District Attorney contends, however, that socialists in San Francisco have no reason to fear harassment and are therefore not exempt from the disclosure laws.

At a press conference on Nov. 3, Ryan presented Assistant District Attorney George Beckwith with extensive documentation of government harassment of dissident political parties in the San Francisco area. The documentation also included incidents of illegal government surveillance of labor unions, antiwar groups, and feminists.

Ryan said that disclosure laws are not



Sylvia Weinstein speaking at Oct. 13 Board of Education candidate's forum in San Francisco

Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

effective and penalize small campaigns. He said that rich candidates get around the laws by hiding contributions in political action committees. This makes it virtually impossible to trace money to its source, and does not stop elections from being "bought."

According to Ryan, Socialist Action ran the most honest campaign in the San Francisco election. "We told people right

away what we are," he said.

"We are socialists. We think that society should be run in the interests of working people—not the rich."

So far the case has garnered modest press coverage. In a front-page article in the daily *San Francisco Progress*, Beckwith admits that Socialist Action has acted "in good faith" by supplying his office with material relevant to the case. He states, however, that charges

may yet be filed.

Socialist Action has stated that it will not reverse its position and intends to take any legal action necessary to protect the rights of its contributors

The American Civil Liberties Union has expressed interest in representing Socialist Action in any litigation that may result from the District Attorney's demand for disclosure.

... elections

(continued from page 1)

alternatives—and on many crucial issues, no alternative at all." This correct but platonic assessment by *the Progressive* reflects the frustration of trying to build a "left wing" inside the Democratic Party.

All those who rallied around Jesse Jackson's bid to win the Democratic Party presidential nomination now have a bitter taste in their mouths. The trek from the illusions in Jackson to the reality of Dukakis must have been a painful one.

When George Bush attacked Dukakis for being "soft on defense," the Democratic Party candidate responded by being photographed while driving a new MX tank. When Bush said Dukakis was "soft on terrorism," Dukakis announced that he would support pre-emptive military strikes against "terrorist" bases. When Bush accused Dukakis of being "too liberal," Dukakis retorted, "No! I'm a moderate."

And then, only two weeks before election day, Dukakis emerged from his cocoon and became a "flaming liberal," albeit a dollar short and a day late. All of a sudden, when it was too late to matter, he started to talk about his concern for working people and the oppressed.

After all, the capitalist political party shell game had to be preserved for the 1992 elections.

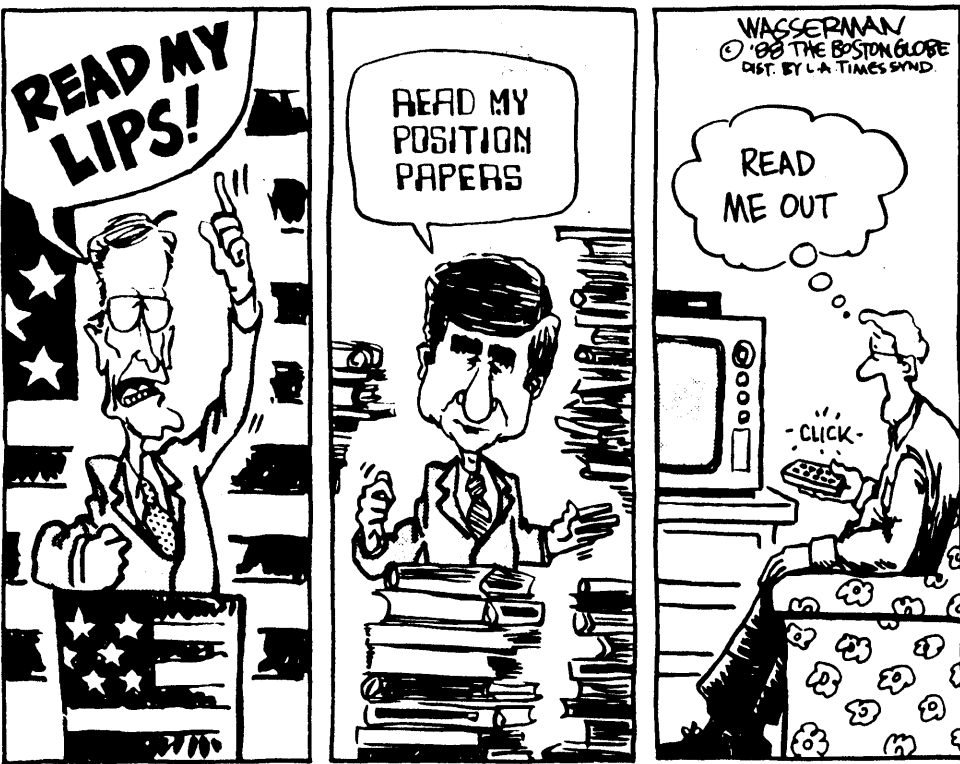
Continuity in crisis

Many capitalist political analysts are saying that Bush's election victory is a further confirmation of the "rightward drift" of the American people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Polls indicate that the majority of Americans are for a *cut* in the so-called defense budget and an *increase* in funds devoted to improving social services. The majority are against U.S. aid to the Contras. The majority state they support a woman's right to abortion. They want solutions to the plight of the poor and the homeless.

But none of these burning issues were addressed by either capitalist candidate, and consciously so.

Furthermore, the looming crisis of the U.S. economy was avoided like the plague by both candidates. Despite the victory of the



Republican candidate, the stock market plunged 110 points between Nov. 3 and Nov. 20. In doom-and-gloom language that socialists are usually accused of using, many prominent U.S. economic analysts are wringing their hands about the future.

A refreshingly frank, but brutally apocalyptic, article published in the Nov. 20, 1988, *San Francisco Examiner*, begins with the conclusions of many capitalist analysts: "After six years of economic expansion built on enormous public and private debt, the faceless fear of a great American financial collapse is beginning to take on some ugly features."

Roger Robinson, former senior director for international economics in Reagan's National Security Council, believes "1989 could be the year" for an economic recession.

President-elect Bush credited his Pyrrhic electoral victory to the eight years of "peace and prosperity" of the Reagan administration. Now it is revealed that the economy contains so many ticking time bombs that economic analysts fear a chain reaction of explosions.

The crisis faced by the U.S. capitalist class and its new chief executive is many-sided. The bankrupt savings-and-loan system is

collapsing, requiring a bail-out of close to \$15 billion per year. Heavily indebted Latin American countries may soon be forced to cancel billions in interest payments they owe to U.S. banks. German and Japanese capitalists might reduce their willingness to finance the U.S. debt.

As the dollar falls on the world market, thus making U.S. goods cheaper, the pressure to increase interest rates accelerates to attract more foreign investment. This in turn will lead to a repetition of the never-before-seen "stagflation" of the early 1970s—a "slowed down" economy combined with rising inflation.

And, of course, always lurking in the background is the \$152 billion federal budget deficit—a budget that by edict of the Gramm-Rudman Law is supposed to be balanced by 1993.

Who will pay?

The U.S. government is not the only institution that's out of money. Corporations have laden themselves with huge debts while pursuing frenzied buy-outs of other corporations. After losing over \$1.2 trillion in the Oct. 19, 1987, stock market crash, any precipitous move by the government—like

higher interest rates—could spell doom.

The so-called "peace and prosperity" that Bush bragged about is nothing more than a house of cards built on a foundation of sand. What economists fear the most is that one ill wind could topple the whole structure.

During the election campaign, neither Bush nor Dukakis would address this question. That's because no matter who won the election the same program would be implemented. For example, the Farmers Home Administration delayed sending foreclosure notices to 85,000 family farmers until after the election.

The money to balance the budget and pay the debts has to come from the hides of working people. The ruling-class program calls for an increase in taxes on consumer items like tobacco and gasoline, combined with a reduction in entitlement programs like social security.

In this sense, a large proportion of working people knew instinctively that the 1988 presidential election was nothing more than the changing of the guard on the executive committee of the capitalist class. But the best laid plans of mice and men. ...

International Viewpoint

November 21, 1987 (C) 87 \$2 USD 90 124

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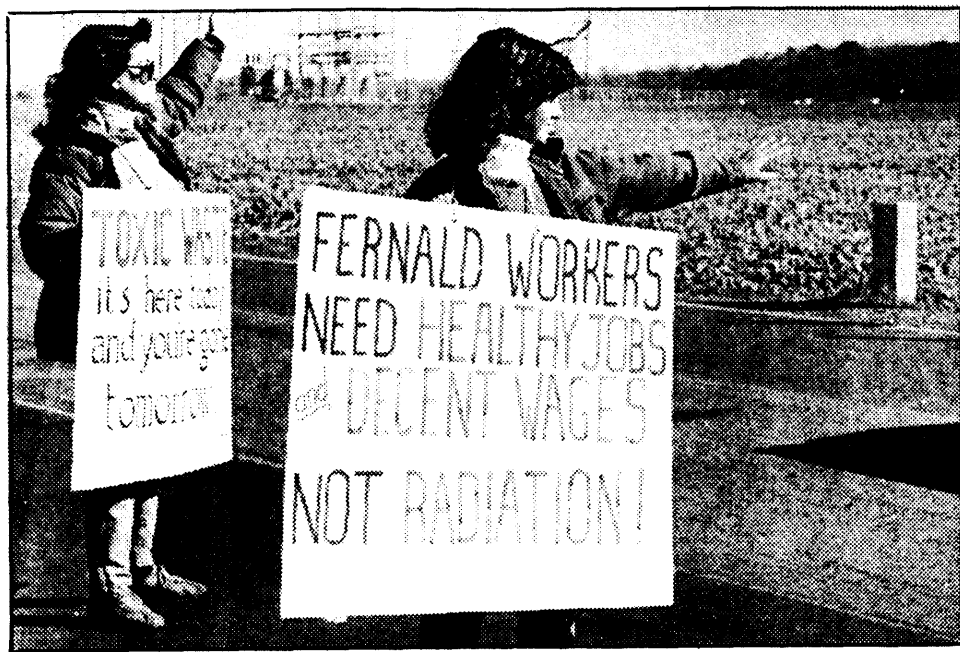
A biweekly magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International. One-year sub: \$47. Write to: 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France.

Cinci. nuke plant stirs outrage among workers



Bob Hense

Management at the Fernald nuclear weapons plant has systematically poisoned workers and residents. Fourteen unions at the plant have been on strike against unsafe work conditions.



Fred Straub/The Cincinnati Enquirer

thousands of dollars.

The local residents, in their majority, favor closing the Fernald plant. In addition, a \$300-million class-action lawsuit has been filed against NLO on behalf of the 14,000 people who live or work within a five-mile radius of the plant.

One of the reasons the Department of Energy has confessed to large-scale bungling and lying is to undermine the suit. The government is saying, "You cannot sue NLO because they were just following government orders, and you cannot sue the government."

The blame really belongs both to the government and to the private contractors that ran the plant. If NLO was as moral as it claims to be, why didn't it just refuse to operate the plant until the government paid for the repairs that were needed? Because it was making a big profit, that's why!

The contractors and the government made the mess. They should be made to close the plant permanently, cease the production and use of hazardous materials, and start an immediate clean-up.

Extensive testing should be conducted of workers and residents who may have been contaminated by the plant. Workers and residents should be reimbursed for all health and medical expenses, emotional distress, lost property values, and moving expenses.

But an even greater problem has to be tackled at the same time. The production of materials for nuclear weapons and power plants must be stopped. Fernald is only one link in the government's nuclear chain. As long as nuclear weapons are being produced and nuclear power plants are being built, this problem will not end.

These kind of solutions will not come about as a result of the good will of the government or the contractors. It will take large numbers of people mobilized in the streets to stop the nuclear menace.

Off and on throughout recent years, local anti-nuclear groups have demonstrated at the plant and called for its closing. Fernald residents have their own group called FRESH (Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health) that has protested against the plant.

The greater Cincinnati area has mobilized large numbers of people against nuclear power in general. A few years ago, a large movement was successful in stopping the opening of a large nuclear-power plant just west of the city. The plant is now being converted to coal.

The victims of nuclear weapons production won't settle for anything less with regard to the Fernald plant. ■

after the revelations were made, a special education professor from Miami University in nearby Oxford, Ohio, stated that whole neighborhoods were seen full of genetic handicaps instead of the normal one in a million.

Large numbers of Americans have seen the Zinser family in *Time* magazine and on "The Phil Donahue Show." The Zinsers owned a garden near the Fernald processing plant, and their two sons contracted cancer. The youngest, two years old, had to have a leg amputated. The amputated leg contained 10 times more uranium than would usually be accumulated over a lifetime.

Residents file suit

As if the medical threat to life was not enough, many of those people living closest to the plant are, in effect, being held hostage by the plant. Property values have decreased drastically, and many cannot afford to take losses that amount to

conservative estimate) 1775 pounds of uranium and 491,890 pounds of toxic chemicals into the surrounding air and water. The Oct. 31, 1988, edition of *The Cincinnati Enquirer* revealed that the threat from hazardous chemicals stored at the plant could pose an even greater immediate health hazard than the nuclear waste.

Government admits liability

The government has admitted that it knew of many of these problems and did nothing. In fact during some of the years when radioactive leaks were a problem, the government was giving NLO large bonuses.

The New York Times stated in an Oct. 26 article, "Thus, a contractor that scored low marks on environmental programs could gain excellent evaluations and high bonuses if it did well in meeting production goals." In 1984, NLO received a bonus of \$1,306,955 for "delivering uranium on time, in improving productivity generally and in keeping costs down."

Fourteen unions are currently on strike at the Fernald plant and production is shut down. One of the issues in the strike is 300 grievances against Westinghouse, most on safety issues. Another is the reduction in job classifications, also seen as a safety issue. And, Westinghouse wants to reduce long-term health benefits.

It is estimated that more than half of the long-time workers at the plant have been exposed to some uranium.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) found a relationship between exposure and medical problems. Some workers could not even walk 100 yards without stopping to catch their breath. More than half had also been exposed to radioactive thorium and other chemical toxics. One-fourth had restricted lung function.

On "The Phil Donahue Show," broadcast from the Fernald area a few days

By BILL O'KAIN

CINCINNATI—Since the early 1950s, the Feed Materials Production Center in Fernald, Ohio, has poured hundreds of tons of radioactive materials into the environment. This installation, owned by the Department of Energy (DOE) and operated by private contractors, processes uranium for use in nuclear weapons.

The innocuous sounding name (rather like a farm "feed-and-seed" store) belies the deadly reality of the plant. It is estimated that over 230 tons of radioactive material have gone up the stacks or leaked into the surrounding water supply. This does not include a missing 337 tons of uranium hexafluoride.

The plant is just a few miles northwest of Cincinnati. It opened in 1951 and was operated for the government by National Lead Co. of Ohio (NLO) until 1985, when Westinghouse took over.

From the very beginning, both NLO and the government knew of the escape of hazardous materials into the surrounding environment and intentionally lied to their own workers and to the surrounding inhabitants about the dangers involved.

Since 1951, it has been estimated by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency that over 12-million pounds of uranium and 176,000 pounds of thorium have been dumped into the six large disposal pits.

By the early 1960s, the operators of the plant suspected that the disposal pits were leaking into the surrounding groundwater. By 1962, NLO knew for sure that radioactive and chemical wastes had contaminated a creek running through the plant.

In 1974 and 1978, NLO warned the government, but not the public, about groundwater contamination. In 1983, uranium was found in private wells in the area.

In 1987, the Fernald plant released (by

Calif. voters 'get even' with insurance firms

By HAYDEN PERRY

California voters have delivered a stunning setback to the predatory insurance industry that has been squeezing working people for decades. The voters cut through an unprecedented \$70-million campaign of confusion and fear to defeat four propositions the insurance industry favored. Instead, they approved the one initiative the insurance moguls bitterly opposed.

Proposition 103, voted into law, requires an immediate rollback of 20 percent from November 1987 levels in auto, property, and casualty rates. An additional 20-percent reduction will be given to good drivers.

These rates cannot be increased before November 1989, unless the insurance company can prove insolvency. All rate increases must be approved by an insurance commissioner, who will be elected. The insurance companies will no longer be exempt from anti-trust laws.

In recent years, the insurance companies have jacked up their rates considerably. Motorists who have never had an accident are paying as much as \$1600 a year for auto insurance. When consumers went to the state capital to seek relief, they found the insurance lobbyists were there already.

The multibillion-dollar insurance/casualty game has a number of conflicting players. Trial lawyers seek large contingency fees, the medical industry wants to get its cut from accident victims, while the insurance moguls want to reduce claims to the minimum.

The lawmakers did not want to offend any of these powerful interests, so it did nothing. This led to the War of Initiatives.

The insurance companies paid for not one but four propositions, each reflecting one or another insurance concern. Consumers then weighed in with Proposition 103.

Out of the fog of confusion and falsehoods, one thing became clear to the voters. Proposition 103 was opposed by the insurance interests and supported by Ralph Nader. They went for the slogan "103 is the one for me," rejected the other four, and left the giant insurance industry flat on its back—for the moment.

Like sore losers, the insurance companies have gone to court to halt implementation of the new law. Some companies have raised premiums on new policies 20 percent to nullify the intent of the rollback.

Despite the delaying tactics now in force, the people have won an important victory.

They have demonstrated that workers can vote in their interest despite a campaign of thousands of lies and millions of dollars.

They can also counter new lies and threats by the insurance companies. The insurance interests wait they are losing money. Supporters of the successful proposition say, "Let them open their books and prove it!"

Some of the insurance giants have threatened to pull out of California if Proposition 103 is allowed to stand. Working people can fight back by demanding the state government immediately freeze the assets in California of the insurance corporations.

Ultimately, the insurance industry must be nationalized under workers control. In addition, a universal system of free health and medical care must be provided. Human needs must come before profits. ■

A case history of one union local's attempted fightback

By ANN ROBERTSON

SUNNYVALE, Calif.—In recent years, production workers here at the Westinghouse Marine Division have been forced to give large concessions to the company. The leadership of Local 565 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), which represents the approximately 800 production workers, decided that this downward spiral had to be halted.

Earlier this year, with contract negotiations about to open, the leadership saw it was necessary to take steps to draw more members into active participation in the union.

First, a picnic and rally was organized for members and their families. In order to encourage a sense of unity and solidarity, members of the four other local unions at Westinghouse that are represented in the national Coordinated Bargaining Committee (CBC) were also invited.

The picnic/rally drew over 200. The success was largely due to a second tactic employed to increase member activism. Each week the leadership of Local 565 composed a leaflet in order to inform members of significant developments in the contract negotiations and to provide an analysis of what it takes to win a decent contract.

The leaflets were distributed at plant gates. In general, the membership was impressed by this show of diligence.

The leaflets argued persistently that the workers and Westinghouse share no common interests: "This is what the company always wants: the lowest possible wage it can get away with. Think about it. The less we get in wages, the more it gets in profits."

One leaflet showed that the lump-sum "bonus," a recent substitute for wage increases, was used by the company in order to dupe the workers into accepting less. A little arithmetic was used to prove that the lump-sum "bonus" constitutes a gigantic rip-off over a given period of time when compared to a wage hike.

"Running over their leaders"

The same national CBC that negotiates the contract with Westinghouse also negotiates with General Electric, only slightly earlier. Thus the GE contract is generally viewed as a weathervane for the Westinghouse contract, although the latter usually ends up a little worse.

Local 565 distributed a leaflet to the membership that took critical aim at the contract that had just been negotiated with GE. The leaflet was soon to attain nationwide notoriety within the IAM as well as other CBC unions.

This leaflet came on the heels of a July 18, 1988, *Business Week* article describing the rising expression of rank-and-file discontent with the contracts negotiated by top officials.

"When their leaders agree to modest settlements rather than risk a strike, members lose patience," *Business Week* asserted. "Some unions are likely to test their muscle against management, even if it means running over their own leaders in the process."


The Local 565 leaflet explained the problem this way: "The reason unions are weak and compelled to accept grossly inadequate contracts is mainly due to the central role played by the top officials themselves."

The leaflet focused on the role of International United Electrical Workers (IUE) President William Bywater, who headed the GE negotiations. "Instead of Bywater acting loyally in his membership's interests," it stated, "he acted as a go-between, giving first-place to the owners' interests."

"It should be clear that a new course is needed with Westinghouse, as well as a new kind of leadership capable of developing the capacity of the members to fight back. Otherwise the union-company 'partnership' will inevitably lead to deeper cuts in our standard of living."


George Poulin, general vice president of the IAM and co-chair of the CBC, received a copy of this leaflet. His temperature must have risen considerably because he immediately

The leadership of a Westinghouse IAM local conducts a model campaign to involve members in a fight against concessions.



IAM LOCAL 565
Labor Solidarity Committee

SAFETY FIRST




IAM LOCAL 565
Negotiating Committee Report #3

LUMP SUM - THE \$24,000 RIP-OFF

A wage increase is cumulative and becomes part of every year's wage increase. Lump-sum payments are not cumulative. You get that only once and at an enormous cost to you and your family.

Year No. *	Wage Scale 1st person Lump Sum - \$949.42 (dollars per hour)	Wage Scale 2nd person 3% 1st year increase (dollars per hour)	Yearly difference in wages between 1st and 2nd persons (dollars total)



IAM LOCAL 565
Negotiating Committee Report #5

Profits

Sales	Profit	Wage Increase
\$	\$	\$
\$10.7 billion	\$739 million	?

Profits: And the company wants us to share costs!

Westinghouse is enjoying record profits. According to *Business Week* (3/28/88), Westinghouse "in 1987 produced its fourth straight year of record profits -- \$739 million on \$10.7 billion in sales." This year, in just the first quarter, Westinghouse had a net income of \$168,500,000. That, according to the company's official First Quarter Report, is an increase of 13.8% over the same period last year.

How do they make all this money? Off of Westinghouse workers, of course!

This increase in profits for Westinghouse is directly related to the increase in the output of Westinghouse workers. "In fact, net income per employee has more than doubled, to \$6,600 in 1987 from \$3,100 in 1982." (*Business Week* 3/28/88)

It's high time for the workers' skills and productivity to be compensated adequately. This is our time. It's no time for "cost-sharing" swindles. It's Union Time!

This is the year Westinghouse must anticipate that its employees are expecting a substantial wage increase. **NO LUMP SUM!**

Let management know that it's Union Time and that you expect a big hunk of the money back that you made for them, in the form of more sick and personal days, more vacations, better benefits and improved pensions.

Labor Donated June 1988

"We don't want to strike — but we will."

shot off a letter to Local 565 President Bill Leumer demanding retractions.

Instead, Poulin received a reply from Leumer, which emphasized: "We think the central point is that Brother Bywater's policy resulted in a setback, despite his claim that the settlement was 'solid.'"

"We are convinced that his policy will continue to result in setbacks, since it essentially amounts to subordinating the membership's wages and working conditions to the company's drive for ever-increasing profits and giving up without a fight." Poulin never responded to this letter.

As a result of all these leaflets and of the picnic and rally, a record number of members turned out for the strike sanction vote just two weeks before the contract's expiration date of Aug. 29.

Negotiations begin

Negotiations had begun on July 20. Five members from Local 565 were elected to serve on the Negotiating Committee and were joined by the Business Agent.

The Directing Business Representative,

who has ultimate authority over these questions, insisted that the Business Agent play the role of spokesperson. He also requested that a Grand Lodge Representative be sent in from the international. The hope was that these officials would hold the Local 565 Negotiating Committee in check.

Not until the last week did Westinghouse finally put its proposal on the table. Noting that the previous contract's concessions were given without a struggle, the company concluded that the union was weak. Like a shark that had tasted blood, it went for more.

A two-tier wage system that had been inaugurated two contracts ago was further expanded. Workers would be required to make higher payments into their health coverage. And "bonuses" again were substituted for wage increases.

Furthermore, even though the national contract stipulated a 10-percent differential for swing and graveyard shifts, the workers at the Marine Division in Sunnyvale were told they would have to settle for 5 percent.

This last maneuver reveals one of the

curiosities of the whole bargaining process. The CBC purportedly negotiates a national contract, including such issues as wages and contract language. But the CBC does not insist in its agreement that the company be prohibited from altering national stipulations on the local level.

In other words, if the company concludes that a particular local is weak, it can launch an isolated attack and demand even more concessions from a small abandoned local—with the full knowledge and probably a "wink" from the "leadership" of the CBC.

"We must act as one!"

In response to the company's aggressive posture and the lack of direction from the top union "leaders," the five unions at the Marine Division took an unprecedented step to forge real unity in defense of their common interests.

The leaders of the five unions met to form a united front. A letter was drafted to the CBC pointing out the seriousness of these local attacks and urging that a united front be formed on the national level—the only level on which the unions were strong enough to stop the company.

"We must act as one!" the letter said. "No union should stand alone against a large multinational corporation. No contract should be signed that permits separate wage and/or benefit conditions. We know we can beat back the company assault if we are united. We will be sure to lose if we are divided."

This letter was signed by the local representatives of the five unions. Unfortunately, it fell on deaf ears.

Union tops "sell" contract

In the final days of the talks, the Local 565 Negotiating Committee was under intense pressure from the union hierarchy to accept the company's shameful proposal.

The Grand Lodge Representative, who was sent in to monitor the local under the guise of "helping" it, rose to the occasion and performed his real assignment. He helped the Business Agent sell the company's contract proposal to the local.

Four of the five members of the Negotiating Committee concluded that under such adverse circumstances the contract was the best that could be secured. Only one Negotiating Committee member, Local 565 President Bill Leumer, refused to recommend the contract to the union membership.

Several days before the ratification meeting, the members received a 14-page summary of the new contract from the company, a two-page summary of local alterations from the Local 565 Negotiating Committee, and nothing from the CBC.

At the ratification meeting, the members heard two reports. One from the Business Agent (assisted by the Grand Lodge Representative) urged acceptance. The Local 565 president, on the other hand, gave a minority report that denounced the no-struggle strategy of the international union leadership.

Leumer pointed out that the union tops overestimate the strength of the company and underestimate the strength of the membership—even of locals left to fend for themselves by the international unions.

Despite the pressure from the company and the international union working together, the contract was adopted by a much closer margin than anywhere else in the country. Forty percent sided with President Leumer in voting down the proposal and 60 percent voted in favor.

In explaining the closeness of the vote, one fact stands out. The IAM Local 565 leadership was willing to do whatever was necessary to keep the membership involved, fully informed, and prepared for a fight. Every union leaflet produced at the time stated clearly: "We don't want to strike, but we will."

Unfortunately, these unionists were generally isolated from other Westinghouse units around the country. As the bosses' attacks increase, however, other union locals will find it necessary to follow the example of Local 565 in Sunnyvale. ■

Part I: The Historical Background

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The long period of capitalist economic stability is coming to an end. A new period of working-class fightback is not far down the road. The new generation of trade-union militants that will be impelled forward by the coming crisis will be forced by necessity to relearn the history of labor struggles and its lessons—and thus avoid unnecessarily repeating the errors of the past.

The "Transitional Program," written by Leon Trotsky and adopted by the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938, is the fruit of nearly 150 years of revolutionary working-class experience.

As a guide to action, it incorporates the method which Karl Marx and Frederick Engels applied in 1848 to the founding program of scientific socialism, the "Communist Manifesto," and in more explicit detail in their 1850 "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League."

The method had been brilliantly applied by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky to the problems of class struggle during the course of the revolution in Russia in 1917.

The "Transitional Program" is the basic guideline for revolutionary working-class action in the present epoch. It is at the heart of the programmatic foundation of Socialist Action and will prove to be an indispensable guide to action for the next generation of working-class fighters.

The method of the "Transitional Program"

In this document Trotsky brilliantly elucidates the transitional method. He explains that its power and effectiveness derives from its primary revolutionary function: the struggle for workers' power.

At the same time, it is the most practical guide for effective action in the day-to-day struggle. It is not limited by the alleged "realizability" or "unrealizability" of the program's demands.

The question of whether or not the demands can be fulfilled, Trotsky explains, "is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery."

But Trotsky carefully guards against infantile leftism that would reduce leadership to "revolutionary" sloganeering without regard to the level of mass consciousness. In the introductory portion of the "Transitional Program," he sums up the transitional method:

"The strategic task of the next period—a prerevolutionary period of agitation, propaganda, and organization—consists in overcoming the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard (the confusion and disappointment of the older generation, the inexperience of the younger generation).

"It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat."

It would be a fatal oversimplification to reduce the "Transitional Program" to a list of tactical slogans out of which is plucked the appropriate action proposal to meet the needs of the working class and its allies.

It is especially necessary, so long as the class struggle leadership is still a minority, to know when to advance the appropriate slogan, and more important, in which form: whether for educational purposes (propaganda), or to prepare workers to take action (agitation), or as a call for immediate action.

Knowing when and how to advance the appropriate slogans depends on the stage reached in mass consciousness and the level of influence reached by revolutionary socialism.

Objective prerequisites for socialist revolution

At this point, however, we must make a necessary detour, to first establish the objective material basis for the major premise of the "Transitional Program": the inevitability of a coming struggle for power between the two fundamental classes in modern society—workers and capitalists.

Marx and Engels' earthshaking contribution to socialist theory was to put it on a scientific basis. Scientific socialism, in contrast to the visionary utopian version which preceded Marx and Engels, is based on the perception of human society as being the objective result of an unconscious evolutionary process.

Their analytical method, historical materialism, enabled them to perceive that the forms of social relations between human beings depend on the level of control over the forces of nature achieved by society. As human culture advances, new forms of social organization become a necessity for further cultural development.

World capitalism lost its capacity a long time ago to create the material conditions for the development of the productive forces, upon which all human progress and well-being depends, without causing ever-greater paroxysms of

Nat Weinstein is co-national secretary of Socialist Action. These are the first two installments of an on-going series dealing with the "Transitional Program."

death and destruction.

Since World War I, the social system based on private ownership of the means of production has been in a continual state of crisis.

That first world holocaust was followed 21 years later by the horror of an even bloodier second world war. The human race is now threatened with a third world war. And in between, scores of "localized" wars and "police actions" have been waged by the most powerful capitalist states to suppress rebelling subject peoples.

Subjective prerequisites for revolution

On the eve of World War II, when the "Transitional Program" was written, Trotsky summed up the objective ripeness of the world for socialist revolution and predicted the impending catastrophe:

"All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet 'ripened' for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only 'ripened'; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership."

This judgment retains full validity today despite the temporary reestablishment of world capitalism in its imperialist strongholds since shortly after World War II. We will examine the reasons for this seeming contradiction in a moment.

Evolution and revolution

Marx and Engels had explained from the outset that when the new mode of production matures within the womb of the old social system, the relatively peaceful process of social evolution cannot automatically be completed. It requires revolutionary force to overcome the resistance of the beneficiaries of the old order.

Those classes which benefit most from the given exploitative social system combat change. They defend, with all the repressive force at their command, the legal and juridical foundations supporting their rights and privileges. Ruling classes never give way to historical necessity without a fight to the death.

Social classes, which history designates to lead humanity forward, become the revolutionary instruments of human social evolution. The capitalist class, for example, led the revolution against feudalism which was blocking a social and economic breakthrough for humanity.

Capitalism, in its gestating phase, required the freeing of the serfs and the formal equality of all men under law, in order to open the road to a massive increase in the productive forces. This objective need caused the capitalist class to be an instrument for human progress.

Similarly, the founders of scientific socialism saw the intrinsic limits to capitalism's progressive role. They deduced from their historical and logical analysis that only the working class can free society from capitalism in its period of decline. And to do this the proletariat must mobilize under its banner all victims of capitalist injustice in a grand struggle to abolish all forms of exploitation and oppression.

Need to develop working-class consciousness

But whereas from almost the very beginning of its existence the bourgeoisie tended to have a very high level of class consciousness, that of the workers has tended to be much lower.

There is a simple explanation for this: The emerging capitalist class had quickly become wealthier than the lords and kings with whom they coexisted. From quite early in the reign of feudalism, the emerging new exploiting class of capitalists owned and, by the same token, controlled the burgeoning press and publishing industry, not to mention their natural domination of the economic and political life of entire towns and cities.

But the expansion of the new social system brought it into conflict with the feudal social and economic framework based on landed property. When the feudal rulers sought to restrict the power of the threatening, upstart bourgeoisie, the latter, then, very consciously used its vast social, economic, and political power to mobilize a mass struggle to overthrow the old landlord class and consolidate the new social system.

The working class is artificially kept at a far lower level of class consciousness. Capitalism, whether under a democratic or autocratic regime, is essentially the reign of wealth. The major instruments of education and mis-education are in the hands of the rich.

One capitalist, with the money to publish and widely distribute newspapers, books, films, and other means of communication, has as much influence on mass opinion as do a million propertyless workers and farmers.

This power is used to block workers from access to the media of communication. For every truthful idea that manages to creep into newspapers and books—or penetrate into the schools, movies, radio, and television—explaining the nature of the existing social system, there are a thousand lies. The effect is to mold "public opinion" in favor of capitalism.

Moreover, capitalism's enormous resources permits it to bribe, corrupt, and co-opt those who rise to the top of workers' organizations—especially those who rise during periods of relative labor passivity. These co-opted labor misleaders and reformists function as the transmission belt for capitalist ideology into the ranks of the working class.

This problem underscores the centrality of the

An introduction to the study of the 'Transitional Program'



Joseph Ryan/Secular Action

50 years after its adoption, the founding document of the Fourth International is still an indispensable guide for working class struggles.

revolutionary proletarian principle of class independence. Any tactic which conflicts with the principle of working-class reliance on its own institutions to advance its class interests serves capitalism.

The role of reformism

Reformists—that is, "socialists" who want merely to reform capitalism—come under a variety of labels. The most important of these are the Stalinized Communist parties in every country. The latter include a variety of smaller Stalinist clones which originally came into existence at the time of the Moscow-Peking split.

All varieties of Stalinism serve capitalism indirectly—according to the diplomatic requirements of the Stalinist state bureaucracies to which each is loyal.

The other main vehicles of reformism are the Socialist, or Social Democratic parties of the world, which more directly serve as the labor lieutenants of their own capitalist classes. (Labor bureaucracies, such as we see in England, Canada, and the United States, are also of this breed—although they may, or may not, palm themselves off as "socialist.")

The Communist parties were decisive in saving world capitalism in the entire period immediately after the Stalinized bureaucracy usurped political power from Soviet workers. Seemingly many revolutionary-minded workers to be the continuators of the inspiring October 1917 Russian Revolution, they used the authority of that great workers' conquest to disorient and reimpose reformism on those who had come to understand the counterrevolutionary nature of the Social Democracy.

Dressing up class collaboration as a "popular front against

fascism," Stalinism, in fact, doomed the working class to impotence and cleared the road for fascism.

What reformism springs from

Common to all varieties of reformism is their over-estimation of ruling class power and their symmetrical under-estimation of workers' power. This leads them to *rule out* a struggle to achieve a decisive victory over capitalism. Instead, reformism accepts the domination of capital as unalterable, and the subordination of working-class interests to the profitability of capitalist enterprises as inevitable.

The recent history of reformism in the United States is instructive. The labor bureaucracy has adopted the psychology of a junior partner of the U.S. capitalist class. "We're in the same boat," they like to say, "we can't demand more than 'our' employers can pay (and maintain a 'reasonable' profit)." Admonishing workers "not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg," the bureaucracy has led them into a vicious cycle of givebacks.

First rationalized as necessary for keeping failing enterprises profitable in order to "save jobs," the givebacks o "needy" capitalists are inevitably followed by granting wage and benefit concessions to all employers, including those enjoying record-breaking profits.

The policy flowing from the myth of worker-employer partnership has resulted in a decades-long capitalist feeding frenzy. Each bites out of the workers' hide, and each craven capitulation by the bureaucracy whets the bosses' appetite or more.

And in those instances when individual national or local unions attempt to fight back, such as the airline controllers'

(PATCO) strike in 1981 or the Hormel packinghouse workers (Local P-9) strike of 1985-86, the labor bureaucracy refuses to give more than token support.

In the case of the PATCO strike, the labor bureaucracy ruled out challenging the strikebreaking court injunctions against effective picketing and prohibited the defiance of "no strike clauses." In effect they barred other airline unions from respecting PATCO picket lines. In the case of the P-9 strike, the entire top-level bureaucracy joined the bosses, cops, courts, and the governor of Minnesota in breaking the strike.²

The strategy of revolutionary socialism

The "Transitional Program" is based on a strategy which is the polar opposite of reformism. Where reformism sees a community of interest between workers and bosses, revolutionary socialism sees a diametric counterposition.

The strategy of class collaboration, which is based on maintaining the profitability of labor's capitalist "partners," demands ever-greater sacrifices from the workers, guaranteeing a declining living standard.

This policy disorients the working class; facilitates its decay, demoralization, and ruin; and thus helps undermine the only creative and progressive class in modern society, and with it, the future of the human race.

The task of revolutionary socialism is to guard against these corrosive effects of capitalism on working-class morale; to advance those demands whose fulfillment is an immediate and urgent working-class need, *whether or not they are compatible with the profitability of capitalism.*

The relation between the immediate needs of the workers

and the longer-term socialist goal is dynamically interrelated. Hence, when the demands advanced by the workers' vanguard correspond to the vital needs of the broad masses, and if these masses feel that they cannot exist unless these demands are met, then the struggle for these demands will become the starting-point of the struggle for power.

Causes of the prolonged economic equilibrium

The labor bureaucrats systematically block the natural tendency of rank-and-file workers to fight back against the employers' assault on their living standards. This is largely due to the priority they give to privileges they have accorded themselves, step by step, in line with their systematic suppression of union democracy.

Their salaries, for example, are no longer pegged to that of the rank and file. Comfortably overpaid, they are in most cases personally insulated from the consequences of their concessions' policy. They tend to impose acceptance of wage and benefit cuts—which do not directly affect them—and energetically maneuver to stifle any spirit of fightback that emerges from the ranks.

Although the bureaucracy may understand that this policy threatens the very existence of the unions upon which their privileges depend, they have greater fear of the rank and file. They know that once mobilized for action in their own class interests, the workers tend to sweep all obstacles out of the road to effective struggle.

The combination of reformist treachery and capitalist repression has allowed the ruling class to extricate itself from each succeeding crisis. This combination has prolonged capitalist stabilization by allowing a gradual increase in the rate of exploitation. The resulting slow but steady decline in the cost of labor power has slowed the decline of the rate of profit and postponed the inevitable collapse of capitalist economy.

The developing breakdown of capitalism

But it is only a matter of time before world capitalist economic equilibrium breaks down. The balloon of credit sustaining capitalist expansion will burst and with it will come a period of rapidly accelerated decline in living standards and explosions of class conflict.

The October 1987 stock market crash, massive debt defaults in the neo-colonial world, a growing tide of U.S. bank and "thrift" failures, and the astronomically increasing government and private debt of U.S. capitalism—the bulwark of world capitalism—are unmistakable symptoms of the system's imminent general collapse.

The coming crisis, moreover, will not be a mere replay of the Depression triggered in 1929. It will most likely take the form of a more intensive version of the "stagflation" in the American economy of the 1960s and 70s.

At that time deficit spending, designed to forestall the economic downturn, sent the rate of inflation into double-digits. But in the next crisis, inflation will more likely reach and ultimately surpass the triple-digit rates that now plague Latin America and other less-developed countries, as the rulers desperately struggle to prop up teetering economies built on a mountain of sand.

This form of capitalist crisis tends more swiftly to force the working class into defensive action. A new wave of union militants will emerge and be driven by events to break through the restraints placed in their path by both capitalists and their labor lieutenants.

Working-class fighters will not take long to form themselves into a class-struggle left wing. They will begin with a struggle to recapture their unions and will quickly find their way to reconquering the highest levels of class consciousness previously achieved by American labor. The "Transitional Program" will win new adherents and is destined to become the program of the next generation of proletarian fighters.

Part II. Transitional Demands: The Sliding Scale of Wages and Hours

We are better able to understand transitional demands when contrasted to reformist slogans ostensibly intended to combat specific problems confronted by the working class.

Reformism, as we have seen, absolutely insists that demands intended to meet workers' needs be subordinate to alliances with their perceived "allies" among the capitalist class. In this category belong slogans like "Buy American!" and "A guaranteed annual wage!" Both are touted to fight unemployment—but without affecting profitability.

The logic of the "Buy American!" slogan

The "Buy American!" slogan, flowing from the bureaucracy's illusion of class partnership, is designed to convince workers that unemployment is caused by their own "shortsightedness." American workers, who "foolishly" buy imported goods because they may be cheaper and better than the domestic product, they argue, lose jobs to America's competitors. The effect of this snowjob is to blame workers for capitalist unemployment.

"Buy American!" is more than a publicity campaign to promote purchases of American-made goods, however. Its advocates know that moral pressure is not likely to convince too many people to voluntarily pay higher prices for made-in-America products.

The slogan is really intended to mobilize political support for placing tariffs on foreign-made products. This would

(continued on page 10)

... Transitional Program

(continued from page 9)

make them more expensive than the domestic products with which they compete.

This has historically led to vicious cycles of protectionism, which only brought to a head the developing crises of overproduction. In the 1920s, such an international trade war triggered the great Depression, which ultimately led to the bloody imperialist struggle for markets in World War II.

Meaning of "Guaranteed Annual Wage!" slogan

The bureaucracy's "demand" for a "Guaranteed Annual Wage!" (GAW) is no less fraudulent. A genuine fight for a guaranteed annual wage would necessarily take the form of a fight for a reduction of the workweek with no reduction in pay. But this is far from the minds of the labor-fakers, who only give lip-service to the workers' aspirations for economic security.

The real history of the GAW is revealing. United Auto Workers (UAW) President Walter Reuther, who became the foremost advocate of the GAW during the economic recession following the Korean War, *counterposed* it to the shorter workweek.

Because of the deep unemployment that struck auto workers in that period, the demand for a 30-hour week at 40-hours pay, which had been repeatedly adopted by UAW conventions, was becoming irrepressible. The AFL and most CIO affiliates, also suffering increasing unemployment, had also come out strongly for a reduced workweek with no reduction in pay.

Reuther cynically sucked the GAW out of his thumb only to block the promising movement for the shorter workweek. He did it simply because, as a confirmed class collaborator, the struggle for real job security—a reduced workweek without a reduction in pay—cannot be won without a major class battle.³

The Guaranteed Annual Wage, of course, never saw life. The best Reuther could produce was a Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) plan. This plan is financed by diverting a portion of a negotiated wage package (in the form of so-called "employer contributions") into a fund, out of which payments are paid to auto workers during lay-off periods, to supplement state unemployment insurance checks.

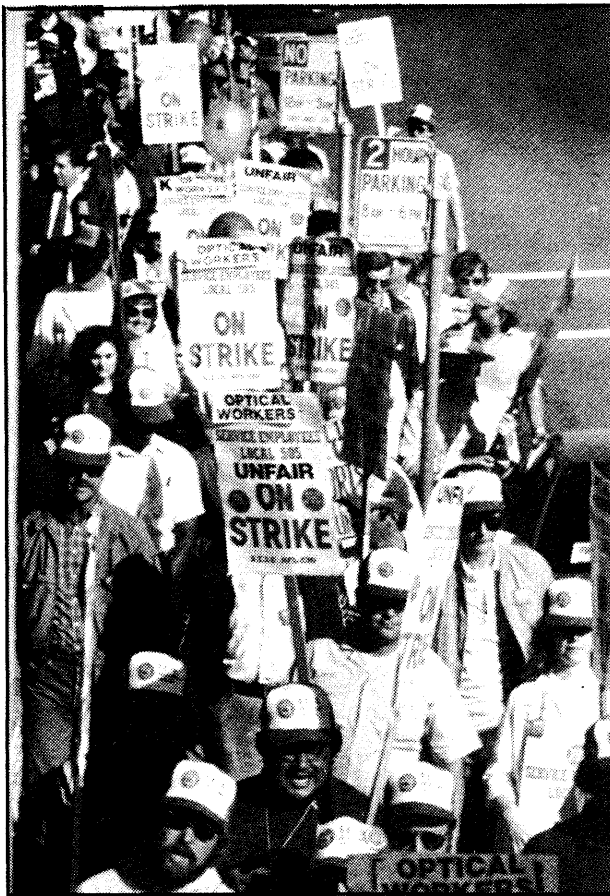
First of all, such plans invariably limit those covered. (The UAW version never covered all employees). Thousands of workers who never gain sufficient seniority to be eligible for SUB payments are cheated of their share of deferred wages paid into the SUB fund. And when the fund runs out, as it does during periods of extended mass unemployment, higher seniority workers are also cheated of their benefits.

More recently, the UAW bureaucracy has set its "demands" for "job guarantees" even lower. Not only are these worthless contractual "guarantees," such as in the current Chrysler contract, conditioned by clauses to "boost productivity" (speedup), they are simply inoperative when the sales of cars go below a level consistent with maintaining profits!

Furthermore, schemes like GAW and SUB plans—besides blocking the fight for a shorter workweek—also divert attention from the need for a class-wide political struggle for its natural complement: a federal, employer-financed, unemployment insurance system for *all workers* for the *full* period of unemployment at *full* union-level wages.

The sliding scale of hours

The sliding scale of hours points in the opposite direction. It flows from the historic tendency of the working class to shorten the workweek *without* a reduction in pay. When the



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

sliding scale of hours slogan is hooked up with the demand for unrestricted unemployment insurance and public works, it serves to unite the class, mobilizing its full power for a political struggle against capitalist unemployment.

Such a struggle might initially take the form of a demand for a law establishing a six-hour day, 30-hour week with no reduction in daily or weekly pay, and double- and triple-time for overtime to discourage the capitalist trend toward extending the average number of hours worked. (It's often cheaper for capitalists to keep fewer workers working longer at the time-and-a-half and even double-time rates than to hire and train additional employees.)

At a higher stage of the struggle, a congress of workers' representatives organized to carry out a class-wide economic and political struggle might simply declare reduced hours at the same pay as a condition for resumption of production. This is the way the soviets (workers' councils), created by Russian workers in 1917, established the eight-hour day.

Even if only partially implemented—as it would be if the popular form of this slogan, "30-hours work for 40-hours pay!" was realized—it would contribute effectively toward protecting the working class from the demoralizing effects of unemployment. And as capitalist crises deepen, such partial victories in reducing the workweek inspire further reductions.

The logic of the sliding-scale slogan, furthermore, points directly toward the socialist future, where production is for the good of the vast majority, not for the minority of capitalist profiteers. And although transitional slogans can never be fully realized under capitalism, they make ever sharper and clearer the urgent necessity for socialist revolution.

The sliding scale of wages

In periods of rapid price rises, the wages lost to inflation in between contracts can catastrophically reduce living

standards. Workers are also placed in the more difficult position, when contracts terminate, of needing to strike just to catch up with prices which have raced out of reach. At the end of World War II, the experience of wages having been generally frozen during the war period led to a massive strike wave just to catch up.

The idea of a sliding scale of wages, or "escalator clause" as it became widely known, was first advanced by the Trotskyists in the union movement through its newspaper at the time, *The Militant*. The idea was widely embraced by union militants and ultimately adopted by most big industrial unions.

The sliding scale of wages is simply a method to peg hourly wages to the cost of living to protect workers against inflation. The purchasing power of the dollar would be computed and wages adjusted on a weekly or monthly basis by a *labor-controlled* commission to statistically track prices. Wages could not fall below the agreed-on basic minimum, which would be subject to normal union demands for improvement during regular contract negotiations.

A class-struggle union leadership would also fight to extend the sliding scale to every section of the class and its natural allies—including the unemployed. In such ways the working class is oriented toward becoming the champion of all the victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression and preparing the mass base necessary for the conquest of governmental power.

The best escalator clauses won by unions, however, provided for cost-of-living increases on a less advantageous, quarterly basis. The adopted escalator clauses also accepted the federal government's Bureau of Labor Statistics—which manipulates the statistics to downplay the extent of inflation—as the authority for determining the movement of prices. Even so, these clauses convincingly proved their value to the workers. Wages were better protected against inflation wherever these escalator clauses were operative.

But in the past period the labor bureaucracy has permitted the prolonged antilabor offensive to water-down or strip many unions of escalator-clause protection without a fight. (More than 60 percent of unions had such clauses in 1977; less than 40 percent had them in 1987).

The bureaucracy has steadily given ground, going so far as to accept, again without a fight, employer demands for substituting annual "bonus" payments for regular wage increases.

These misnamed "bonus" payments cheat workers in several ways: They are neither figured into overtime rates, nor in the determination of benefits (which are based on hourly pay rates). Nor are they cumulative, as is the case of regular wage increases, which form a permanent part of base pay.

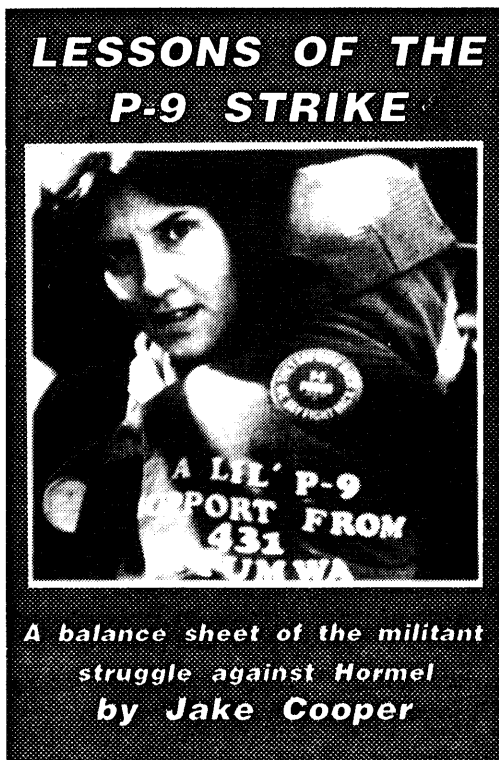
Such "bonuses," in other words, are misnamed lump-sum wage increases that disappear from your paycheck after the year is up!

These examples illustrate the qualitative difference between a strategy based on class partnership and one based on class struggle. In the case of the former, wages, hours, and working conditions are subordinate to profits. In the latter, the defense of the immediate needs of the working class is the only concern and is organically connected with abolition of the profit system and socialist revolution. [To be continued.] ■

Footnotes:

1. "Culture," in the broadest sense of the term, encompasses everything from advances in tool-making to the development of agriculture, written language, and science.
2. For a full account of the P-9 strike, see the Socialist Action pamphlet "Lessons of the P-9 Strike" by Jake Cooper.
3. For an account of Walter Reuther's role in opposition to "30-for-40," see "Labor's Giant Step" by Art Preis (pp. 489-494), Pioneer Publishers.

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BOSTON—By a vote of 2034 to 112, Local 26 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers union has authorized a strike against 13 major hotels here if their demands for better wages and a housing fund are not met. The current contract expires Nov. 30; the union won their demands at the 11th-hour in both 1982 and 1985.

Balloting took place at an open rally on Nov. 16 attended by close to 2500 Local 26 members and their supporters. Workers were greeted by huge banners that read "S.I.T. I.N.—Support-us Inside, Terminate Injustice Now."

The 4000-member union is one of the most militant in the Northeast. President Domenic Bozzotto has unified one of the most diverse memberships in Boston: 55 percent women; a majority Black and Latino; 87 languages spoken. The names of the 164-strong negotiating committee reads like an international phonebook.

Hotel owners are pushing for job reclassification, meaning more work for less money, and are demanding a two-tiered wage system that would discriminate against newer workers. They've also proposed a bonus system. Bozzotto characterized this as "the Judas demand. It appeals to our greed. There will NEVER be bonuses instead of raises in our contracts."

While hotel owners enjoy the highest occupancy rates and the second-highest room rates in the country, they pay the average member of Local 26 a measly \$6.00 per hour.

Local 26's demands

The union has its own demands, including an owner-financed higher-education fund, and a widely publicized demand for affordable housing.

Housing costs in Boston are the highest in the United States. Few hotel workers are able to afford their own homes. Many union members with families pay 40 percent and more of their income for one-bedroom apartments. Some have joined the ranks of the homeless and lost their jobs after being evicted from apartments they could no longer afford.

The housing issue is a militant departure from the typical wages and benefits labor struggle. Prudential and other corporate hotel owners have systematically contributed to the lack of affordable housing in the city, causing working people to lose their homes to condo conversion and high-priced development.

The union is demanding that owners contribute to a housing trust fund that would



Dave Walsh/Socialist Action

Militant Boston hotel workers authorize strike

provide financial assistance to its members. They may strike on this issue alone if the hotel owners refuse to negotiate it.

Initially the owners claimed that housing isn't a union issue and that it was illegal to include it in the negotiations. Bozzotto rejects this, stating that in demanding housing Local 26 wants to "start something new in this country. We want no less than the rights the owners would expect for themselves."

"No one's gonna cross our lines!"

Long-time union supporter Reverend Graylan Ellis-Hagler addressed the rally, reminding the owners that "we know where you live. You can run but you can't hide! We will go, by whatever means necessary, to their neighborhoods. We'll take this strike to

their front doors."

Hagler told the rally, "Your ranks extend throughout the community. And if the time comes that you have to go to jail, move over, 'cause I'm coming with you." Hagler was one of those arrested in the Greyhound strike five years ago.

Hotel owners threatened in the past to replace striking workers with scabs, but the union beat that back twice before. At another rally workers passed around a baseball bat and declared, "No one's gonna cross our lines and take our jobs!"

In 1982, when hotel owners ran full-page ads for scabs, the union promised its members that they would not lose their jobs. This time workers were handed a six-language leaflet titled "Local 26 Guarantee" and signed

by Bozzotto. It stated:

"1) It is against the law for the hotel to fire you if you strike.

"2) If a strike becomes necessary, Local 26 will not sign a new contract unless every member is guaranteed their job.

"3) We will win a good new contract, if all Local 26 members join together to fight."

Boston could be severely crippled by a strike during December, when Christmas shopping at downtown stores is in full gear. And the first week of the month brings a conference of the National League of Cities to town, with fully booked hotels.

As Roberto de la Cruz of the United Farm Workers reminded the rally as he led a chant of HUELGA, "the hotel owners have nightmares when they hear that word." ■

... Palestine

(continued from page 1)

P.L.O. as close as possible to the identified American vision of peace in the Middle East," stated the *New York Times* on Nov. 16. It would seem that Arafat was successful in his effort to bring the positions of the PNC more in line with State Department policy.

The U.S. reaction to the PNC's declarations, however, was less than enthusiastic. State Department spokesman Charles Redman said: "The reference to U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 is an advance over previous efforts by the PNC. Nevertheless, it is ambiguous. ... Indirect recognition of Israel is not sufficient. Recognition must be clear and unambiguous." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Nov. 17)

Other imperialist powers, however, have reacted more favorably to the PNC's recognition of Israel. Even Margaret Thatcher told President Reagan, "When people do things that we like we should welcome it." (*New York Times*, Nov. 18)

Playing hard cop

The U.S. government has decided to play hard cop and bully the Palestinians into more concessions. It is not that U.S. officials haven't recognized the historic nature of the PNC's concessions; it is simply that they are trying to push Arafat and the P.L.O. as far as they will go.

A P.L.O. leader close to Yasir Arafat, speaking off the record, admitted this much

when he told the French daily *Libération* that "Whatever they may say officially, the Americans know they obtained from us what they wanted." (quoted in *Rouge* No. 1329, Nov. 17-23)

A foreign-policy aide to George Bush made this revealing statement, "They [the P.L.O.] are still operating on the basis of the lowest common denominator. To meet them and reward them would send the wrong signal." (*New York Times*, Nov. 17)

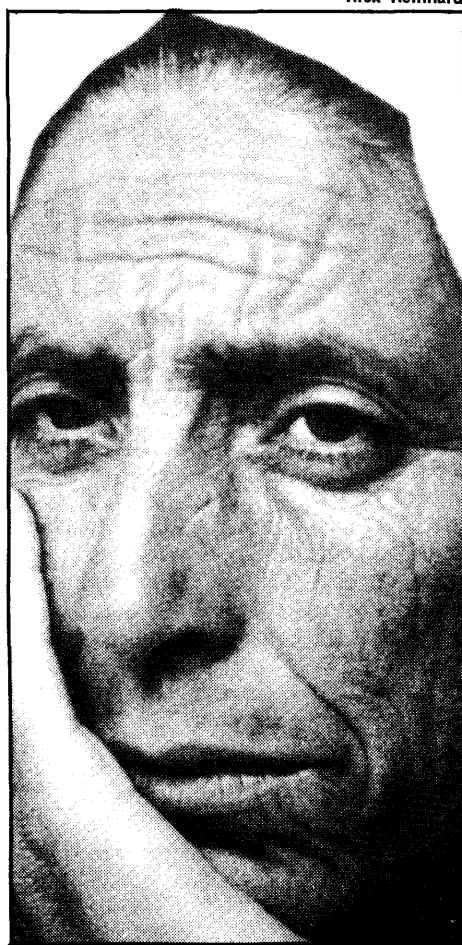
But Arafat, aware that he has gone out on a limb in making these concessions, has warned that he, too, can play hard ball. In an appeal to the U.S. government to put pressure on the Israeli government to negotiate with the P.L.O., Arafat said: "If we meet with a rebuff, only God knows the outcome. Let it be clear that I can always come back to our council and declare that moderation does not pay." (*New York Times*, Nov. 16)

A misguided strategy

Over the past several months, Arafat has met with Arab and European heads of state in an attempt to find a formula for a Palestinian state that would be acceptable to the world imperialist powers. He is reported to have even agreed to a proposal for a Palestinian "state in confederation with Jordan"—that is, to a rump state under the direct control of Jordan's King Hussein. [See November 1988 *Socialist Action*.]

Arafat has staked his reputation as a Palestinian leader on finding a "solution to the Palestinian conflict" within the framework of United Nations resolutions that demand acceptance of Israel's right to exist within secure borders. But his strategy and that of the top P.L.O. leadership is entirely misguided.

The U.S. government will never pressure Israel into accepting any proposal that would grant true self-determination to the Palestinian people. Israel is the United States' policeman in the region. A Palestinian state that was both independent and sovereign would



Rick Reinhard

What does it all mean? This Palestinian woman just lost her husband to an Israeli poison gas attack in the West Bank.

threaten the stability of Israel as well as that of the capitalist Arab nations, which also oppress their own Palestinian populations.

George Shultz made this clear in September when he said, "The United States cannot accept 'self-determination' when it is a code word for an independent Palestinian state." (*New York Times*, Nov. 16)

Many Palestinians have recognized the futility of viewing the U.S. government as a potential ally in the fight for self-determination. Dr. Sufian Khatib, a West Bank resident, said: "It's a striptease. We gave them 242 and 338. ... In the future, every country is going to ask us more and more."

Sheik Yassin, an activist in the Palestinian uprising, said, "The strong one isn't the one who gives concessions. It's the weak one that concedes. I differ with them [the PNC] on the concessions they've given." (*New York Times*, Nov. 22)

The P.L.O. strategy of reliance on diplomatic maneuvers with wings of the international capitalist class will not win Palestinian rights.

The Palestinian movement should rely on the masses who have been mobilized by the year-long Intifada—as well as on their oppressed worker and peasant allies in the adjoining Arab states—to push the struggle forward.

The P.L.O. should also appeal to the working people and students in Israel, who are facing growing austerity, insecurity—and even repression—at the hands of the same government that massacres Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. All these forces can unite against the imperialists and the Zionists for the creation of a secular society in all of Palestine.

This strategy—not concessions to the Zionists and their imperialist sponsor—is what today's situation demands. ■

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The meaning of the current rehabilitations in the U.S.S.R.

The following is an interview with Susan Weissman, a long-time scholar and commentator on the Soviet Union. Weissman is an editorial board member of *Critique*, a journal of Soviet studies and socialist theory published in Scotland. She is also the moderator of a program titled "Portraits of the U.S.S.R.," which is broadcast weekly on KPFK Radio in Los Angeles. The interview was conducted by Socialist Action editor Alan Benjamin on Nov. 14.

Socialist Action: What is the reason behind the rehabilitation of many of Stalin's victims in the Soviet Union today?

Susan Weissman: It is important to understand that an important plank of *glasnost* and *perestroika* is the re-examination of history. If you look at the film "Repentance," which is an allegory of the Stalin years, the point is made that until Stalin is forced to stand trial for his crimes, the truth cannot emerge. In other words, the reforms sought by Gorbachev cannot go forward on the basis of a false understanding of the society and of its history.

The coalition headed by Gorbachev (there are different interest groups in the party apparatus) began to attack Stalin and to rehabilitate some of Stalin's victims. They began with the Moscow Trials. Of course their main goal is to rehabilitate Bukharin by elevating him into the real anti-Stalinist symbol.

But Bukharin was always a Stalinist, except in the period between 1918 and 1921, when he was a "left communist." He was in favor of the market and increased concessions to the peasantry, and that's the part they're trying to rehabilitate. The other reason Bukharin is important for them is that he was in favor of a tightly controlled society with the one-party system.

They have also rehabilitated some Left Oppositionists [supporters of Leon Trotsky], including someone who is very important for our tradition—Khristian Rakovsky. But Rakovsky's works have still not been published in any major mainstream organ. One of the members of the New Left is trying to publish Rakovsky's important letter to Valentinov, which is called "The Professional Dangers of Power." It's a trenchant critique of bureaucratism.

S.A.: What about Leon Trotsky; will he be rehabilitated?

Weissman: They have now said, if only implicitly, that everyone who was accused by Stalin was falsely accused—and that means Trotsky as well.

We've already started to see in the Soviet press how they're planning to deal with Trotsky. They've come up with a new falsification of his role in Soviet history.

In order to talk about Trotsky, they've had to cleanse him of the absurdities of the positions he was said to hold. They're trying to say that he was a revolutionary and a hero of the civil war—but that he made terrible mistakes. Many recent articles state that Trotsky was a "super-industrializer" who would have been worse than Stalin if he had come to power.

So they're saying that Trotsky was not a traitor, but he was wrong, just as Stalin was wrong.

S.A.: The recent article in *Pravda* by Stalin's biographer, General Volkogonov, is an extremely sophisticated attack on Trotsky and his ideas—straight out of the school of Stalinist falsification.

Weissman: Absolutely. The Volkogonov piece is full of lies. It says, for example, that Trotsky, along with Stalin, was opposed to the 1917 revolution. It says that Trotsky was in favor of exploiting the peasants. It also completely distorts Trotsky's position on the collectivization of agriculture.

S.A.: The fabrications are incredible. Trotsky was one of the first to propose a "new economic policy" with overtures to the better-off peasants and the introduction of limited market mechanisms. But his proposals were rejected by the Bolshevik Party leadership. So he then said that the only alternative would be to carry out a rapid plan of industrialization to supply the peasants with adequate consumer and capital goods.

Weissman: That's right, he proposed it to the Central Committee of the party back in 1920. And he was in a position to know about the country's drastic economic situation



While the Soviet bureaucracy elevates Bukharin to the role of heroic anti-Stalinist, it continues to falsify Trotsky's ideas

since he was the leader of the Red Army. He could already see the results of war communism.

Later on Trotsky said that collectivization would only make sense if the collective farms were industrialized. He was for mechanized agriculture. In the first five-year plan he proposed manufacturing large quantities of agricultural machinery. For Trotsky mechanized collective farms would stand as an attraction to the peasant, who was still toiling with horse and plow.

Stalin, on the other hand, collectivized to break the resistance of the peasantry, and when they were put on the collective farm there was no machinery there for them. As in other respects, Stalin took something Trotsky had said and emptied it of its content.

S.A.: Indeed. Trotsky explained that the collectivization of agriculture could only be carried out through patient example. Only the lure of increased production, material goods, and mechanization would bring the peasants to relinquish their private plots and join in more advanced cooperative and collective forms of production. Trotsky was vehemently opposed to Stalin's forced collectivization and terror.

In the article by General Volkogonov, however, you get the distinct impression that Trotsky would have carried out the same forced collectivization as Stalin.

Weissman: You're right. They're trying

to steal certain aspects of Trotsky's program, cleanse him of the most grotesque absurdities—but then make him look like even more of a dictator than Stalin. They're doing this to steal the banner of his anti-bureaucratic stance while emptying it of its revolutionary content.

And to accomplish this, they have to leave out entirely Trotsky's real views on the role of the working class, on the role of democratic planning, and on his critique of privilege. So in a sense, they're pushing for an emasculated rehabilitation of Trotsky.

S.A.: From what I have read, there seems to be a considerable amount of resistance

among Soviet workers to Gorbachev's *perestroika* reforms—that is, to the increased labor discipline, lower wages, growing unemployment, and other attacks on the social gains of the October Revolution.

In this context it seems to me that what Trotsky wrote about the defense of the planned economy and the need for workers' democracy would find a real hearing among Soviet workers. These workers, however, haven't had any access to Trotsky's writings or ideas other than the slanders from Stalin and now from people like Volkogonov.

But how about the Soviet New Left: What

(continued on page 13)

Last minute: Trotsky's son, Sergei Sedov, rehabilitated

As we go to press, the Soviet bureaucracy has just announced that Sergei Sedov, Trotsky's son who was shot by Stalin in 1937, has been rehabilitated.

Sergei Sedov was an engineer who generally kept out of politics. He was assassinated after serving a three-year sentence on charges of conspiracy against the state. His only crime: Being the son of Leon Trotsky.

In a related item, we have learned that

a meeting of 500 people, organized by the group Memorial, just took place in Moscow to call for the rehabilitation of Leon Trotsky. Two of the keynote speakers were Pierre Broué, director of the Leon Trotsky Institute in France, and the daughter of Adolf A. Joffe, who was a leader of Trotsky's Left Opposition.

In our next issue, we will publish an extensive interview with Pierre Broué on the meaning of these two events.

Gorbachev faces new crisis in rise of oppressed nationalities

The wave of regional nationalism that is rolling across the Soviet Union has reached the shores of the Baltic. The people of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania are in the streets demanding the restoration of their national languages, their cultures, and their national identities.

In an unprecedented move, the Estonian Supreme Soviet passed a constitutional amendment requiring Estonian approval of any Soviet law applied to them. The Estonians also issued a "declaration of sovereignty," asserting Estonia's independence in all areas except defense and foreign affairs. They also want the text of the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939 published to expose the truth about their forcible annexation by the Soviet Union.

Hitler invited Stalin to take over these three small nations as part of the deal that divided Poland and gave Hitler the green light for his war of conquest. The Baltic people were not consulted as their nations were obliterated.

Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania had been independent nations for 22 years—from 1917 to 1939. For centuries they had been ruled by Germans, Swedes or Russians.

When Stalin took over the Baltic states, he integrated their economies into the socialized property relations of the Soviet Union. Despite the bureaucratic, dictatorial way this was accomplished, there is little evidence the Baltic people preferred the rule of the former capitalists and landlords.

However, the Baltic peoples did resist when Stalin resumed the policy the Tsars had pursued in vain: to Russianize these states and turn them into provinces where Russian culture predominated, with the economies controlled in the interests of Moscow.

Thousands of Baltic people were deported to Siberia by Stalin. Thousands of Russians were sent to the Baltic states to replace them. Large factories were built, without regard to local needs, to employ the newcomers.

Minority in their own land

In Estonia only 60 percent of the population is now Estonian. In Latvia the native population is a minority in its own land. Instead of the Russian settlers learning Latvian, the Latvians have to learn Russian. "For over 40 years I have watched the culture and economy of my country slowly deteriorate," said a Latvian quoted in *The New York Times*.

Now the Latvians have organized to fight back. They have formed the Latvian Popular Front, with a membership of over 100,000. They demand complete economic independence, the right to create their own currency, to establish independent relations with other states, and the right to control travel and immigration.

In Lithuania a new movement, "Lithuanians in Support of Perestroika," held a



congress in October that voiced nationalist demands, including the right to their own language and national flag. These demands are backed by the vast majority of the Lithuanians, as attested by a petition campaign that gathered 1.5 million signatures out of a population of 3.6 million.

Under Stalin, raising such demands would result in a fast trip to Siberia, or worse. But today, the political and economic crisis of the bureaucracy that gave rise to Gorbachev's *glasnost* policy has created a wide channel for expressing grievances against national oppression. However, the intensity of nationalist feeling expressed has taken the Kremlin by surprise.

Demonstrations of 300,000 make the unrest obvious. Local Communist Party officials have joined the Popular Front and are supporting their demands. This reflects the broad base of support this movement has, but also the unwillingness of the Kremlin to confront the nationalist movement head on, at this time.

Riding out the storm

The ongoing crisis in Soviet Armenia and the unrest in the Ukraine indicate that nationalism is a major threat to the stability of Gorbachev's regime. The history of the Baltic republics as recently independent nations makes the situation there particularly volatile. Communist Party leaders in the Baltic states, in most cases, have joined the nationalists, only to counsel patience.

The Kremlin has yielded to some demands, permitting the display of national flags, and tolerating the new national movements. But the bureaucrats want to keep the movement

within limits they can control.

A serious limit was set when Gorbachev proposed deleting the right of a republic to secede from the Soviet federation. This right has been a basic policy since the founding of the first workers' state. Even Stalin did not remove this fundamental socialist right from his 1936 Constitution. Exercising this right, of course, would be another matter.

Deleting this right has created alarm among the Baltic people. This was intensified as they learned of other changes to be proposed at the coming Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The Estonians hear the Supreme Soviet will tighten, rather than loosen, Moscow's control of these states.

They challenged Gorbachev by calling for an Estonian veto of Soviet laws that impact badly on Estonia. The Estonians were careful to say these measures would not be a call to secede from the Soviet Union. Their demand, they stated, was for genuine equality among Soviet republics. Popular Front spokesman Edgar Savisaar, who is also a Communist Party member, said "We want a sovereign Estonia inside the Soviet Union."

Gorbachev has responded to the Estonian challenge with a call to "talk it over." He has already said some of his proposed laws could

be modified.

But he rejected the Estonian declaration of sovereignty as a threat to the integrity of the Soviet Union.

The people of Latvia and Lithuania are demonstrating support of Estonia, although these two republics have not issued a similar declaration of sovereignty.

There is sentiment for total independence among the Baltic people, but, even as independent states, they say, they would preserve socialized property relations, and maintain relations of equality with other Soviet republics and other workers' states.

But this development would not be acceptable to the Kremlin. Gorbachev hopes, however, by concessions that stay short of true equality among the republics, to contain the nationalist sentiments of the Baltic people.

A key factor, besides the political concessions Gorbachev is forced to grant, is the bureaucracy's inability to solve the shortages and other economic ills that are straining Soviet society to the breaking point. Scarcity of consumer goods, and the role of a privileged caste are major factors intensifying the national aspirations of the many minorities that make up the Soviet Union.

In our next issue:

A Special Supplement on 'The National Question in the Soviet Union Today'



with articles by Zbigniew Kowalewski on 'The Resurgence of the Nationalist Movement in the Ukraine,' Gerry Foley on 'Political Revolution and the National Question,' and an introduction by Nat Weinstein.

... rehabilitations

(continued from page 12)

is their view of Trotsky? Are they familiar with any of his works?

Weissman: I agree with you that one of Trotsky's most important contributions is his critique of privilege and his understanding of what the Marxist sense of planning is—that is, democratically controlled planning at all levels, the conscious regulation of the economy in which both the planners and the plan implementers are one and the same.

Now, many of the organizations of the Soviet New Left, such as Boris Kagarlitsky's group, the Club of Socialist Initiative (which has now been formed into a Popular Front), have come out for Trotsky's rehabilitation. They don't agree with everything Trotsky wrote, but for them Trotsky is the real anti-Stalinist symbol.

For them, Trotsky was the only one with enough political courage to oppose Stalin from the very beginning until the very end. He was someone, they say, who made it his life struggle to analyze Stalinism from a Marxist point of view and to never go over to the other side of the class line, as so many of those who emigrated did.

They've read some of Trotsky's writings from the 1920s that have been available in libraries for the last 10 years to a select number of people. They know something about Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, but they don't know any of his writings of the '30s.

S.A.: What is the attitude of these groups toward Gorbachev's market reforms?

Weissman: Kagarlitsky's group feels that the market will be the only indicator of consumers' needs and the only check on the quality of goods. But the group also feels that there should be planning, but planning that is democratic. So in a sense the group is looking for a more mixed economy.

Now there's nothing wrong or anti-Marxist to have forms of a market economy in the transitional stage to socialism. But the question is, of course, who will exercise control over the economy? If these groups see the working class in the controlling role, then we have to say they're absolutely right. But I think there's some real waffling on this question.

S.A.: Trotsky was not opposed in principle to the use of market forces so long as they were totally subordinate to a democratically controlled planned economy and to state's monopoly on foreign trade.

Weissman: That's right. Now I think that within the Soviet left there's such a strong reaction to the status-quo that the market is seen as a kind of panacea. But what makes these groups different from the Gorbachev leadership is that they don't want to forget the working class.

The New Left today is primarily made up of discontented intellectuals and students. Recently a few workers' organizations (workers' councils) have formed, but the informal organizations mostly consist of the radicalized intelligentsia who want a more democratic society and who are influenced by Western Marxist thinkers, especially Gramsci and

Marcuse. So, obviously, they have all kinds of confusions.

Now about the workers' councils. One of the main demands of the workers is "All power to the soviets." I have the names of two workers' organizations: One is called the Red Workers and the other is the Union of Workers Communist in Moscow.

The other thing is that if you look at the way *perestroika* has proceeded, it's really hit a stalemate. And the stalemate is because the party leadership under Gorbachev can't move forward on the market unless they can impose some kind of austerity or unemployment on the working class—and the working class is resisting that.

S.A.: So how is the bureaucracy going to resolve this dilemma?

Weissman: In the first place, Gorbachev has been consolidating his power. So far he has been able to outflank his opponents in the party leadership. But he's still sitting on top of a coalition and he still has to respect the interests of the other groups in relation to how far—and how fast—he can go.

I think that what the Soviet government did in Europe in early November is the key to what they're trying to do—that is, they obtained loans from Italy and West Germany. These were small loans, only \$6 billion dollars, but they're going to use this amount to either import consumer goods or import the machinery to produce consumer goods so that they can buy off the population in the short term while they continue with their restructuring.

So far, Gorbachev has convinced many of the Western European leaders that what the West should do is help Gorbachev with his restructuring of the Soviet economy; in a

sense to have a Marshall Plan for the Soviet Union.

Zbigniew Brzezinski [Jimmy Carter's former national security adviser] is in favor of this approach, as are many other liberal thinkers. It would be the most intelligent policy for the American ruling class because, by making the Soviet Union gradually more dependent on the West, they can be assured of a greater change in the Soviet system over the long term.

S.A.: The Soviet bureaucracy has just announced that it will permit foreign capitalists to have a controlling interest in joint ventures established in the Soviet Union. Prior to this they had established an upper limit of 49 percent.

Weissman: Yes, currently many significant steps are being taken in the direction of a market-based economy.

S.A.: But for the bureaucracy to overturn the property relations established by the October Revolution it would mean taking on—and ultimately crushing—the Soviet workers, who have already shown signs that they are not about to sit back and accept austerity, unemployment, and greater hardships.

Weissman: Indeed, the major obstacle to *perestroika* is the Soviet working class.

If you look at the Polish workers' struggle, you can see how this resistance can develop. The Polish workers, in the beginning, were in favor of the social-democratic market reforms—but as long as they didn't have to pay for them. Now they have become the most ardent opponents of price increases and unemployment. The Soviet workers will react in absolutely the same way.

Midwest Educational conference

In addition to building the Kowalewski tour, Socialist Action members in the Midwest spent time this fall organizing a regional educational conference. The event took place in Detroit on the weekend of Nov. 12-13. People came from Minneapolis; Chicago; Kansas City; Cleveland; Cincinnati; Bowling Green, Ohio; and Urbana, Ill.

The conference opened on Saturday with a talk by Carl Finamore on the political situation in Nicaragua. He was followed by Barbara Putnam, speaking on what socialists stand for.

That evening, participants viewed the film "Labor's Turning Point," which was introduced by Jake Cooper, a Socialist Action National Committee member who participated in the 1934 strikes the movie depicts. On Sunday morning, people returned to hear Kwame Somburu discuss the ideas of Malcolm X and their relevance for today.

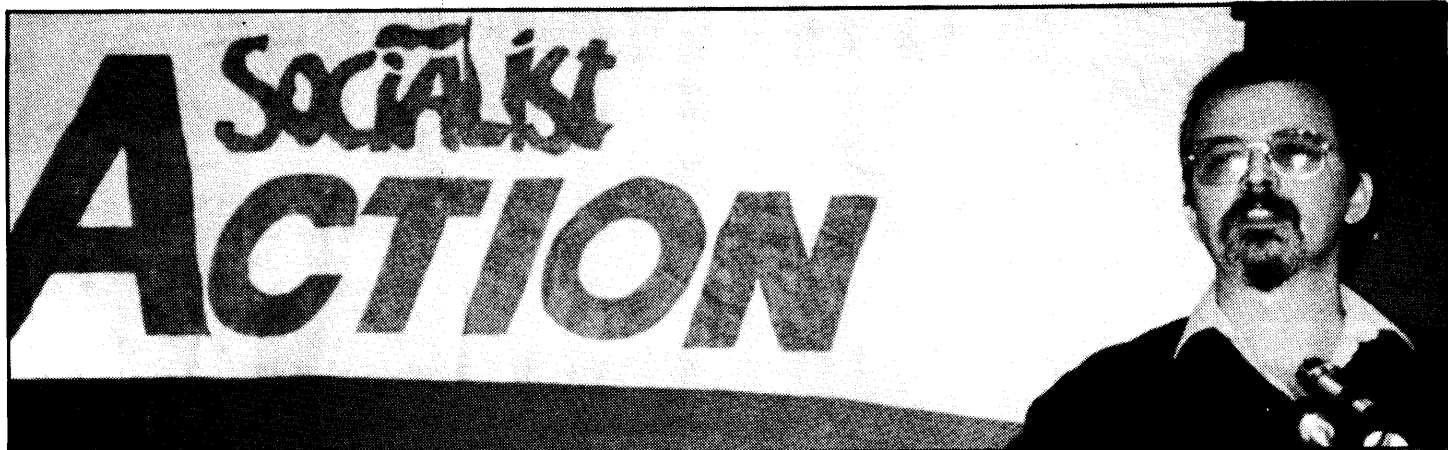
Several participants expressed interest in joining Socialist Action. If you are interested in joining our organization or receiving notice of future activities, contact the nearest Socialist Action branch to you. Don't delay! See the branch directory on page 15.—S.D.

Socialist Action Forum: San Francisco

'Leon Trotsky and the Struggle for Socialist Democracy in the Soviet Union Today'

Speaker: Alan Benjamin, Editor, Socialist Action newspaper.

Friday, Dec. 9, 8 p.m.
3435 Army St., Rm. 308



Zbigniew Kowalewski speaking at New York Hunter College meeting on Nov. 11.

Solidarnosc activist completes U.S. tour

By SANDY DOYLE

The November issue of *Socialist Action* reported on the first eight stops of the 12-city tour of Zbigniew Kowalewski. Kowalewski is a former regional leader of Solidarnosc and author of "Give Us Back Our Factories: Solidarnosc and the Struggle for Workers' Self-Management in Poland." The tour was organized by Socialist Action and Walnut Publishing Co., Inc.

In the Los Angeles area, from Nov. 1-4, Kowalewski spoke at three campuses and a citywide forum. The meetings drew a combined total of over 100 people. He was also interviewed by Susan Weissman on KPFF radio.

In San Francisco, on Nov. 5, Kowalewski's visit began with a Saturday afternoon meeting of 45, which heard his talk on Poland and saw the film "Ten Days That Shook the World."

On Nov. 7, Kowalewski spoke to a group of 40 at San Francisco State University.

In Berkeley, Calif., on Nov. 9, Kowalewski spoke to 50 at a University of California meeting sponsored by the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, AFT Local 1474, Peace Studies Students Association, Walnut Publishing, and other organizations. Kowalewski was interviewed on KALX, the university's radio station.

In Baltimore, on Nov. 10, a forum at Towson State University attracted 137 people. This successful meeting was the first public event sponsored by Socialist Action members in this city. An interview with a prominent newspaper done by telephone prior to Kowalewski's arrival added to the enthusiastic response.

In New York, on Nov. 11, a citywide forum at Hunter College was attended by 60

people. The following day, Kowalewski was able to meet several trade unionists interested in the experience of Solidarnosc. On the tour's final day, Nov. 14, he spoke to a small group at New York University.

In all, Kowalewski spoke to well over 1000 people in the course of his national tour. Socialist Action members in every city of the tour report good sales of *Socialist Action* newspaper—including several subscriptions.

Many of the new Socialist Action pamphlets were sold. The new pamphlet by Zbigniew Kowalewski, "Poland: Solidarnosc and The Fight for Workers' Democracy," was featured at all of the meetings. A number of people interested in knowing more about socialist ideas signed up to attend classes sponsored by Socialist Action branches in the coming months.

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Salvadoran UNTS 'fights for justice'

Earlier this year, JoAnne Ross, a graduate student and Central America solidarity activist at Hunter University in New York, traveled to El Salvador on a two-week delegation hosted by the National Union of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS).

In an interview with Socialist Action reporter Brenda Bishop on Nov. 7, Ross spoke about her trip and about recent developments in El Salvador.

Socialist Action: What is your view of the current situation in El Salvador?

JoAnne Ross: First of all, the Reagan-sponsored "democracy" has basically fallen apart. It never really was a democracy, but the facade has fallen apart.

President Duarte is dying, the Christian Democrats are

split, and basically they have very little political legitimacy—although in name they are still the government. The ARENA party won the municipal elections last spring, and since then death-squad murders are on the rise.

There is a group of extreme right-wing military officers, the Tandonas, who are increasingly advocating an all-out solution to the war, which has come to be known as the "total war" option. They are impatient with the current "low-intensity" counterinsurgency strategy and want to just go out and kill as many people as it takes to crush the resistance.

The repression—the way the military is dealing with the popular demonstrations and marches—is getting worse.

S.A.: How have the Salvadoran people responded to

this situation?

Ross: The situation has gotten much more polarized in El Salvador. In fact, a lot of groups that were pro-Duarte, pro-Christian Democrat, or pro-government have now moved toward the popular movement. Many of these groups have now joined the UNTS. I think the popular movement is stronger and more unified now than it ever was.

S.A.: What role does the UNTS play in the struggle in El Salvador today?

Ross: It plays a very major role in the struggle. I think the UNTS is the group that has really brought together the different sectors of Salvadoran society.

The UNTS was founded in 1986. It represents a coalition of most of the major unions, guilds, workers' federations, peasant cooperatives, student and teachers' unions, and community-based groups such as the Committee of the Disappeared.

The level of organization of the UNTS is extremely high. Everywhere we went we heard the same analysis—from a peasant in La Union to a student in San Miguel to a worker in San Salvador. It's very powerful to hear the peasants identify with the students and with the city electrical workers. They see their struggle as one.

S.A.: What are the demands put forward by the UNTS? What is the nature of their work?

Ross: The UNTS is really fighting on two levels. It's fighting for basic rights. The workers are fighting for better pay, benefits, and the right to strike. These concrete demands are put forward in the strikes they organize and support.

On a broader level, it is struggling for a more just society. It has played a leading role in calling demonstrations around political demands that unite the people. For example, on our second day in the country, our delegation participated in a demonstration in San Salvador that had been called to protest a proposed State of Emergency law and the disappearance of several workers.

There were 20,000 people in the streets, and we heard there would have been more except that a lot of buses from the countryside were stopped and turned back at the edge of the city. Still, the march was 80-percent peasants. The rest were workers and students.

The protesters were marching along in a very disciplined manner when all of a sudden we heard gunfire. What had happened was that the military had blocked off the road to the Treasury, where the protest was to take place, and then fired and sprayed tear gas on the crowd.

The march organizers were so well prepared and calm they had us back together and marching back in the other direction in no time.

Despite the demonstration, the emergency law was passed several days later. The purpose of the law is to further legitimize the on-going repression. It gives the government legal ground to hold prisoners longer and to militarize the workplaces anytime there's a strike or what they consider to be a disturbance in a public workplace. ■



Impact Visuals

Youngster views bodies of 10 peasants killed by Salvadoran military on Sept. 21, 1988.

Our readers speak out

Airlines

Dear editor,

An agreement was signed in October between the Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS, an airline jointly owned by state and private interests in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden) and the notorious Texas Air (parent of Continental Airlines), headed by unionbuster Frank Lorenzo.

By using Continental's facilities at Newark, N.J., SAS will obtain access to Continental's routes for its overseas passengers. SAS will also buy a 10-percent share of Texas Air. Its chairman, Jan Carlzon, will take a seat in Texas Air.

At a New York press conference, Carlzon said there was 100-percent backing among the SAS unions for the deal. But no sooner was this

blatant lie told than Leif Christoffersen, chairman of the joint union committee in Denmark, stressed that the unions rejected it. A few days later, Transportworkers Local 46 in Sweden also adopted a resolution saying "no" to the deal.

Later, however, a section of Local 46 at Arlanda airport near Stockholm gave support to the deal. Why? One of the union leaders (a former Maoist) is one of the union's six representatives that sit by law on the SAS company board. He used his former reputation as a militant unionist to push forward the company's proposal in the name of "defending jobs."

Furthermore, the cabin attendants decided to support the deal while protesting the "mistreatment" of Eastern and Continental employees. The pilots union said no to the deal—and reminded everyone of the

bitter strike by Continental pilots some years ago.

Although the SAS management has been successful in dividing the unions, one can see elements of a growing militancy among the workers—with firm roots in Denmark but spilling over to Sweden. In its resolution, Local 46 stresses the need for cooperation between the different unions in the airlines industry and especially with the ones at Eastern and Continental in the United States.

Lennart Andersson,
Stockholm, Sweden

Empty arms

Dear editor,

What's this business of sending me just five copies of *Socialist Action* to sell on campus? Do you realize it took a total of 15 minutes before my arms were empty of November's edition?

Although students at the university here are generally more conservative than I'm accustomed to, plenty are interested in finding out about socialism.

One student (after having bought the paper and given the articles a glance) asked, "So where can I meet some of these people from *Socialist Action*?" I told him, "You just have. Here I am."

R.Z.,
Urbana, Ill.

Response

Dear editor,

If *Socialist Action* newspaper and pamphlet sales are an indication of the reception of revolutionary socialist ideas today, our Los Angeles

campus sales team can point to a new level of response.

The crowd that we drew at a sidewalk table on the edge of Los Angeles City College campus provoked the campus police to send four officers to enforce a rarely invoked ordinance.

We hadn't been there two hours, and had had sales of over \$60 (mostly pamphlets of around \$1 each), when the police appeared. We were then ordered to move across the street or be cited. We took the names and addresses of people who expressed interest in forming a campus group to sponsor socialist literature tables in the future.

Brad Wiedmaier,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Recovery

Dear editor,

Activists in the movement against repression and war in Central American are going forward in the Toronto area following two years of decline in the movement.

When the Toronto Anti-Intervention Coalition (TAIC) was

founded four years ago, it had up to 100 affiliated organizations and organized educational, cultural, and protest activities on a year-round basis.

But controversies over TAIC's mass-action orientation, the need to criticize Canadian complicity with U.S. intervention, and whether to adopt the policies of Central American liberation movements took a toll on coalition activists. The movement reached its lowest point following the signing of the Esquipulas 2 agreement by the five Central American presidents in 1987.

We are only now beginning to recover from the movement's demoralization. A demonstration of some 200 people in Toronto on Sept. 17 was a limited sign of the recovery.

A conference is scheduled for Nov. 25-26 in Toronto to reconstruct a representative coalition against intervention in Central America. The conference was initiated by TAIC and by individual solidarity activists.

Barry Weisleder,
Toronto, Ontario

Oscar Coover Jr. dies of cancer

On Oct. 28, Oscar Coover Jr., a 50-year veteran of the revolutionary socialist movement, died in Los Angeles of cancer. He was 68.

His father, Oscar Coover Sr., was a founder of the Trotskyist movement in the United States and helped lead support for the Teamsters union during the historic 1934 strikes in Minneapolis.

Oscar joined the Trotskyist movement in 1938. Soon afterwards, he became immersed in the struggle of unemployed youths. He became a leader of the Youth Section of the Unemployed Section of Teamster's Local 544 in Minneapolis.

During Oscar's lifetime, he became a seaman, a master carpenter, and an organizer of the Socialist Workers Party. He supervised and participated in the work of remodeling the new headquarters of the SWP in New York. He also supervised and participated in the reconstruction of the party headquarters in Los Angeles.

Oscar was a National Committee member of the SWP from 1961 to 1973. He resigned from the SWP in 1983, but remained a supporter of the party.

Oscar's life expressed the confidence he had in the socialist future of the American working class. We pay tribute to Oscar Coover for living his life in harmony with his socialist convictions.

—DAVE COOPER

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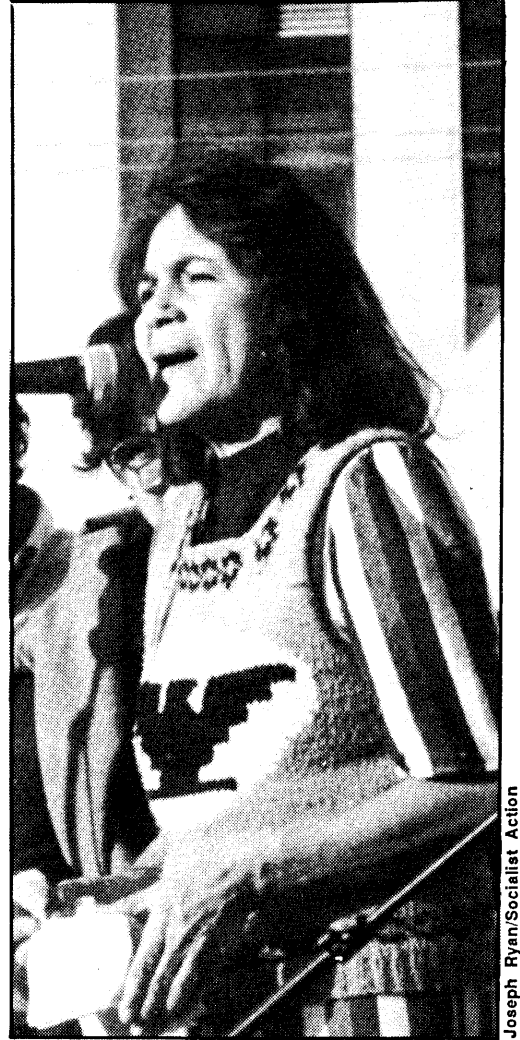
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UFW grape boycott boosted as 3000 demonstrate in S.F.



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Several thousand farm workers and supporters marched militantly through the Mission District of San Francisco before listening to UFW Vice President Dolores Huerta (speaking above) and other labor leaders at a rally in front of a Safeway store.

By AMANDA CHAPMAN

On Saturday, Nov. 19, over 3000 Latinos, unionists, students and others marched through San Francisco to show their support for the United Farm Workers' national boycott of table grapes. They also protested the savage beating of the union's vice president, Dolores Huerta, by San Francisco police in mid-September.

The spirited demonstration was sponsored by the UFW, the San Francisco Labor Council, and the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice.

The marchers wound through the predominantly Latino Mission district. They were accompanied by Latino percussionists performing from a flatbed truck, by a marching band, and by an all-women percussion band, Sistah Boom. They stopped for brief rallies at two major intersections in the Latino and gay communities and at a Cala Foods store in the Mission. Before a change of ownership, Cala Foods had promised to stop carrying grapes, but now refuses to take them off their shelves.

The march ended in front of a large Safeway supermarket at the intersection of Church and Market streets, where there was a rally with speakers and music.

The speakers included Dolores Huerta, actor Martin Sheen; Sherry Chiesa, president, Hotel and Restaurant Employees, Local 2; Carlos Palomino, former world-welter weight champion; Jack Henning, president, California State AFL-CIO; Jimmy Herman, president, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union; David Jennings, International Indian Treaty Council; and Baldemar Velasquez, president, Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

Grand jury white-wash

In addition to calling upon San Franciscans to support the boycott, speakers denounced the San Francisco grand jury's refusal to indict the police officers who beat Dolores Huerta almost to death. The incident occurred when Huerta was distributing leaflets at an anti-Bush demonstration; the police charged the crowd, clubbing demonstrators who could not disperse because they were surrounded by

police and other demonstrators.

Huerta, who was struck repeatedly in the upper-back and kidney area, sustained three broken ribs and a ruptured spleen. She was hospitalized for over a week and, according to one doctor, almost died from internal bleeding.

In response to the outcry against police brutality that followed, the district attorney began a grand-jury investigation of the incident. The week before the demonstration, the grand jury ruled that there were no grounds for criminal charges and issued, instead of indictments, a report on crowd-control methods used by the police. The report contained a recommendation that police spy on protest groups.

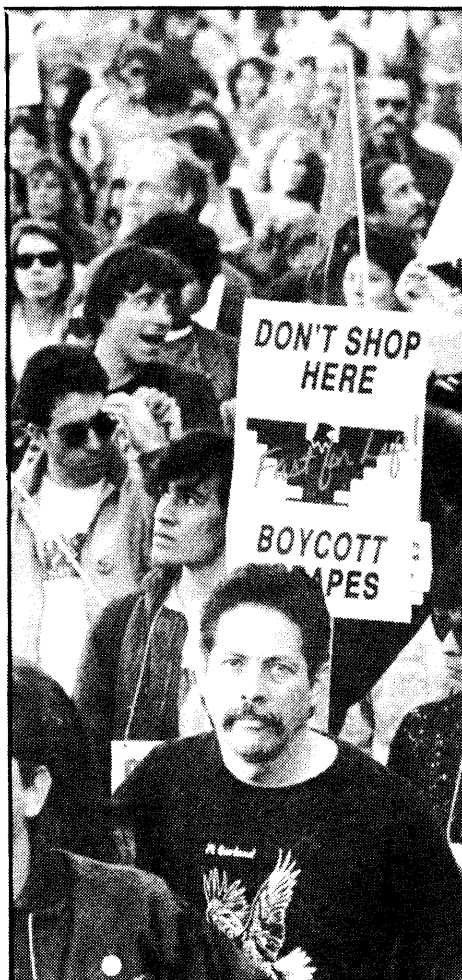
"The attack on Dolores Huerta is being white-washed," said Jack Allen, spokesperson for Local 14 of the Service Employees International Union, at a UFW press conference. Other labor unions and civil rights groups have protested the grand jury's refusal to issue any indictments in the case and have denounced the grand jury's recommendations. Huerta responded to the cover-up with a \$15 million-damages claim against the city of San Francisco.

Cesar Chavez was scheduled to speak at the Nov. 19 rally but was still too ill as a result of his 36-day fast this summer and a fall from his porch—in which he fractured an arm—early in November. Chavez fasted to draw attention to the five-year-old boycott of table grapes. Since his fast, according to UFW boycott organizer Dan Martin, the boycott has garnered a lot more support.

Boycott victories

The original boycott target areas—Boston, New York City, Detroit, Chicago, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Los Angeles—were chosen because they had the highest sales of table grapes in the country. Recently, Martin said, increasing support from other unions, from environmental and consumer groups, and from celebrities and local politicians has led the UFW to set up boycott offices in Austin, Texas; Toronto; Miami; Washington, D.C.; Baltimore; Philadelphia; and upstate New York.

In Chicago, New York, and the San



The composition of the demonstration reflected the coalition of the labor, peace and UFW sponsors.

Francisco Bay Area, according to Department of Agriculture figures, shipments of table grapes have dropped by 18 percent to 25 percent. This has been partially offset by a 22-percent increase in shipments to Los Angeles, where growers are forced to dump their grapes at a very low price—an average of three pounds for a dollar.

Red Apple Supermarkets, a New York City chain of 26 stores, has removed all table

grapes from its shelves. And, as part of a week-long publicity blitz by the UFW, an additional 100 stores in New York will remove grapes from their shelves for the first week in December.

In New York and Boston, the City Councils have passed resolutions banning grapes from city institutions and urging citizens to join the boycott. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors will vote on a similar resolution Dec. 1.

Clearly there is widespread sentiment in support of the farm workers' struggle for better working conditions and higher wages. There is also deep concern about the effects of pesticides and other chemicals on our environment and on our health—as workers and as consumers.

Broadening boycott needed

The combination of the anti-intervention, labor, and community forces in the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice with the United Farm Workers and the San Francisco Labor Council "represents," in the words of Cesar Chavez, "the type of broad-based coalition crucial for the success of the grape boycott."

This powerful coalition was able to involve a large number of young Latinos and union activists in the leadership and logistical support for the demonstration. Monitors and fund-collectors were supplied by the UFW, Local 2 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees union, community organizations, and the Alameda Central Labor Council. Latino activists declared that the march and rally had the largest participation and turnout from their community of any demonstration that has taken place in San Francisco.

The Mobilization has always strived to show the connections between the U.S. government's military intervention abroad and union-busting and cuts in social services in this country.

This demonstration, according to Carl Finamore, staff director of the Mobilization, facilitated making these connections because "it strengthened the ties between the labor movement, community groups, and the anti-intervention movements, providing the basis for mass-action protests against U.S. government policies here and abroad." ■