

THE MILITANT

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

ERA & abortion

Are they
'separate
issues'?

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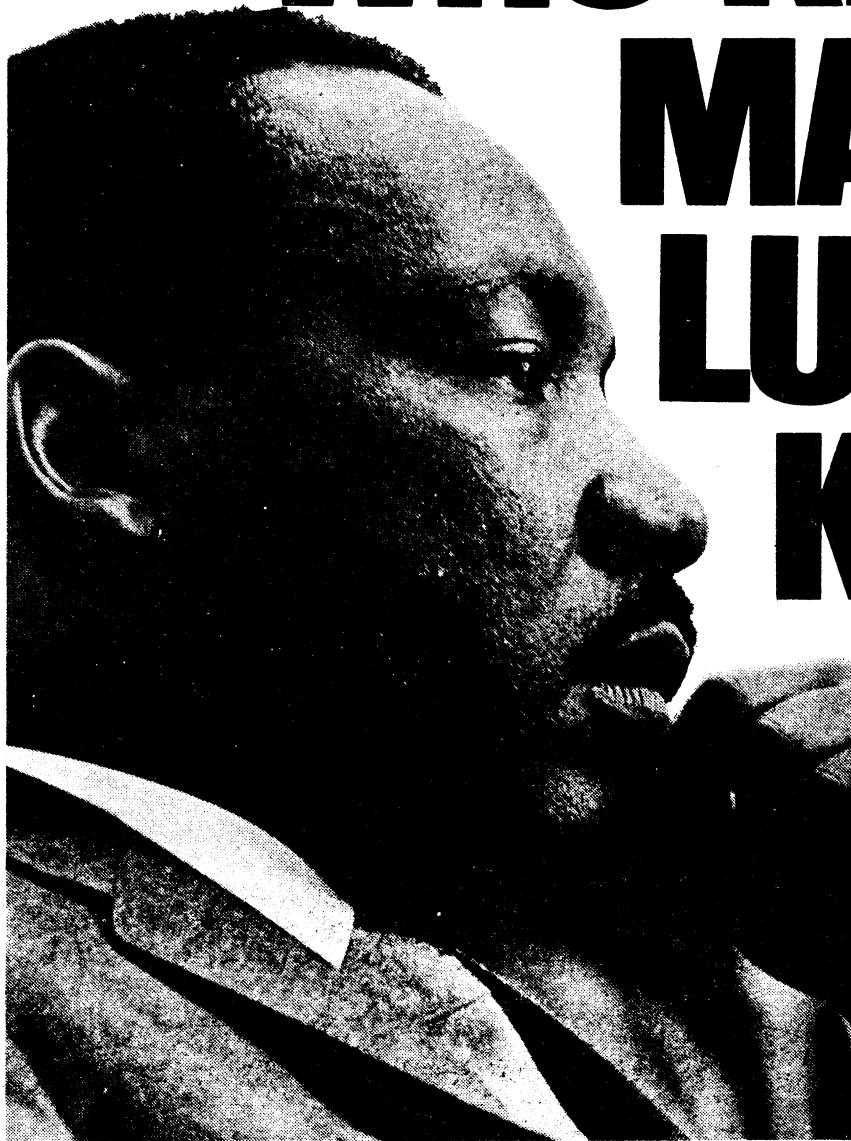
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N.Y. Muslim innocent in second murder trial

Lewis 17X Dupree, whose first trial for the murder of a New York City cop ended in a hung jury last fall, was found innocent of the charge March 27.

Dupree was accused of killing policeman Philip Cardillo during a police raid on a Harlem mosque in 1972.

The prosecution's star witness, Foster 2X Thomas, was discredited by six defense witnesses who agreed they hadn't seen Thomas at the mosque.

Also riddled with contradictions was the testimony of a New York City cop who said a man standing over Cardillo's body was slightly built and around five feet ten. Dupree is six feet two and weighs 250 pounds.



ANITA BRYANT ON GAY RIGHTS: The anti-gay rights crusader and orange-juice peddler comments on the visit of a group of gay activists to the White House:

"I protest the action of the White House staff in dignifying these activists for special privilege with a serious discussion of their alleged 'human rights.' . . .

"Behind the high-sounding appeal against discrimination in jobs and housing, which is not a problem to the 'closet' homosexual, they are really asking to be blessed in their abnormal life-style" by the president.

Meanwhile, back in Miami—where Bryant is heading an anti-gay crusade—Manuel Gomez, a leading pro-gay rights figure in Miami's Cuban community, found his car fire bombed March 22. Miami has been the site of a bitter struggle to keep a gay rights law on the books. A referendum on the law will be held June 7.

Boston supporters of the Miami law have formed Boston Advocates for Human Rights. With wide backing in the Boston area, the group plans an educational campaign. It also will try to raise money to aid the Miami gay rights battle.

FILIPINO NURSES' TRIAL OPENS: The trial of Filipina Narciso and Leonora Perez, accused of murdering nine patients at the Veterans Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan, during 1975, opened March 28.

The government claims the two women injected powerful muscle relaxers into the patients, causing fatal breathing failures.

The prosecutor's opening remarks admitted his case was entirely circumstantial.

The defense pointed out that virtually anyone could have walked in off the street and injected the patients. In addition, defense attorneys noted, the FBI was under intense pressure to make an arrest in the case.

A Detroit newspaper reported before the trial began that Betty Jakim, the nurses' former supervisor, had been under psychiatric care and had left a suicide note admitting her guilt and exonerating Narciso and Perez.

ANN ARBOR PROFESSOR WINS TENURE FIGHT: Student-faculty protests have defeated an attempt by the administration of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to fire a politically active English professor, William "Buzz" Alexander. Alexander is a leading activist in the Ann Arbor Committee for Human Rights in Latin America. More than 3,500 people attended a teach-in on political repression organized by the committee last November.

The English department had recommended tenure for Alexander, but the executive committee of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts (LSA) overruled the department, effectively firing the popular teacher.

Alexander and his backers formed the Educational Defense Committee to organize support for an appeal of the executive committee's decision. More than a hundred protest letters were sent. Leading faculty members spoke out on his behalf.

The defense campaign was successful. On March 7 the word went out: for the first time in more than thirty years, the LSA executive committee had been forced to reverse a tenure decision.

NOTE FOR CUTBACKS PROTESTERS: While President Carter is cutting back funds for education and other social services, a little-noticed government report reveals that the navy plans to increase its purchase of Trident nuclear-missile submarines from thirteen subs to sixteen. According to General Accounting Office estimates, this will boost the cost of the Trident program from \$21.4 billion to more than \$30 billion.

'VETS HAVE A RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION': More than 200 Wayne State University Weekend College students and teachers picketed the Detroit Veterans Administration offices March 19. They were protesting a threat to cut veterans' educational benefits.

The Weekend College is an innovative program designed to give people who work full-time the chance to earn a bachelor's degree. A large majority of the college's students are veterans receiving government benefits. The VA has consistently harassed the college by seeking legal loopholes to cut benefits and ultimately decertify the entire program.

Tom Neal, a student spokesperson, told the *Militant*: "The VA's attack on the Weekend College is part of a broader attack on all working people. Veterans and workers have a right to an education, and we intend to defend that right through militant mass actions."

The VA nonetheless announced its intention to go ahead and slash student benefits by about 40 percent in the upcoming spring semester. Weekend College students plan to continue their protests.

ACLU HITS SMALL-PARTY BALLOT RULING: The Michigan American Civil Liberties Union held a news conference March 22 to attack a U.S. Supreme Court decision that seriously limits ballot access by small parties.

The court upheld without a hearing a Michigan law requiring small parties to compete in an August primary in order to appear on the statewide November ballot.

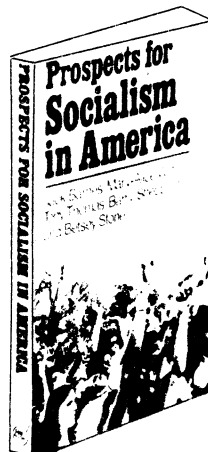
The law will keep virtually all small parties off the November ballot. ACLU attorneys representing the Socialist Workers party, Communist party, Communist Labor party, Socialist Labor party, and Human Rights party appealed a ruling upholding the law.

The Michigan law is now one of the most restrictive in the country. The ACLU plans to seek repeal of the law while simultaneously petitioning the Supreme Court for a rehearing.

—Arnold Weissberg

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Socialists aim to top 10,000 sales goal

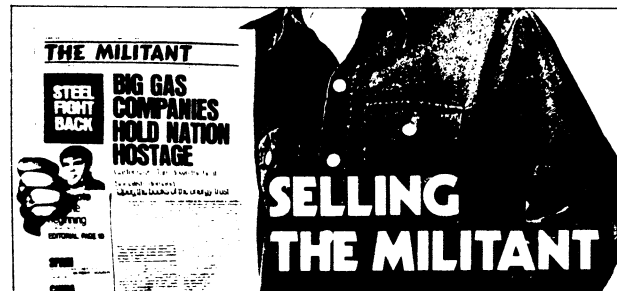
By Andrea Baron

Socialists all over the country have been making ambitious plans to get this issue of the *Militant* into the hands of more than 10,000 new readers. Members of the Socialist Workers party and Young Socialist Alliance will be intensifying their sales efforts for the national "target week," April 2-8.

Also joining in the sales effort will be eight teams of Young Socialists, currently traveling to college campuses across the country, selling socialist literature and signing up new members to the Young Socialist Alliance.

The plan for the target week is to surpass the goal of selling 10,000 copies of the *Militant*.

A number of areas are boosting their goal for the week. Socialists in Detroit, for example, normally



aim to sell 395. But this week they plan to go all out and hit 1,015.

Other areas that have raised their goals are Kansas City, Missouri, from 100 to 150; Indianapolis, from 100 to 200; Denver, from 200 to 350; Philadelphia, from 400 to 450; Richmond, from 75 to 90; Los Angeles, from 650 to 900; and Phoenix, from 125 to 200.

Also, Cincinnati, from 125 to 150; Dallas, from 125 to 300; Albany, New York, from 75 to 100; Salt Lake City, from 100 to 115; Miami, from 75 to 90; Toledo, from 75 to 85; Washington, D.C., Area, from 400 to 450; and San Francisco, from 550 to 750.

During the first six weeks, the *Militant* sales drive has made relatively steady progress toward the goal of raising the level of sales, putting these sales on a regular, systematic footing, and expanding sales to industrial workers.

Although we still have not reached the 10,000 goal, we have already made some substantial progress.

Los Angeles is one of the areas where sales have been increasing at a fairly steady clip each week. Rich Finkel, organizer of the Socialist Workers party local in Los Angeles, outlined some of the local's plans for the target week.

"We are raising our goal for the week from 650 to 900. We think this target week will be a great opportunity to combine *Militant* sales with the last week of campaigning for our candidates, Sam Manuel for mayor and Virginia Garza for school

board. The elections will take place on Tuesday, April 5.

In addition to regular Saturday and weeknight teams, each of the SWP branches in Los Angeles sends two teams a week to sell at plant gates. For the target week, they plan to increase sales at plant gates with more teams going out.

Some of the most successful sales have been in areas where there are new branches of the SWP. Dallas and Phoenix are two new branches that have raised their regular weekly sales goals.

Dallas SWP organizer Becky Ellis reports, "We found selling the *Militant* to be one of the best ways to meet people who are interested in political activity and to get the SWP known."

The Phoenix branch of the SWP has met its sales goal five out of the six weeks of the drive. They have also raised their regular weekly goal from 100 to 125.

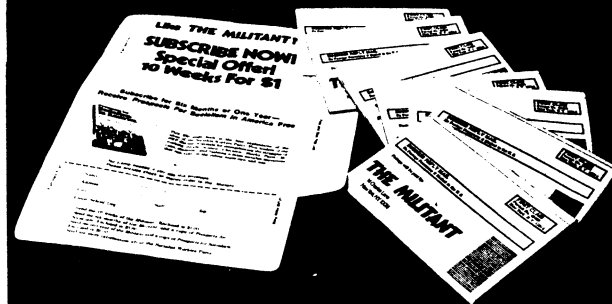
Phoenix sales director Joe Callahan reports that one of the newest members of the SWP there, Bill Flynn, quickly became their top salesperson.

"Bill sold fifty-six *Militants* one week and fifty-seven the next. Bill says he likes to sell the *Militant* because he likes what's in it, and because he knows the value of the paper in winning new members of the SWP." Bill Flynn had been looking for the SWP in Phoenix. He finally met someone who was out selling the *Militant* and joined the party the next week.

The Phoenix branch is now selling at the Marathon Steel and Reynolds Metals plants, the two largest plants in Phoenix organized by the steelworkers.

While most *Militants* are sold by members of the SWP and YSA in areas listed in the scoreboard, some are sold by other readers, who order small bundles to sell to co-workers, friends, or on campuses.

Something new



'Militant' salespeople are adding something new to papers they sell this spring—prepaid subscription envelopes. These leaflet-sized advertisements fold into postage-paid envelopes that can be mailed directly to the 'Militant.' All a new reader has to do is fill in their name and address, fold the envelope, put in a dollar, and drop it in the nearest mailbox. Subscription envelopes can be ordered free from the 'Militant,' 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.

Socialists in Chicago recently won a major victory in their suit challenging undemocratic petitioning requirements for the mayoral election. Now they are organizing a massive petitioning drive to get 20,000 signatures, which must be collected by April 18.

Because of the short time they have to petition, Chicago won't participate in this week's sales drive. However, other areas have pledged to top their local goal by a big enough margin that we ought to be able to both meet our 10,000 national goal and put the SWP on the ballot in Chicago.

Sales scoreboard

Area	Goal	Sold	%	Los Angeles	650	539	82.9	San Francisco	550	233	42.4
Dallas	120	139	115.8	Boston	520	421	81.0	Oakland, Calif.	250	82	32.8
Kansas City, Mo.	100	113	113.0	Philadelphia	400	317	79.3	Chicago	650	153	23.5
Phoenix	125	141	112.8	Houston	400	314	78.5	Total			
Raleigh, N.C.	40	45	112.5	Cincinnati	125	98	78.4	March 25 issue	10,000	7,114	71.1
Miami	75	77	102.7	Salt Lake City	100	77	77.0				
Indianapolis	100	102	102.0	Pittsburgh	175	128	73.1				
Portland, Ore.	200	200	100.0	Louisville	125	88	70.4				
Cleveland	180	180	100.0	Tacoma, Wash.	70	45	64.3	Young Socialist teams			
San Antonio	125	125	100.0	New York City	1,100	674	61.3	Mid-Atlantic	90	118	131.1
Newark	225	214	95.1	Albany, N.Y.	75	44	58.7	East Great Lakes	90	90	100.0
Washington, D.C., Area	400	378	94.5	Seattle	215	124	57.7	Northern California	90	90	100.0
New Orleans	200	189	94.5	Detroit	395	224	56.7	Midwest	90	60	66.7
St. Louis	300	280	93.3	San Jose	200	106	53.0	Northeast	90	51	56.7
Richmond, Va.	75	67	89.3	Baltimore	150	77	51.3	South	90	24	26.7
Atlanta	400	354	88.5	Milwaukee	200	101	50.5	Southwest	90	7	7.8
San Diego	200	176	88.0	Minneapolis	300	149	49.7	Rocky Mountain	90	4	4.4
Toledo	75	64	85.3	Denver	200	97	48.5	Total	720	444	61.7
St. Paul	80	67	83.8	Berkeley, Calif.	250	112	44.8	Combined total		7,558	

Unionists convicted in gov't. agent frame-up

By Arnold Weissberg

SPRINGFIELD, Mass.—Two unionists, on trial as the result of the work of a government provocateur, were convicted March 26 in federal court of possessing and transferring "explosive bombs."

Alex Markley, western Massachusetts field organizer for the United Electrical Workers, and Tony Soares, a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, face up to fifty years in prison.

The case was the result of provocations by an undercover agent of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau of the U.S. Treasury Department.

Markley's local went out on strike in early September 1975. A casual acquaintance introduced him to a man named "Jerry," who turned out to be an ATF agent named O'Reilly.

"Jerry" kept pestering Markley to let him "take care" of scab trucks running the union's picket lines.

O'Reilly testified that Markley gave him a "bomb" on November 7, 1975, only two weeks before the strike ended.

Suares entered the case because Markley happened to introduce him to "Jerry."

O'Reilly also testified that Suares sold him three "bombs" on December 8, 1975, almost three weeks after the strike ended.

The government also sought to prove Markley and Suares had "conspired" to destroy trucks. But its case was so weak that the judge yielded to a defense motion to drop the conspiracy charge.

With that charge eliminated, the jury's deliberations focused on whether the devices obtained by

O'Reilly were "explosive bombs."

Howard Emmons, a professor of engineering at Harvard testifying for the defense, ridiculed the notion that the four toilet paper tubes filled with commercial black powder were "explosive."

Emmons testified that they didn't explode. He pointed out that they didn't even burn up. He added that a person holding one probably wouldn't even be injured if it ignited.

The government's "expert," Ralph Cooper, admitted he had classified the devices as "explosive bombs" without even testing them. He said he did this because the items were sent to his lab with a cover letter explaining they were to be used against trucks.

Cooper said that anything that looked like the devices and was designed to be used against trucks

was an explosive bomb.

No evidence was introduced to back up the government claim that trucks were the intended target.

The government witness also admitted that the definition of an "explosive bomb" was up to the director of the ATF.

When the government finally tested models of the devices, Cooper ignited one under the hood of a pickup truck.

Suares's attorney, Lawrence Shubow, asked Cooper if any damage had resulted.

Cooper said yes. When asked to describe the "damage," he said that a gray ash residue had been deposited on the engine block.

Not even a single wire had been moved or severed.

Cooper's testimony made clear that the government was using a vaguely written law to railroad Markley and Suares.

In his summation, prosecutor O'Neill told the jury they shouldn't pay any attention to the Harvard professor and his instruments.

"Just use your good common sense," he said. "You know what a bomb is. Ask yourself what you would think it was if you saw it on the street. What would you think if your children brought home one of these? Do you want these on the streets of Springfield?"

Markley and Suares are free on bail. The verdict will be appealed. Defense attorneys Shubow and Allan Rosenberg, who represented Markley, felt that a strong appeal could be filed. The two men will be sentenced April 14.



Tony Soares (left) and Alex Markley

Brasky for mayor

Socialists launch Chicago petition drive

Victory in ballot suit

By Pat Grogan

CHICAGO—Supporters of the Socialist Workers party here are on an all-out petitioning drive to put Dennis Brasky, their candidate for mayor, on the ballot in the June 7 special election.

The socialists began petitioning after a federal judge reduced from 66,000 to 20,000 the number of signatures they need to qualify for ballot status. The judge also extended the filing deadline for these signatures from April 4 until April 18.

Brasky says the judge's order is a "major victory" for an SWP lawsuit against Chicago's "notoriously undemocratic election requirements." Independent or third party candidates had been required to gather signatures equal to 5 percent of the votes cast in the previous election.

Brasky is running in the special election that was called to fill the mayoral seat left vacant by Richard Daley when he died last December.

In 1975, SWP mayoral candidate Willie Mae Reid became the first independent candidate ever to overcome these undemocratic ballot laws. Reid won ballot status after her supporters gathered more than 66,000 signatures.

But the ruling by the board of elections that independent candidates would need to gather a similar number of signatures again—this time in only eighty-one days—was a transparent move to prevent the socialists, or anyone else, from repeating Reid's successful 1975 ballot effort.

As Federal Judge Bernard Decker observed in his ruling in favor of the SWP suit, the "Socialist Workers party did manage to satisfy the . . . signature requirement for the 1975 mayoral election."

"Still this was achieved without the stringent time limitations effective in the current election. There is no evidence that any other independent or third party candidate has ever satisfied the 5 percent test for Chicago city-wide elections."

Decker said the 5 percent law unconstitutional required independent candidates to gather more signatures to qualify for ballot status in the Chicago mayoral race than the 25,000 maxi-

mum required of independent candidates for statewide office!

The judge ordered the board of elections not to exceed this 25,000 statewide signature limit in future Chicago elections.

Decker also observed that "there has been much concern expressed recently over the substantial portion of the electorate that failed to exercise its franchise in the preceding elections."

"This absenteeism may in itself reflect discouragement with the range of choices on the ballot or desire for an effective means of casting a protest vote."

Attorneys Lance Haddix and Ron Reosti, who argued the successful ballot challenge for the SWP, insist that the new 20,000 signature requirement is still too high. They are back in court arguing that Brasky should be granted automatic ballot status on the basis of the proven support for the SWP shown during the Willie Mae Reid campaign.

At the very least, the SWP's lawyers are arguing, the number of signatures required should be further reduced given the short time before the April 18 deadline.

More than seventy people have already volunteered to help petition, beginning March 30, to put Brasky on the ballot. If you would like to help, contact the SWP campaign at 407 South Dearborn, Room 1145, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Telephone: (312) 939-0737.

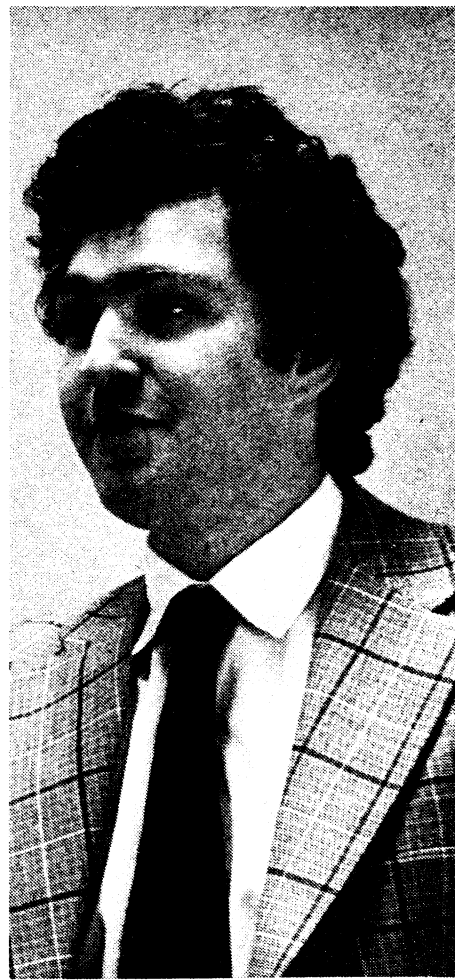
Dennis Brasky: working-class alternative

By Pat Grogan

CHICAGO—The Socialist Workers party here is appealing for support to the petition drive to put Dennis Brasky, its candidate for mayor, on the ballot.

"We need a candidate who speaks in the interests of working people," Brasky says, "a candidate who will fight for the Equal Rights Amendment, against the death penalty, for the desegregation of Chicago's schools and housing, and who will stand up for the rights of undocumented workers."

"Only Black and labor political action that is independent of the



Militant/Cassandra Dowden

DENNIS BRASKY

Democrats and Republicans," the SWP candidate adds, "can defend our democratic rights and standard of living from the attacks these two parties of big business are now carrying out."

When Brasky confronted his Democratic and Republican party opponents at a March 7 South Shore mayoral forum, the predominantly Black audience was able to see a concrete example of what the socialists mean.

All the candidates except Acting Mayor Michael Bilandic, the Democratic party machine's choice to succeed Richard Daley, were there.

The *Chicago Sun-Times* reported, "Dennis Brasky, the Socialist Workers party candidate for mayor, drew large applause when he pointed to former State's Attorney [mayoral primary candidate Edward] Hanrahan as the murderer of Black Panther leaders Mark Clark and Fred Hampton."

Brasky demanded an end to the police spying backed by Democratic and Republican party politicians. He

faced Hanrahan, who led the 1969 murder raid on Hampton and Clark, saying, "Some of them go beyond spying. They become the racist assassins of Black people."

The three Black candidates at the meeting—State Sen. Harold Washington and Ellis Reid, both Democrats, and Republican A.A. "Sammy" Rayner—were silent on the question of Hampton and Clark.

But the audience was not satisfied. A written question labeled the 1969 raid as a "hit job" for the FBI.

The moderator, State Rep. Lewis Caldwell, tried to suppress the question. But a Black man stood up and shouted, "If [Hanrahan] wants to be mayor of Chicago, that's an important question—it should be answered."

The audience backed the man up. Hanrahan, who is a defendant in a federal civil suit brought by the families of Hampton and Clark, answered, "I'll talk about it after the trial is over, it would be inappropriate now. I invite you to examine my testimony." His testimony has been marked primarily by incredible "lapses" of memory.

Brasky told the meeting he disagreed with the claim made by his opponents that Chicago is "the city that works."

Unemployment on the West Side, he explained, is more than 40 percent. One out of every five adults receive some form of public "aid." The socialist cited Chicago as one of the most segregated cities in the country in terms of schools and housing. Brasky denounced proposed police department plans for stepped-up raids in pursuit of "illegal aliens." The Chicano community, he said, is already subjected to a racist dragnet by immigration officials.

Brasky is scheduled to confront his opponents at least twice more before the primary elections on April 19.

At these meetings, at campus and street corner rallies, plant gates, union and community gatherings, Brasky will be urging support to the SWP campaign as a way to show opposition to the two parties of racism and unemployment, the Democrats and Republicans.

"Working people in Chicago and throughout the country face big problems," Brasky says, "because of a social system that isn't designed to work for us. Ultimately, this system must be replaced by one that puts us first and profits last: Socialism. That is what I stand for."

St. Louis: sharp debate in mayoral race

By Norton Sandler

ST. LOUIS—As the April 5 mayoral election here approaches, the debate between Socialist Workers party candidate Helen Savio and her Democratic and Republican opponents is heating up. An editorial in the March 27 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* noted that Savio's "presence in the race has called attention to serious issues that might not otherwise have been raised."

One example: a sharp exchange took place March 23 during a mayoral candidates' news conference at the St. Louis Press Club.

Newspaper reports described how Savio, a member of American Federation of Teachers Local 420, blasted "the corporations and utilities as responsible for the economic crisis in the city." Savio called for a massive, federally funded public works program to provide jobs for all who needed them.

Savio's running mate for the post of comptroller is Black activist Mary Pritchard. The socialists are challenging mayoral candidates Democrat James Conway and Republican James Stemmler. Black Democrats William Clay and John Bass are running a write-in campaign for mayor and comptroller.

At the news conference, Bass called on the other candidates to reveal how they planned to get more jobs for Blacks.

Savio answered that just electing Blacks to city hall was not enough by itself. She insisted that the Black community had to be mobilized in visible protests and organized to solve the problems it faces. "I support the call by Mary Pritchard," Savio said, "for Blacks to form their own political party, independent of the Democrats and Republicans."

Both Bass and Clay have repeatedly denounced the Democratic par-

ty as "racist." But Bass attacked Savio and Pritchard's suggestion. "We are Democrats. We intend to remain Democrats. We are trying to restructure our party and strengthen it," he said of himself and Clay.

Both Savio and Pritchard have been outspoken in their support for the Equal Rights Amendment and a woman's right to abortion.

In contrast, Democrat and mayoral front-runner James Conway, now a state senator, skipped out of the Missouri Senate chambers just prior to a key vote that led to the recent defeat of the ERA in the state.

The two socialist candidates have also made support to the struggle for school desegregation a key part of their campaign. They support a legal challenge by the NAACP that seeks to bring equal education to Black youths in St. Louis schools.

Pritchard says that while Bass

and Clay are for school desegregation, the two Democrats are in a contradictory situation since "it has been the Democratic party that is responsible for the segregated school system."



Militant/Chris Smith

HELEN SAVIO

Interview with Black socialist

L.A. mayor race: Manuel is only busing advocate

By Harry Ring

LOS ANGELES—"Manuel is the only candidate noticeably to the left of Bradley in the entire race and has been the only one to advocate busing as a means of integrating Los Angeles schools."

That estimate by the February 21 *Los Angeles Times* is a revealing commentary on this city's mayoral contest.

Sam Manuel, the Socialist Workers party nominee, is one of twelve candidates in the race. Other than incumbent Mayor Thomas Bradley, he is the only Black in the contest.

While the election is officially "non-partisan," there are Republicans in the race, conservative Democrats, and several, like Bradley, who are regarded as liberal Democrats.

In an interview with Manuel, I asked if the *Times*'s estimate of the political lineup was correct.

It's true, he responded, even though "Bradley's is not the typical campaign run by a Black Democrat, or even a liberal white.

"He's made his appeal to the right," Manuel continued. "When he announced his campaign he gave two important reasons why he should be reelected. One was that he had been able to keep on the streets the largest police force Los Angeles has ever had. "And two, he was against any kind of 'massive, cross-town busing' for the purpose of school desegregation.

"What Bradley's done," Manuel said, "is to strengthen antibusing forces like the racist outfit Bustop with this kind of campaign rhetoric."

Manuel is the only one of the mayoral candidates to advocate busing. The only difference between Bradley and the others on this issue, Manuel observed, is that as a Black, Bradley can't afford to say he's against "forced" busing, as the others do.

One reason Bradley is able to take such a deplorable position on desegregation, Manuel explained, "is because of the problem of leadership in the Black community.

"Bradley has been assured," he said, "that the established leadership of the community will not make an issue of his stand during the campaign."

The city's major Black paper, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, Manuel noted, along with supporting Bradley, has run several editorials calling for "moderation" on the issue of busing.

"The failure of the *Sentinel*, as well as other leading voices in the Black community, to speak up on this," Manuel said, "gives Bradley the room for maneuver on the issue.

"It's not that many of these people aren't for desegregation," Manuel added, noting that a number of them had helped build a February 12 desegregation march of 1,600 people.

"But since the election," he continued, "many of them have drawn back. They may not like Bradley's position, but they don't want to oppose him. They know it would put him on the spot. And they don't want to do that.

"They do want to see a Black elected mayor. But the problem is broader than that. Like Bradley, they represent the politics of the Democratic party.

"They're telling Black people that the way to get equal education, end police brutality, and win jobs is through the Democratic party.

"But," Manuel emphasized, "the people who wield power in the Democratic party are opposed to Black rights. They're the ones who are responsible for these problems in the first place. So these Black spokespeople are in a position where their hands are tied by the party that they're members of.

"To push the issue of desegregation would mean not only a break with Bradley but a break with the politics that Bradley represents.

"The Socialist Workers party," Manuel explained, "is running in this election because we believe that in order for the Black community to win on the issue of equal rights in education, or jobs, or the fight against police brutality, exactly such a break with the Democrats is needed.

"Bradley is first of all a Democrat," Manuel went on, "and secondly a Black. He's made that clear all through the campaign.

"When I explain that, especially to young Blacks on high school and college campuses, and explain what Bradley's actual record is, I've gotten a favorable response," Manuel said.

He cited the example of a story in the student paper at Fremont High, a school that is largely Black.

Entitled, "Is Mayor Tom a Tom?," the article deals with Bradley's failure to defend school desegregation and to deal with the problem of police brutality against Blacks.

"These youth," Manuel said, "are against Uncle Tom politics. But they need a political alternative to the Democrats and Republicans.

"What kind of alternative?" Manuel asked. "One idea to consider is what would happen if Los Angeles Blacks stopped supporting the Democratic party that fosters our oppression. What if we used our power to build an independent party based on and re-

sponsible only to our own community?

"Another alternative is for all the working people in this city to join together in a labor party, based on our trade unions. Such a party could unite all working people around a program to defend our standard of living and the rights of Blacks, Chicanos, and other oppressed groups.

"The important thing is to see the need to put an end to the politics of always limiting our struggles to the needs of Democrats-first, Blacks-second politicians like Bradley. The important thing is to start on the road of independent political action so that we can *continue* our struggles in the political arena.

"In this campaign," Manuel concluded, "the Socialist Workers party is raising that idea. That's why Blacks, Chicanos, and all working people should vote for us."



SAM MANUEL

SWP urges vote for Lockshin, Rodriguez

By Rich Finkel

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Socialist Workers party is urging a vote for Luis Rodriguez, Communist Labor party candidate for board of education, seat six; and Arnold Lockshin, Communist party candidate for community colleges board of trustees, seat two, in the upcoming municipal elections here.

The central issue in the April 5 primary is the right of Black, Chicano, and other minority youth to an equal education.

The Socialist Workers candidates for mayor and board of education, seat two, Sam Manuel and Virginia Garza, have campaigned vigorously in support of busing and bilingual education.

Rodriguez, a young Chicano steelworker, and Lockshin, the CP's Los Angeles organizer, have also advocated desegregation and bilingual education.

Although the SWP has differences with both the CLP and CP, their campaigns represent examples of independent working-class political action. A theme of Manuel's campaign has been the need for working people to break with the Democratic

and Republican parties and initiate a course of independent political action.

The Communist party is not fielding a candidate against Mayor Thomas Bradley. The CP's total silence on the race for mayor is another example of its backhanded support to liberal Democratic politicians.

In a statement issued March 23, Manuel urged supporters of the CP to join with the Los Angeles County Peace and Freedom party in endorsing his campaign as a working-class, pro-desegregation alternative to Bradley.

Manuel also urged the CP to endorse the SWP's groundbreaking lawsuit against government harassment. This suit has already strengthened the rights of all working-class parties.

Manuel further noted that unlike the Communist parties in France, Italy, and Spain, the CPUSA continues to support the suppression of human rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He urged the CP to change this shameful policy as well as its opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment here at home.

Bronx rally hears Garza, community activists

By Fran Collet

BRONX, N.Y.—A week of campaigning by Socialist Workers party mayoral candidate Catarino Garza climaxed March 19 at a rally opening campaign headquarters here in the Militant Bookstore/Librería Militante.

The rally provided a forum for community activists who have been involved in fighting cutbacks in social services that have hit this part of New York City especially hard.

Speakers included Ricardo Soto, a paraprofessional at Roberto Clemente High School and a member of the Young Socialist Alliance; Marian Gladhill of the International Women's Day Coalition; Victor Vasquez, vice-president of the Hostos Community College student government; and Ramón Jiménez of the Citywide Community Coalition.

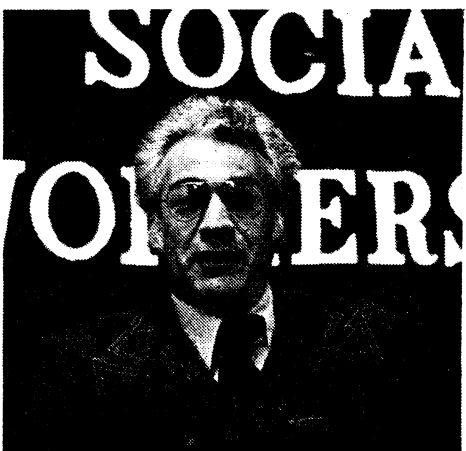
Hostos, the only bilingual college on the East Coast, has been the scene of a determined struggle to stop the city from closing it down.

Virginia Scott, a member of the executive board of the Bronx chapter of the National Organization for Women, told the rally that she supported Garza's mayoral bid "because the SWP is the only party I know of in 1977 fighting for the rights of women."

Garza's speech emphasized the need for activists from the labor movement and the anticutbacks fight to struggle in the political arena independently of the Democrats and Republicans.

"We could take the best delegates and activists from unions like District 1199, those who led the hospital strike last July," he explained, "and run them, not in the Democratic or Republican primaries, but *against* the politi-

cians who do nothing but continue the attacks on our standard of living and ensure profits for the banks."



Militant/Mary Jo Hendrickson

CATARINO GARZA

ERA & abortion

Are they 'separate issues'?

By Diane Rolling

ST. LOUIS—On March 5 the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* ran an unusual photo showing leaders of the anti-abortion movement picketing alongside leaders of the National Organization for Women.

The accompanying story explained that the women were protesting an editorial in the Catholic weekly *St. Louis Review*.

The February 25 *Review* editorial had stated that anti-abortion Catholics who favor the ERA "seem deaf to the strongest advocates of the ERA who consistently equate women's rights with the right to abortion."

Not so, said the protesters. One of the action's organizers, Sister Eileen Donovan, told the *Post-Dispatch* that there was no connection whatsoever between abortion and the ERA. "We are all staunchly pro-life," she said.

Thus readers were led to believe that the pro-ERA movement is "staunchly" anti-abortion. And the leadership of NOW, which stands in support of legal abortion, actually urged NOW members to join this supposedly pro-ERA protest.

This is the logic of a position held by many leaders of the women's movement here. Demands for the ERA and for abortion rights must never be raised in the same movement or on the same platform, they say, because support for the ERA will suffer.

The debate over this "separate issue" approach sharpened around an ERA demonstration here February 26.

The coalition assembled for the ERA march and rally held regular planning meetings. At one of these, Judi Widdicombe was proposed as a speaker for the February 26 rally. Widdicombe is a well-known leader of the abortion rights movement in Missouri and director of the largest abortion clinic in St. Louis.

Leaders of NOW and the Women's Political Caucus opposed her speaking. They argued that for years they had fought to separate abortion from the ERA. Inviting Widdicombe to speak would confuse the ERA issue and destroy all their work.

They also warned that the news media would focus on the abortion speaker and that would serve to mobilize the "right-to-lifers." Inevitably, they

said, the anti-abortionists would outmobilize the ERA supporters and defeat the purpose of the march and rally.

This intimidation by the right wing showed up among some campus activists, too. Women from St. Louis University, a Catholic Jesuit college, even proposed that a "pro-life, pro-ERA" speaker be invited if Widdicombe was to speak.

They argued that it was tactically incorrect to have a pro-abortion speaker in a "pro-life" city.

Widdicombe is a well-known leader of the women's movement, coalition activists responded. The "right-to-lifers," on the other hand, are out to destroy the women's movement.

If individual opponents of abortion want to join an ERA march, that's their right. It's also their contradiction, and perhaps some of them over time can be won to support abortion rights.

But for the ERA movement to feature enemies of abortion rights on its platforms is to miseducate all women on what the fight for equality is all about.

The ERA movement can only be strengthened by involving allies in the abortion rights movement.

If we sit back and remain silent on abortion rights, some women pointed out, we will be playing our enemies' game. We will be abandoning our Black, Puerto Rican, Chicana, and poor working sisters who are most affected by the Hyde amendment's threat to cut off Medicaid-funded abortions.

Another woman disagreed that St. Louis is an anti-abortion city. The majority of Americans—60 percent of St. Louisans, according to a recent poll—favor a woman's right to choose.

The sentiment appears strongly anti-abortion here, she said, because the minority of right-wingers are well funded, well organized, and very visible—more visible than the abortion rights majority.

To counter this, the women's movement needs to launch an aggressive campaign to mobilize women in support of abortion rights.

Unfortunately, the majority of women at the coalition meeting voted against inviting Widdicombe to speak.

At the next meeting this exclusionary tactic escalated. A leading member of NOW proposed that marchers be limited to "ERA yes" signs and banners. This, however, met with resistance.

After a heated debate, the overwhelming majority of activists there voted against excluding any ERA supporters or women's rights banners from the march.

Despite dismal, wet weather February 26, 400 marched and 800 rallied in support of the ERA. The feared turnout of massive anti-abortion forces did not materialize. Rally speakers who urged the women's movement to unite in a fight against all attacks on women were enthusiastically received.

"Many of us don't feel or see the immediate need to organize against these attacks," Mary Pritchard told the demonstrators. Pritchard is the Socialist Workers party candidate for comptroller.

"It may not seem real to us, but you can bet your bottom dollar it is real to that sister who knows that without Medicaid she can't get a safe and legal abortion, or without affirmative action she can't get a job.

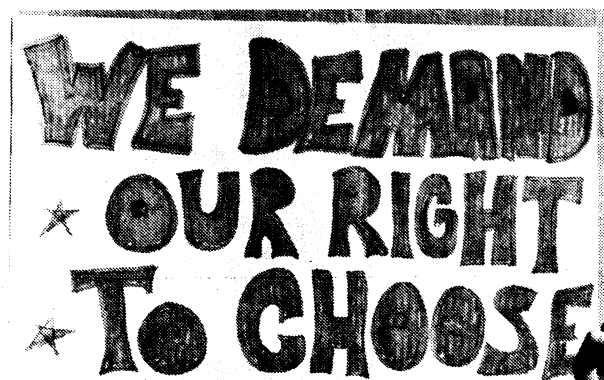
"These hard-fought-for rights, if lost, will hit the working woman the worst. This is why it is important that the image of the feminist movement take on a new face, one that working-class, low-income women will be attracted to."

On March 15 the Missouri senate voted the ERA down. But the movement to force ratification next year continues.

If we are to win we must mobilize more and more of our supporters. A strategy that excludes abortion rights fighters from an ERA rally platform while encouraging ERA supporters to join forces with abortion foes must be rejected.



Militant/Joe Sanders



Militant/Barry Chann

Pa. NOW questions relying on Democrats

By Clare Fraenzl

CHAMBERSBURG, Pa.—"The Equal Rights Amendment is in trouble. We are in serious, I would say, critical danger of losing the whole thing."

That was Dixie White's evaluation in a report here to nearly 100 Pennsylvania members of the National Organization for Women. We were attending the March 5-6 NOW state board meeting. White is a member of Lehigh Valley NOW.

Clare Fraenzl is vice-president for liaison of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Organization for Women.

Many listened in stunned silence as she reviewed the setbacks of the past few months:

- Idaho voted to rescind the ERA.
- A rescission move is afoot in Nebraska.
- Nevada voted the ERA down. Eight house Democrats who opposed it had received campaign contributions from NOW members because of their pro-ERA platforms.
- The ERA was defeated in Georgia

and Virginia, where NOW had also relied on advice from Democrats.

- North Carolina killed the ERA for two years.
- Florida doesn't look good.

"The Democrats' program may not be what it seems to be," concluded White. "The national [NOW] leadership has doubts about its strategy and about the veracity of the Democrats."

"Has the leadership considered holding the party in power responsible for the passage of the ERA?" someone asked.

"Ellie Smeal [chairone of the NOW National Board] is not sure yet," White replied.

"What about some national demonstrations in D.C.?"

"It may be too soon," White responded. She said Smeal thinks the situation is so serious that "we may have to put everything else on the back burner."

This "back burner" approach is an ominous sign. Defeats for the ERA are only a part of the assault on women's rights.

It's no secret that many NOW leaders opposed sounding the alarm when Congress passed the Hyde

amendment to cut off Medicaid funds for abortion.

They argued that a fight against it would jeopardize Democratic support for the ERA.

But women cannot pick and choose their issues according to the whims of Democratic party politicians. Failure to understand this has led the NOW leadership into the trap of counterposing the ERA to struggles against the Hyde amendment, the Supreme Court ruling denying pregnancy benefits, child-care cuts, and retreats on affirmative action.

This plays directly into Carter's strategy—a strategy of public proclamations in favor of the ERA as a cover for stepped-up attacks on abortion and other women's rights.

The ERA must be fought for, but not at the expense of other demands.

If the board meeting here was any indication, doubts about NOW's strategy of relying on "good Democrats" are prevalent among our ranks.

The ERA work session following White's report proposed a telegram campaign to President Carter, April 15 protests around the state to encourage tax resistance, and reinstituting a

weekend ERA vigil at the White House. "Zap" civil-disobedience actions were also discussed.

Unfortunately, none of these actions can involve more than a few, committed NOW members. They fall far short of the massive campaign necessary to secure passage of the ERA, as well as to beat back other attacks.

A growing number of NOW members, however, are beginning to see the need for a re-evaluation of NOW's ERA strategy. The NOW national conference in Detroit April 21-24 will be a forum for discussion of this strategy.

About twenty women met here during the board meeting to talk about a resolution for that conference proposed by myself and a Black Philadelphia NOW member, Rhonda Rutherford.

Our resolution—endorsed by more than eighty NOW leaders and activists around the country—would reverse NOW's current course of reliance on the Democratic party. It calls for NOW to base itself on the independent power of women, particularly those who have most at stake in this struggle—working women, Blacks, Chicanas, and Puerto Ricans.

Int'l Women's Day

First step in countering attacks

By Gale Shangold

This year on International Women's Day thousands said "no" to the recent barrage of attacks against their rights.

The response was slow in coming. The gravity of the assault was not at first recognized by the women's liberation movement.

But the protests held March 5-12 were an initial step in turning this around.

Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. No restrictions on abortion. Defeat the Hyde amendment against Medicaid-funded abortions. End sterilization abuse. Full rights for pregnant workers. Implement affirmative-action plans. Restore child-care funds.

These were the demands raised by thousands of women in at least twenty-six cities.

In some places the actions protested a particular attack.

For instance, in St. Paul at the last minute, the planned action was turned into a protest of an arson attack on an abortion clinic.

More than 300 people in Seattle demonstrated against an effort to rescind the ERA in Washington State.

These actions showed that women are beginning to see the need to defend their rights with a united response.

Sylvia Law, a lawyer who argued against the Hyde amendment in court, put it this way at the March 12 New York City rally:

"When Congress attacks the rights of the poor, the rights of minorities to obtain abortions, it doesn't affect all of us directly," she said.

"Well, we can't be a movement that allows that kind of division. We have to be a movement where we all fight for each other."

The women's movement should see the Hyde amendment as only the first attack on abortion rights. If the government is successful in denying poor and Black women abortions, it will try to outlaw abortions for all women.

The stake that Black, Chicana, and Puerto Rican women have in the fight against the attacks on women's rights was reflected by their participation in the International Women's Day events.

Women who marched with the minority women's contingent in the New York demonstration told the *Militant* they were there because abortion restrictions and sterilization abuse were among the demands of the protest.

In Los Angeles, 300 Chicanas and Latinas attended a statewide conference called by Mujeres Unidas (Women United).

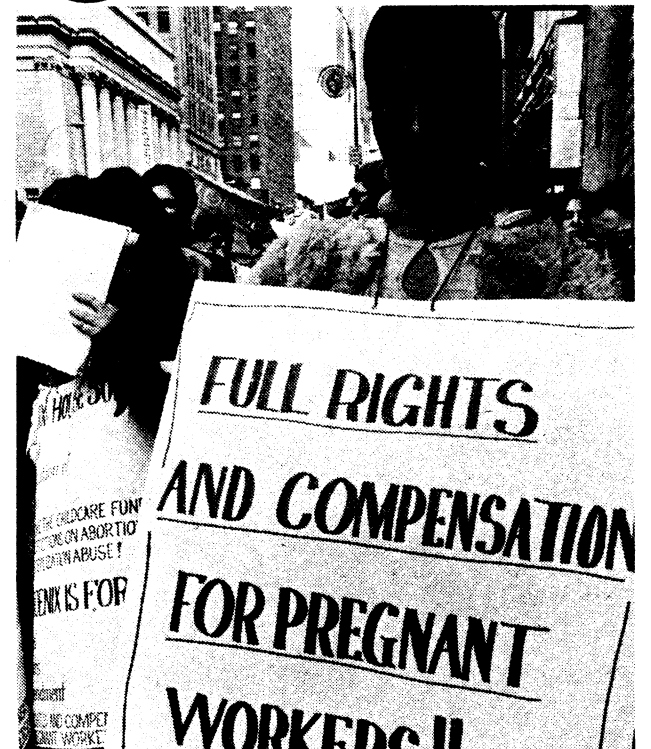
This year's actions attracted support from some Black and Latino groups that have seldom joined women's activities before. The Puerto Rican Socialist party participated with a contingent and speaker in New York. The NAACP spoke at Salt Lake City's rally. In other cities organizations such as the Urban League and National Council of Negro Women endorsed the actions.

This makes clear that when the women's movement addresses those issues of most concern to Black, Chicana, and Puerto Rican women, they will join its activities.

Last year's actions focused on the ERA. Their theme was "On to May 16" for the national ERA demonstration called by the National Organization for Women in Springfield, Illinois.

The leadership of NOW, the largest feminist group in the country, supported and helped build the 1976 International Women's Day actions, from the national level down. That, unfortunately, was not the case this year.

While many members of NOW and some local chapters joined the protests, NOW's national leadership didn't throw its full weight behind the actions.



Militant/Barry Chann

Most actions were sponsored by International Women's Day coalitions. These coalitions involved Black, community, campus, political, and feminist organizations, as well as some trade-union representatives.

New York City's coalition formed a minority task force that made a point of reaching Black, Puerto Rican, and other nationally oppressed women where they are—in Harlem and other communities, on campus, in the labor unions.

Campus feminist organizations sponsored International Women's Day events at their schools. They also helped publicize community events.

For example, the newly formed NOW chapter at Rutgers University in Newark sponsored a week of activities leading up to the March 12 New York march and rally.

Reports indicate that the International Women's Day actions were held in more cities and were, for the most part, better attended than last year. They were, however, modest in size—a sign of the big job ahead of us.

What is most important is that these actions were a first step in countering the attacks.

They show the direction the women's movement must take if it is to maintain the gains won previously and take on new fights for equality.

'Human rights begin at home'

"Mr. President, human rights begin at home," was the theme of a picket line at the White House March 22—the fifth anniversary of congressional approval of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Fifty members of the National Organization for Women demonstrated in the rain to dramatize Carter's hypocrisy in criticizing the lack of human rights abroad while women are denied equality here. Three more states must ratify the ERA by March 22, 1979, for it to become law.

"Carter needs to give more than lip service to passage of ERA in Democratic, Southern States—all unratified States are controlled by the Democratic Party," said a NOW news release.

In one of those states, Florida, NOW and other ERA supporters are planning a rally for Sunday, April 3, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Miami's Bicentennial Park. Among the rally endorsers is Local 1363 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. NOW President Karen DeCrow will be a keynote speaker.

What Black and Puerto Rican women want

By Willie Mae Reid

NEW YORK—For me, the most exciting aspect of the March 12 demonstration here was the participation of a contingent of Black and Puerto Rican sisters: the Minority Women's Task Force of the International Women's Day Coalition.

Before the march kicked off from Herald Square, I asked Narcita Michelen what she sees as the most important issues facing Black and Puerto Rican women.

"Affirmative action and day care. Also abortion," she answered. "Minority women want jobs. In order for them to work if they have children, they have to have some kind of centers to keep their kids in."

Viola Winston, a deputy director of the Phoenix House drug rehabilitation center, was active in the abortion rights struggle of the early 1970s. She hasn't been active in the feminist movement during the past several years, however. I asked her why she's again participating.

"The issues that are now being confronted affect all of us, whereas before I don't think they did," Viola answered.

The National Organization for Women is an important feminist organization, a group of Black and Puerto Rican women told me. Why?

"Because they have power," said one woman. One reason more Black and Puerto Rican women haven't joined NOW is because it has the "image" of being mostly for white, middle-class women, she explained.



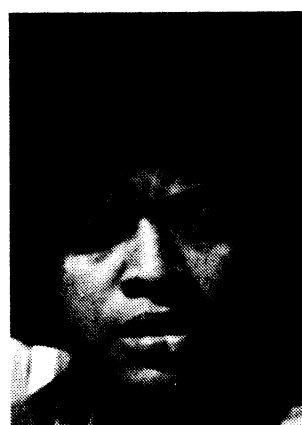
Militant/Lou Howort



Militant/Lou Howort



Militant/Martha Harris



Militant/Anne Teesdale

Clockwise beginning at top left: GRANT, MICHELEN, WINSTON, GONZALES.

Sharon Grant, cochairperson of the March 12 rally, spoke up: "I don't doubt that NOW members have feelings for what's happening to minority and poor white women. I just think that because they may have a lack of certain experiences that we have, we've got to get in there and talk about them."

"You've got to try to educate them to channel NOW's power into constructive struggles," added Carmen Bissessar.

"I think we made a big step forward having a minority task force march in the front of the demonstration and ten minority women speakers," said Magdalena Gonzales. "Everything we've suggested in coalition meetings—that the march raise issues of concern to minority women and that minority women speak for the coalition—the other women agreed with."

"Many women in the coalition are NOW members," Magdalena continued. "We think it's important to be in NOW and work with other NOW members."

The task force wants to organize educational activities in Black and Puerto Rican communities, Narcita Michelen told me. She also described plans for NOW's national conference.

"The minority task force plans to attend it and propose guidelines to involve minority women all over the country." For example, Narcita continued, "to join NOW there's a membership fee of roughly thirty dollars. A fee is all right, but poor women can't afford thirty dollars."

Weekend of protests in Atlanta

March against the death penalty April 9

By Sid Finehirsh

ATLANTA—"The Atlanta chapter of the NAACP urges its members and citizens across the state to join in the Witness Against Executions," Jondell Johnson, executive director of the Atlanta NAACP, told a news conference here March 21.

Speakers at the news conference announced plans for the protests against legalized murder to be held here April 8, 9, and 10. The central focus of the weekend of protests is the April 9 march and rally against the death penalty.

Joining Johnson at the news conference were Murphy Davis, national coordinator of the witness; Willie Bolden, staff representative of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 1644; Vince Eagan, Atlanta Student Coalition Against Racism; Millard Farmer, Team Defense; and George Telford, director of the Board of Corporate and Social Mission of the Presbyterian Church, USA.

Murphy Davis described the weekend of activities as "the first national demonstration protesting the resumption of execution in the United States—three days of marches, speeches, workshops, and religious services.

Davis went on to explain that Georgia was chosen as the site of the protests because it has executed more prisoners than any other state and has one of the highest numbers of people on death row.

From 1930 through 1964, Georgia executed 366 persons. Four out of every five were Black.

"Not only has Georgia executed more people than any other state in the union, it has also lynched more than any other state," added Millard Farmer of Team Defense.

Team Defense is a group of attorneys and legal experts who are handling

death penalty cases in Georgia. They have just completed a study of lynching patterns in this state. The study shows that areas with the highest number of lynchings also have had the highest number of death penalty convictions.

Farmer stressed the importance of this first demonstration against executions. "This is the social issue of the 1970s—state executions," he said.

"This march, this Witness Against Executions, will be looked back on as we today look back on Dr. King in Selma. . . .

"We have to stand and say we will not tolerate state executions," Farmer said.

After Farmer's remarks, one reporter questioned the "timing" of the protest activities.

The reporter maintained that the climate of violence in society had put the American people in the "wrong mood" for an anti-death penalty march.

Willie Bolden of AFSCME Local 1644 and former aide to Martin Luther King, answered, "We can't wait for the mood to be right.

"In 1965 the mood wasn't right for those who thought that Blacks in the South should have the right to vote. But we began to organize anyway. We have to speak out now," Bolden said.

Support for the Witness Against Executions continues to grow here. The Atlanta Association of Educators recently endorsed the protests, as did the Atlanta chapters of the National Organization for Women and of the NAACP.

The AFSCME Local 1644 Executive Board also endorsed and has set up a union committee to build support for the April 9 demonstration. The committee has produced a special leaflet for distribution to its members.

Among the groups that had pre-

North Carolina petitions



North Carolina House Speaker Carl Stewart (right) receives petitions against capital punishment signed by 4,000 people. Harriott Quin, co-convenor of the North Carolina Coalition Against the Death Penalty (far left), and Collins Kilburn, director of the Commission of Social Ministries of the state Council of Churches (second from left) presented the petitions. There are four proposals before the state legislature to reenact capital punishment. The state's old law was struck down last July by the U.S. Supreme Court. Under the old law, 122 people had been put on death row. Eighty-two of them were Blacks or members of other minority groups.

viously announced support for the protest are the Martin Luther King Center for Social Change; Southern Christian Leadership Conference; National Coalition Against the Death Penalty; National Student Coalition Against Racism; and American Civil Liberties Union Capital Punishment Project.

Also, Southern Poverty Law Center; United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice; Socialist Workers party; National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression; American Friends Service Committee; and

numerous church-related groups.

The witness will begin on the evening of Friday, April 8. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Center will be the organizing center for the march and rally the next day.

On April 9 the community center will be the gathering point for the march to the state capitol, which begins at noon.

Among the speakers at the rally after the march will be: Tom Wicker, associate editor of the *New York Times*; Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general; Rev. Joe Ingle, director of the Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons, the group that initiated the witness; and Wilbert Lee, a Black man who spent twelve years in Florida prisons—nine on death row—for murders he did not commit.

At 6:30 p.m. there will be a series of workshops on capital punishment and how to fight it at the Georgia State University Urban Life Building.

At sunrise on April 10—Easter Sunday—there will be a religious service across the street from the state capitol.

From noon until 5:00 p.m. the National Student Coalition Against Racism will hold a southern steering committee meeting at Georgia State University Student Activities Building Rooms 460 and 461.

What to do when you get there

The Easter Witness Against Executions will be providing free housing to people coming from outside the Atlanta area to attend the April 9 protests against capital punishment.

From 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. April 8, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Center at 450 Auburn Avenue (corner of Jackson Street) will be a movement center for the protesters. People will be dispatched from there to a place they can stay. The phone number of the center is (404) 658-6070.

From 11:00 p.m. April 8 until 9:00 a.m. April 9, the offices of the Georgia affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union will be staffed to help people coming in from out of town. People should call (404) 523-5398, 523-6201, or 525-1490 to receive instructions on how to get to a place where they can stay.

From 9:00 a.m. until noon April 9, people can go directly to the King community center, which is also the gathering point for the march to the state capitol. The march will step off at noon.

Housing will also be available Saturday night for those attending the Easter Sunday sunrise service or the meeting of the southern steering committee of the National Student Coalition Against Racism.

All those planning to stay in free housing should bring a sleeping bag with them.

Those arriving in Atlanta before 6:00 p.m. Friday or wanting further information can contact: Witness Against Executions, 369 Connecticut Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30307. Telephone: (404) 373-3253.

FBI's lament: Bill of Rights ties its hands

By Joanne Murphy

NEWARK—When an FBI agent speaks to a businessmen's luncheon, he can afford to be straightforward. On March 23 when Louis Giovanetti, head of the New Jersey FBI, spoke to the Greater Newark Chamber of Commerce, he was openly critical of how the Bill of Rights is getting in his way.

Giovanetti warned the businessmen that if "a narrow interpretation of the Bill of Rights holds sway, a sanctuary would be created within which violent members of society may plot their mayhem free from law enforcement scrutiny."

In a press release March 25, Roberta Scherr, chairperson of the New Jersey Socialist Workers party, answered the agent.

"Using catchwords like 'violence' and 'terrorism,' Giovanetti is trying to create an atmosphere of fear to justify the FBI's continued practice of spying,

bugging, and harassment," Scherr charged.

Giovanetti complained, "The FBI has recently been cast by certain elements of our society as a menace to constitutionally granted liberties. But unfortunately, relatively little public exposure has been given to the real threat to our liberties—the threat posed in this country by existing bands of revolutionaries, hate groups, and extremists who openly espouse violence and hostility to our system of government."

Scherr pointed out that "in the decades of FBI spying on the SWP, not one of our members has been indicted for any illegal activity. What the FBI fears is not that we will commit crimes but that we will gain an audience for our ideas—ideas which challenge the American system of private profit instead of human needs."

Scherr is a plaintiff in the \$40

million lawsuit by the SWP against the FBI and other federal agencies for political spying and harassment. The suit has documented FBI disruption programs, burglaries, and spying.

Giovanetti did not refer to the SWP by name. But he complained, "Even now a number of our own agents have been forced to retain private counsel at their own expense and may well be indicted on criminal charges. . . ."

The agent called the FBI situation "a crisis of considerable magnitude. We are concerned that the highly publicized criticism of our operations will undermine the trust Americans traditionally have placed in the FBI. We must continue to have that trust if we are to function effectively in the future."

The agent claimed that FBI dirty tricks were made necessary by the "turbulent days of the sixties," and that failure to carry them out "would

have been a dereliction of . . . responsibility, legal niceties or not."

Scherr insisted that evidence from the SWP lawsuit has proved the FBI can't be trusted, that the G-men continue their disregard for such "legal niceties" as the Bill of Rights. "The fact is that the FBI, like the CIA and other government intelligence agencies, is built on lies and dirty tricks aimed at suppressing freedom of speech and assembly," she said.

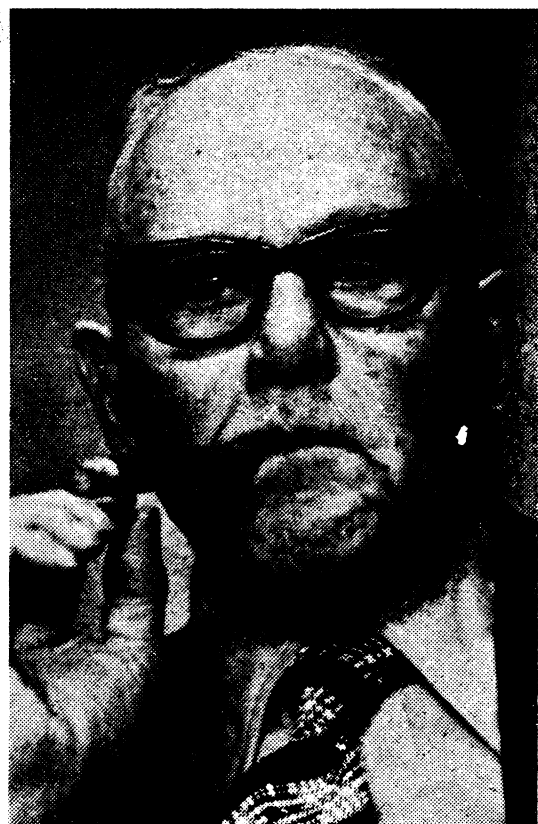
Scherr pledged that the SWP candidate for governor of New Jersey, Rich Ariza, "will be campaigning throughout the state in opposition to the Democrats and Republicans, who support the FBI. . . . And unlike Giovanetti, who argues for a less 'narrow interpretation of the Bill of Rights,' Ariza will campaign in defense of the Bill of Rights—a program working people fought to win and will not give up without a fight."

DEMOCRATS VS. LABOR

Behind defeat of 'common site' bill



CARTER



MEANY

By Frank Lovell

The March 23 rejection by the House of Representatives of the so-called common-site picketing bill is more damaging to the building-trades unions than appears on the surface. And there is more at stake than the future of craft unionism in the construction industry.

The House action also served notice on the union movement that this Congress and the Carter administration are controlled by the employing class. They will not enact reforms of benefit to labor unless forced to by mass struggle of the workers.

An editorial on labor's legislative defeats appears on page 10.

Carter's rejection the next day of the AFL-CIO's minimum-wage plan should have destroyed any lingering doubts of union officials about this.

Carter's proposal for a \$2.50 minimum wage instead of the \$3.00 requested by the unions was denounced by AFL-CIO President George Meany as "shameful," which it is. An hourly wage of \$2.50 is \$.38 below the federal government's official poverty level.

Thus in two days the legislative program of the union hierarchy—announced with great fanfare in February at the winter meeting of the

AFL-CIO Executive Council in Bal Harbour, Florida—was knocked down by the Democratic party in full power in Washington.

The sweeping victory in 1976 of a union-endorsed Congress, with a two-thirds Democratic majority, and a Democratic president in the White House, had led union political strategists to believe that the time had come to push for major revisions of the labor law. The AFL-CIO Executive Council drafted a list of demands for the new Congress and the Carter administration. These were:

- Revise the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, giving the National Labor Relations Board more power.
- Repeal Section 14-B of the Taft-Hartley Act, wiping out "right to work" laws that ban the union shop in twenty states.
- Extend collective bargaining rights to all public employees.
- Increase the federal minimum wage from \$2.30 to \$3.00, with provision for periodic adjustment to keep the minimum at 60 percent of average hourly wages in manufacturing.

The common-site picketing bill, a demand of special interest to the union bureaucracy, was thought to be a sure-shot deal for early passage.

The building trades claim that they are discriminated against because they are prohibited by a 1951 Supreme

Court interpretation of Taft-Hartley from closing down a construction site in the same way as an industrial union closes a factory or an entire industry.

Craft unions can only strike the particular contractors with whom they have bargaining rights. There may be twenty different contractors or subcontractors on a building site—one for electrical work and others for carpentry, plumbing, heating, floor laying, and so on.

If the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, for example, has a dispute with an electrical contractor, it can strike that contractor. But it cannot, under existing law, picket the job site and ask carpenters, plumbers, masons, and all the other crafts to respect the picket lines.

The IBEW cannot close down a job site in the same way as the United Auto Workers can close an auto plant.

That is what most of the publicity about the common-site picketing bill has emphasized. This bill would have allowed the electricians or any other craft to ask all workers on a construction job to stop working until their particular dispute was settled.

There was, in fact, much more to the bill. This was the least part of it, and certainly the part that least interested top union officials.

Whenever there is a serious dispute on any construction site, the crafts

never have any problem finding good and sufficient reasons for a dispute with their different contractors. They have no trouble closing down a job site when the building-trades council decides to close it.

The important part of the bill would have established a new Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Committee, composed of labor and management representatives.

This committee would have the power to step into local disputes to regulate wages and working conditions. No local union would be allowed to strike without permission of its international officials. Arbitration machinery would be established to settle all disputes arising from contract interpretation.

The structure and purpose of the new labor-management committee were patterned after the old Construction Industry Stabilization Committee. The CISC was established by Nixon in 1971 and headed by John Dunlop, who later became secretary of labor. The CISC under Dunlop's guidance effectively controlled wages and curbed strikes.

As labor secretary in the Ford administration, Dunlop drafted the so-called construction-site picketing bill and secured its passage in both houses of Congress by large majorities in 1975.

Continued on page 27

Phila. transit workers strike, veto 'sellout' pact

By Terry Hardy

PHILADELPHIA—A strike by 5,000 militant transit workers brought all public transportation in the Philadelphia area to a halt at midnight March 24.

Earlier in the day members of Transit Workers Union Local 234 voted to strike despite intense pressure from union officials, the city administration, and Philadelphia business interests.

The Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce estimates that downtown stores will lose \$3 million a day for the duration of the strike.

Union officials accepted a contract on March 14. But an aroused membership, in a large turnout, voted ten days later to reject that agreement by 2,507 to 1,699.

Initially, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) refused to offer any wage increase until a clause in the previous contract—prohibiting layoffs of employees with more than one year seniority—was removed.

As the March 15 strike deadline approached, SEPTA backed off in its attack on the no-layoff clause. In return the union leadership accepted a

two-year contract with wage increases of thirty-two cents the first year and twenty-eight cents the second year—well below the modest original demand for a one-year contract with a dollar-an-hour increase.

Demonstrations of hundreds of transit workers protested the acceptance of the contract by the union leadership.

On March 16, 200 drivers marched on union headquarters demanding an explanation of the contract terms and an immediate mass meeting to vote on the contract. As one driver explained, "The union is not telling us anything. The only thing we know about this contract we read in the papers."

There was also resentment that drivers would be working without a contract for nine days and that the final vote would be a secret ballot at the place of work instead of an open meeting.

That night 500 angry SEPTA drivers met at the southern depot. Earlier in the day they had called the union leaders and demanded that they show up to answer questions. Shouts of "No contract, no work" were heard everywhere.

"The wage increase barely covers inflation," said driver Earl Edwards.

"Every time a contract comes up we get shafted," said Curtis Brown, a southern depot section chief. "[TWU President] Ned LeDonne and those other union officials work for the company."

Another driver, Fred Peterson, agreed, "We were sold out. We weren't properly represented."

After it became clear that the union officials were not going to appear, hundreds of transit workers took off for a major subway station at Bridge and Pratt and proceeded to shut it down.

SEPTA fired fifteen drivers involved in the action. Later all were offered a thirty-day suspension without pay.

The disciplinary action heightened discontent with the proposed contract. Drivers were already mad that the no-layoff clause had not been extended to all workers.

City and state officials are taking a hard line. Mayor Frank Rizzo threatened, "If they expect us to come up with more money, this will be the longest strike in the history of the world."

SEPTA, while claiming to have a deficit of \$26 million, is paying \$15

million to the banks and the wealthy for interest on bonds. This money, which could be used to restore service and meet the needs of drivers, is benefiting no one but Philadelphia's rich.

Most drivers believe the strike could last for weeks. "Once we go out it's going to take a hell of a lot to get us back," said a driver at the Luzerne depot. "There is no way we are going back for a nickel or a dime per hour."

Another factor in the strike is the intervention of international union President Matthew Guinan. Only a few months ago Guinan forced New York transit workers to accept a contract with no wage increase.

"If Matty [Guinan] goes back to New York after getting a dollar an hour up front for us," said a Local 234 official, "they'll string him up by his thumbs." This is an example of how one sellout contract gives birth to others.

But the reverse is also true. If Philadelphia transit workers can improve their contract in battle against the city administration and business interests, and over the heads of their union officials, it will be a victory for all workers.

A losing strategy

The one-two punch was labor's "most painful Congressional defeat since the AFL and CIO merged 22 years ago," said *Newsweek*. First, Congress voted down the common-site picketing bill, a top priority of AFL-CIO political strategists. The next day, the Carter White House spurned the federation's proposal for a \$3.00-an-hour minimum wage.

"This is a bitter disappointment to everyone who looked to this administration for economic justice for the poor," said AFL-CIO President George Meany.

Last year the AFL-CIO spent millions of dollars hustling votes for Carter and falsely promoting him as the hope for "economic justice" for all working people. Meany must have expected more for the money.

For the future, the union tops promise to try harder at the same game. Robert Georgine, head of the AFL-CIO Building & Construction Trades Department, thanked the members of Congress who voted for the common-site bill. "We shall try to increase their number by reasoned discussion and political action," he declared.

The defeats are publicly blamed on inadequate lobbying efforts by the unions. AFL-CIO officials willingly shoulder the responsibility and excuse their Democratic friends. "We made a bad tactical mistake," a top Meany aide told *Newsweek*. "We spent all our time working on the Senate, thinking that's where the big fight would be."

This is superficial and misleading. The Democrats and Republicans rejected labor's demands for one basic reason: This is a new era of worldwide capitalist economic crisis, and the employing class is determined to make working people bear the burden.

The wealthy ruling minority wants wages curbed, union rights restricted, and social services cut back. This is a long-term drive and it is implemented through both of the big-business parties.

The common-site picketing bill was a measure to aid craft-union bureaucrats, not workers. But its defeat signals that on vital issues such as organizing the nonunion South, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life, labor will get no help from the Democrats. The "labor lobby," the story now goes, has proven to be weaker than the "conservative lobby."

The American labor movement is not weak at all. It is potentially the most powerful political force in the world. But its real power lies in the organization and mobilization of the union ranks, now stifled by the bureaucracy.

Doing the bidding of the employing class *does* weaken the unions. The reputation of the building trades as racist, pro-Vietnam War, and safety-be-damned advocates of nuclear power has isolated them from the masses of workers.

A movement has begun in the steelworkers union to break with this suicidal strategy. Steelworkers Fight Back—which came together around the campaign of Ed Sadlowski for union president—calls for rank-and-file control of the unions. It rejects the Meany line of collaboration with the bosses, and calls for a return to the militant methods that built the industrial unions.

A consistent fight for the workers' interests against the bosses will require the unions to break from the capitalist parties and launch a mass independent labor party. Steelworkers Fight Back can be the beginning of such a movement for independent labor political action—the only way labor can defend itself from the employers' attacks.

March against death

The *Militant* urges its readers to participate in the April 9 demonstration against capital punishment and other activities of the Witness Against Executions that will be held that weekend in Atlanta.

The death penalty is cruel and barbaric. It is a weapon of race and class oppression.

Its advocates tell us that capital punishment deters crime. This is a lie. Numerous scientific studies have shown that capital punishment doesn't affect crime rates.

They tell us that the death penalty no longer discriminates. But half of the 342 persons now on death rows are Blacks or Latinos.

They tell us the majority of the American people want executions. But the truth is the American people have been spoon-fed lying, racist propaganda and have not yet had a chance to consider the arguments against the death penalty.

The April 9 protest will be a significant step toward organizing a broad movement that can educate the American people on the truth about capital punishment and force the government to abolish it.

Condolences

A student at American University fell to an accidental death while playing Frisbee. The Wham-O Company, which makes Frisbees, sent a letter to the student newspaper, the *Eagle*, complaining that an article about the death did not give the company credit because it failed to capitalize the word Frisbee and didn't put a "registered" mark by it.

One more example of the warmth and intelligence of free enterprise. A.P.

Washington, D.C.

On the Arizona front

Sen. Barry Goldwater, the Republican party's standard-bearer prior to Richard Nixon and an air force reserve general is, we now learn, a sidekick of the mob.

With their help, the senator, his brother, and a friend have run Arizona's business, banking, and politics for more than two decades.

Arizona politicians and judges, we further learned, are bought and sold wholesale with money the mob makes in enterprises ranging from Las Vegas hotels to hookers to heroin. The drug is brought across Arizona's southern border from Mexico according to plans made years ago, possibly with Goldwater's help, certainly without his interference.

Ex-philosophy professor Morris Starsky was fired from Arizona State University by Goldwater's protégés and the FBI, who orchestrated a secret campaign against him.

Starsky was perhaps the most well known and effective anti-Vietnam War leader in the state. He got the ax. The mafia-influenced courts of Arizona recently upheld his illegal firing.

Meanwhile, Goldwater's picture and story have disappeared from the front page. For those few who miss his craggy grin we say, "Take heart. Maybe he'll be playing himself in the sure-to-come version of *The Godfather: Part III*."

Michael Smith

New York, New York

Labor history

I hope that the *Militant* has the perspective of having more labor history articles in future issues like the one on the sit-down strikes. The *Daily World* has been running a rather sporadic series on the subject. I'd hate to see the Stalinists steal a march on this point.

If there's one thing that today's labor movement could use, it is a real history of American labor struggle, not the prettified mythology which the labor bureaucrats are so enamored of.

While I'm not suggesting serializing *Labor's Giant Step*, *American Labor Struggles*, or Farrell Dobbs's series on the Teamsters union, we could use a few short articles on past struggles such as Lawrence, Homestead, Gastonia, or the San Francisco general strike.

Jim Rousey

San Francisco, California

[Editors note—These books and others on labor history are available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014.]

'Post' boycott reply

I want to respond to the letter by Dave Elsila that appeared in the March 11 *Militant*. Elsila, managing editor of the United Auto Workers

newspaper, criticizes the *Militant* for quoting the *Washington Post* and urges that the boycott against the *Post* be honored.

I have been active in support of the *Post* press operators since they went on strike in October 1975. I completely agree with Dave Elsila that ongoing defense of these union brothers is an obligation of the entire labor movement. But I don't think pretending that a boycott still exists aids their defense.

Calling for a boycott of the *Post* is closely tied to the idea that there is still an active strike in progress there. This, unfortunately, is not the case. The strike was unquestionably defeated more than a year ago.

No one can maintain that there is any prospect of halting production of the *Post*, or that a boycott exists with any effect on *Post* circulation.

A boycott is a weapon of struggle, not an expression of moral condemnation. If it was a moral question, we would have to boycott everything produced by every capitalist enterprise.

What exists today at the *Post* is above all a *defense case*. Fifteen members of press operators Local 6 face a total of 268 years in jail if convicted of the frame-up charges against them. It is urgently necessary to get out the truth about their case and gather support for the defendants.

In my opinion, pretending that the boycott is still going on can only divert attention and energy from where they are most needed. The key demand of the defense committee is that the charges against the press operators be dropped.

One could, I suppose, argue for a token boycott that would be observed only by those in immediate contact with the press operators, and by socialist and radical publications.

The labor movement as a whole would certainly not join any boycott. All other newspaper craft unions have contracts and are working at the *Post*.

In my opinion, a purely token boycott does nothing to put pressure on the *Post* management, nor does it help the press operators in their coming trial.

Lee Oleson

Washington, D.C.

Music, please

Though I have received the *Militant* for only a short time, I would like to make a friendly suggestion.

Please seriously consider adding either a regular column on music, or a series of in-depth articles analyzing popular music from a socialist perspective.

Music is all around us. Music is as much a constant part of our lives in New York as it is in Tennessee or California.

There are many pegs on which to hang a series. Singers like Bob Marley (reggae), Pete Seeger (folk), James Tally and Bruce "Utah" Phillips (country), Gil Scott-Heron (jazz), Peter La Farge, Country Joe McDonald, Barbara Dane, and of course many others are all progressives.

A.W.

St. Louis, Missouri

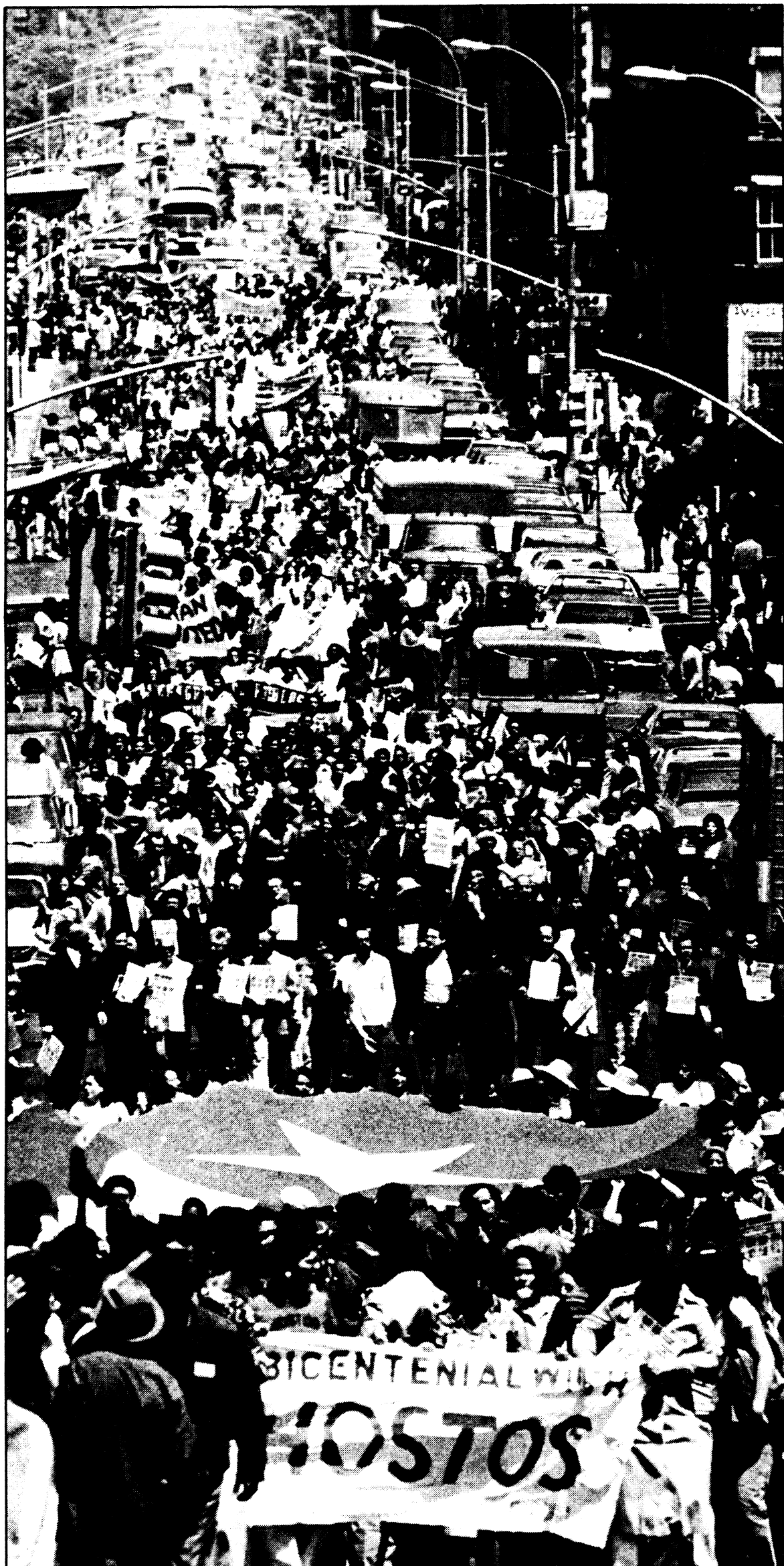
Marxism and gay rights

The twists and turns that bourgeois academics go through in their seemingly endless efforts to "disprove" Marx have become complete circles in at least one organization.

I was shocked to hear the report from the national conference of the

Continued on page 23

international **socialist** review



**Socialist Workers Party
Resolution**

PUERTO RICANS in the U.S.:

The Struggle for Freedom

Mass march, May 10, 1976, protested New York City plans to close Hostos Community College only bilingual college in the Eastern United States.

Andy F. Corriette

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

'Natocommunism'?

The U.S. Communist party has thrown its not very considerable weight behind Moscow in the controversy between the Kremlin leaders and the "Eurocommunist" current in world Stalinism. At issue are the criticisms that "Eurocommunist" leaders have been making of some of the antidemocratic practices of the Brezhnev regime and its East European satellites.

The "Eurocommunist" current is not a small-scale phenomenon. The French and Italian Communist parties—the largest CPs in the capitalist world—have joined the chorus of criticism against Moscow's efforts to suppress dissent. The British Communist party has expressed similar views. The Spanish Communist party split over this and related questions some years ago, leaving the most slavish Moscow loyalists with only a tiny sect. Similar splits have taken place in Communist parties in Greece (with the pro-Moscow wing holding a majority) and most recently in Sweden.

"Eurocommunism" first emerged when the British, Italian, and French Communist parties refused to endorse the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which overturned the reform-minded regime of Alexander Dubcek in 1968. These parties suffered heavy losses in 1956 when they supported the crushing of the Hungarian workers' uprising, and they were determined not to repeat the experience. They have recently stepped up criticism of violations of human rights in the workers states.

"Eurocommunism" does not represent a fundamental break with Stalinism. The parties that make up this current continue to advocate such basic Stalinist concepts as "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence." These are code words that the bureaucrats use to justify their privileged position in the workers states and their policy of collaborating with imperialism against the world revolution.

The "Eurocommunist" parties oppose a revolutionary overturn of the bureaucratic regimes in the Stalinist-dominated workers states. Instead, some European CPs sympathize with "liberalizers" in the ruling bureaucracies who seek to relax totalitarian restrictions, but stop far short of real workers democracy.

The differences between the "Eurocommunist" leaders and Moscow are not differences of principle. The dispute stems from the desire of the Communist parties in capitalist Europe to retain and strengthen support among radicalizing workers. These workers want to fight for socialism, but they fear and oppose the imposition of a Moscow-style bureaucratic dictatorship.

The Communist parties need to win the support of these workers if they are to carry out the basic policy of Stalinism—offering to direct workers' struggles into procapitalist channels in exchange for an agreement by the capitalist rulers to accept and implement détente with the regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Nonetheless, the criticisms of the Stalinist regimes by the "Eurocommunist" parties are irritating to the Kremlin, demonstrating that it is not at all "anti-Soviet" to support the right of citizens in the USSR and Eastern Europe to speak, read, write, and travel as they wish. Such criticisms can inspire working people in these countries to demand of the ruling parties, "Why can't we have the same right to dissent that you grant to 'fraternal parties' in France, Italy, or Spain?"

* * *

The U.S. Communist party's sallies in defense of the Kremlin will hardly surprise anyone familiar with this party's history. The CP has an unbroken record of obsequiously supporting every repression carried out by the bureaucratic rulers in Moscow since Stalin came to power.

In replying to the "Eurocommunists," the U.S. CP leans heavily on slander—the standard response of General Secretary Gus Hall and his ilk to anyone who gets on the wrong side of Leonid Brezhnev. The CP polemicists have resorted to charges that Brezhnev, who wants to maintain relations with "Eurocommunist" parties, has held back from.

An article in the February 19 issue of the CP's *Daily World* is typical of these attacks. Under the title "N.Y. Times: Why capitalism should care about Eurocommunism," columnist Erik Bert defined the views of parties identified with "Eurocommunism" as "Natocommunism."

This is not a reference to the support voiced by the French and Italian parties for continuing the imperialist NATO alliance. On the contrary, the U.S. CP hails the Portuguese Stalinists, who hold an identical position on NATO but condemn all who criticize the Soviet regime. The U.S. CP has hailed NATO backers such as Paul Warnke, President Carter's arms control negotiator, as true friends of peace. Support for

NATO is part and parcel of the Stalinist policy of "peaceful coexistence."

Bert's characterization is an unsubtle way of accusing critics of the Kremlin in the Communist parties of being agents of imperialism—the same charge used as a justification for jailing human rights activists in the Soviet Union, and the same charge that was used to justify the frame-up and execution of thousands of Communists in Stalin's heyday. Like his mentors in the Kremlin, Bert feels no need to prove such an accusation.

Of course, it is unlikely that Erik Bert favors executing or even imprisoning the leaders of the Italian, French, Spanish, and British Communist parties. Perhaps he feels that their current "emotional disturbance" about human rights could be "cured" by a sojourn in one of the mental hospitals maintained by Brezhnev's secret police.

Strikingly absent from Bert's assault is any explanation of how massive Communist parties, with long records of faithful support to the leaders of the Soviet Union, could suddenly be transformed into anti-Soviet "Natocommunists."

While the *Daily World* and the West Coast *People's World*, which also reflects the views of the CP, denounce "Eurocommunism," the views of this current are barred from their pages, thus making it difficult for members and sympathizers of the Communist party to objectively evaluate the differences.

Indeed, these publications have tried to conceal the CP's growing isolation even within the Stalinist camp. Thus a headline in the February 26 *Daily World* declares, "Western Communist parties hit hysteria over 'dissidents.'" An anonymous "Daily World Foreign Department" presents the opinions of the Dutch, Danish, West German, Finnish, and Venezuelan parties.

Missing from the roll call of "Western Communist parties" are those of France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and Britain—the most substantial of the European parties.

Slavishly following the latest directives from the Kremlin, as it does on all questions, the U.S. Communist party evidently hopes to prevent the development of "Eurocommunist" or other critical currents in their own ranks by suppressing the views about dissenters, while strongly suggesting that U.S. imperialism is really behind it all.

What the CP cannot admit is that "Eurocommunism," far from being the product of the machinations of the CIA and NATO, reflects verbal concessions by the leaders of the major European Communist parties to a belief that has become deeply embedded in the minds of hundreds of thousands of workers in Europe: socialism and human rights are inseparable.

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Puerto Ricans in the U.S.: The Struggle for Freedom

The following are major excerpts from a resolution adopted at the Twenty-eighth National Convention of the Socialist Workers party in August 1976. The complete resolution, together with an introduction and a report on the resolution by Catarino Garza, is soon to be published by Pathfinder Press. Garza is the 1977 SWP candidate for mayor of New York City. Readers are invited to send their comments and suggestions to the International Socialist Review.

Puerto Rico's Relationship to the United States

Since 1898 Puerto Rico has been a direct colony of the United States. It was seized from the decayed Spanish empire at a time when the U.S. was emerging as a world imperialist power.

In 1900 authority was transferred from the U.S. military to U.S. civilian governors appointed by the president, and a Puerto Rican legislature with limited powers was established. In 1917 Puerto Ricans were made U.S. citizens, primarily to provide cannon fodder for the U.S. Army. In 1948 Puerto Ricans were permitted to elect their own governor, and the present commonwealth status was imposed by Washington in 1952.

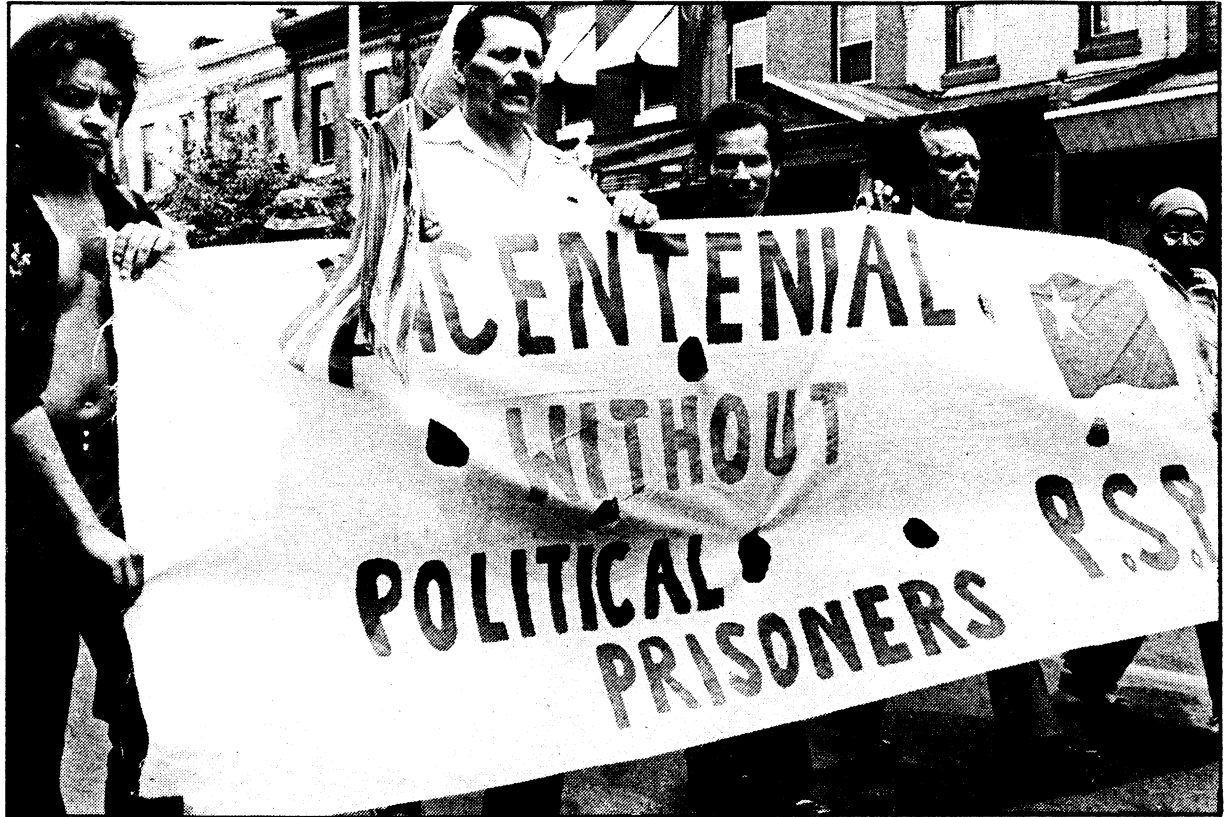
Following the nationalist agitation in Puerto Rico in the 1930s and 1940s and the worldwide colonial revolt after World War II, the commonwealth status was designed to give the appearance of greater autonomy for Puerto Rico. In reality it attempts to camouflage the true relationship between the U.S. and its colony and to improve Washington's image internationally by hypocritically declaring that Puerto Rico is "self-governing" and "voluntarily" associated with the U.S.

In response to growing pro-independence sentiment and international pressure, the U.S. Congress is now discussing a recodification of the laws describing its colonial domination of the island. The proposed Compact of Permanent Union between Puerto Rico and the United States is simply an attempt to cover up the same colonial relationship with new legal language.

The compact would not recognize the sovereignty of the Puerto Rican people and their government. It would not permit the Puerto Rican legislature to have any control over such vital matters as foreign relations, immigration, customs, tariffs, monetary policy, postal service, or licensing of television and radio stations. These matters would remain the exclusive domain of the U.S. Congress.

Independence Struggle

At various times during the past seven decades there has been considerable support on the island for independence. In the 1930s and 1940s there was a mass independence movement in which the Nationalist Party led by Pedro Albizu Campos was the most prominent organization. One indication of the depth of pro-independence sentiment at that time was that the bourgeois liberal Popular Democratic Party felt pressure to include a plank in its program supporting independence. It later abandoned this position—which led to a split and the formation of the Puerto Rican Independence Party in 1948. In



Lou Howort

Puerto Rican independence demonstration, Philadelphia, July 4, 1976, the biggest ever held in the United States.

1952 the PIP received the second highest number of votes in the elections.

There was a temporary ebb in pro-independence activity in the 1950s because of the improved economic situation and the McCarthyite witch-hunt, which was carried out more savagely in the colony than in the United States.

The colonial revolution, particularly the Cuban revolution, played a significant role in inspiring and ideologically influencing the reemergence of the independence movement in the 1960s. The formation in 1959 of the Pro-Independence Movement (MPI), which became the Puerto Rican Socialist Party in 1971, and its subsequent growth reflect the new sentiment.

Testifying to the depth of this movement is the size of several pro-independence demonstrations in the past decade, including actions of 20,000 in Lares in 1968 and 80,000 in San Juan in 1971.

The struggle for Puerto Rican independence has received considerable international attention. This has focused on the drive by the Cuban government, the Puerto Rican Independence Party, and the Puerto Rican Socialist Party to get the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a resolution clearly reaffirming the "inalienable right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence." This resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly in 1973 over the strenuous objection of the U.S. government, which denies that Puerto Rico is a colony. In 1953 Washington had pressured the United Nations into dropping the characterization of Puerto Rico as a "non-self-governing territory."

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, the U.S. government has ruthlessly attempted to suppress the decades-long fight for independence. Thousands have been jailed and scores shot down as the American capitalists stubbornly resist any move that would restrict their freedom to exploit the island's natural resources and labor.

At present most of the U.S. ruling class and its agents in Puerto Rico favor the commonwealth status or modest modifications of it such as the Compact of Permanent Union.

The only major alternative proposed by sections of the ruling class is statehood. This is the position of the New Progressive Party in Puerto Rico, which has ties with the Republican Party in the U.S.

Statehood would not fundamentally alter the national oppression of Puerto Rico. It would simply be another form of maintaining the domination of the U.S. government and American capital over the island.

At its founding conference in 1938, the Fourth International declared that it stands for "the immediate and unconditional independence of Puerto Rico." This remains the position of Trotskyists today.

The resurgence of the independence movement in the 1960s and its continued growth in the 1970s indicate that it was not an ephemeral phenomenon peculiar to the 1930s. Rather, this testifies to the deep historical, economic, and social roots of the independence movement and its permanent character as a significant and powerful force in Puerto Rican politics.

Revolutionary Marxists in the United States have the elementary obligation to oppose all aspects of colonial domination over Puerto Rico and to demand that Washington recognize Puerto Rico's right to self-determination. We unconditionally support the demand for a free and independent Puerto Rico. While we believe that full national and social liberation can only be achieved through a socialist Puerto Rico, we do not make agreement with this position a condition for supporting the struggle of Puerto Ricans for independence.

American working people have no interests whatsoever in preserving the imperialist enslavement of Puerto Rico. On the contrary, breaking the chains that bind Puerto Rico would be a serious blow to the American capitalist class and a victory for U.S. labor.

The labor movement, under its present procapitalist leadership, has seriously defaulted by supporting the U.S. government's colonial policy rather than placing its considerable weight behind the struggle for Puerto Rican independence.

Puerto Ricans in the United States

Migration and Distribution

The massive migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States is rooted in the oppressive economic and social conditions imposed by Yankee imperialism. Puerto Ricans were dispossessed of their land by U.S. monopolies and transformed into a wage labor force suffering high unemployment and low wages. These conditions have driven hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans to leave their homeland and come to U.S. cities looking for jobs and better economic opportunities.

Today, about two million Puerto Ricans live in the U.S., compared with fewer than sixty thousand in 1935. Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. represent more than one-third of all Puerto Rican people and are the third largest oppressed national grouping in the U.S. after Blacks and Chicanos.

Twenty-five years ago the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. was "El Barrio," or East Harlem, and only 20 percent lived outside of New York City. Today an archipelago of barrios has been created by the settlement of Puerto Ricans in other parts of New York City and in more cities throughout the country.

Although Puerto Ricans are only about 1 percent of the U.S. population, their concentration in a few large cities gives them greater potential political and social weight than their numbers alone would indicate. Nearly 80 percent live in major cities, and they are significant minorities in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and Newark. In New York, the country's largest city, Puerto Ricans are about 11 percent of the population, giving them a major role in coming social struggles.

The overwhelming majority of Puerto Ricans in the United States are part of the working class. Severe discrimination in employment opportunities restricts most of them to low-paying menial jobs. By far the greatest number are employed in semiskilled jobs and as service workers and laborers.

Like other oppressed national groupings, Puerto Ricans are part of American capitalism's industrial reserve army. When there is a labor shortage employers hire from this pool of cheap labor. When production is cut back and layoffs occur, these workers are an easily identified layer and are among those fired first, with the acquiescence of many white workers. Many Puerto Ricans who received jobs in the past few years as a result of "affirmative action" plans are among the first to lose them with the cutbacks and layoffs. The existence of this reserve labor force helps the ruling class restrain wage increases and deepen divisions in the working class.

There is a thin stratum of small businesses owned by Puerto Ricans, especially barrio grocery stores, and a small layer of independently employed professionals. Together they form the main basis of the Puerto Rican petty-bourgeoisie. There is no significant Puerto Rican bourgeoisie in the U.S.

National Oppression

Puerto Ricans migrating to the U.S. are part of a people who have suffered several centuries of national oppression under both Spanish and American rule. They come looking for better opportunities than are available to them in their superexploited country. Because wage levels are higher in the U.S., many have found better-paying jobs than they had in Puerto Rico. However, there is no escape in the U.S. from national oppression and inequality. In many respects it is more intense because of the depths of racism and language discrimination. Racial and language characteristics are used by the capitalist ruling class to brand Puerto Ricans and restrict them to second-class status. They are discriminated against in all aspects of economic, political, and social life and segregated into hellish barrios. Thousands of youth soon despair of bettering their miserable situation and try to escape by using drugs.

The 1974-75 depression (which forced millions into the ranks of the unemployed) and the continuing ruling-class offensive to drive down the living standards of the working class have



heaped especially heavy burdens onto Puerto Ricans. And an even deeper crisis in Puerto Rico means that the thousands who return there every year are not finding any relief either.

Discrimination in employment means that the jobless rate among Puerto Ricans is at least twice that for the population as a whole.

In 1974 the median income for Puerto Ricans was an estimated 59 percent of the U.S. average, compared with 71 percent in 1959. The long-run trend is for the gap to widen.

Even when a job does not require complete proficiency in English, a Puerto Rican applicant with a heavy accent will often be turned away. And most civil service examinations are not given in Spanish, making it difficult for many Puerto Ricans to get government jobs.

The worst slum areas left by previous waves of immigrants have become the lodging places for Puerto Ricans. Some areas such as the South Bronx, the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and parts of Brooklyn resemble bombed-out zones more than residential areas.

When Puerto Ricans seek escape by buying homes in better neighborhoods, they are often subjected to arson and bombing by racist vigilantes, as tragically shown in recent cases in Philadelphia and Boston.

The housing patterns also segregate Puerto Ricans into schools that receive less funding and are inferior to schools attended by most white students. This inequality in education is made worse by language discrimination. Tens of thousands of Puerto Rican children begin school with little or no knowledge of English. Many of them have transferred directly from schools in Puerto Rico. Very few teachers know Spanish, so that all instruction in arithmetic, geography, science, and so forth is conducted in English. The Spanish-speaking students, struggling to learn English, fall behind. Monolingual racist teachers call them "retarded." Many students give up and the "push-out" rate is high, especially compared with the rate for white students. The problem is aggravated because there is only a handful of Puerto Rican teachers. Most teachers are racist in their attitude toward Puerto Rican students and insensitive to their history, culture, and problems.

Language discrimination not only makes it difficult to get jobs or a decent education, it pervades every aspect of social and political life. When a Spanish-speaking Puerto Rican goes to a welfare or unemployment office, hospital, library, or any other public facility, the chances are slim that there will be competent Spanish-speaking employees on hand to help. Until recently, participation in political life was restricted by English-only ballots and voting instructions and, despite federal court rulings, racist gerrymandering continues.

Puerto Ricans are subjected to particularly barbaric treatment by the cops, courts, and prisons. While organized crime and the drug

traffic operate under their benevolent eye, the police harass and murder Puerto Ricans. Even the mildest expression of Puerto Rican unity and cultural identity arouses the cops to frenzy, as shown in attacks on annual Puerto Rican Day parades and festivals in Newark, Boston, and other cities in the past few years.

Recently released documents on the government's Cointelpro ("Counterintelligence Program") operations confirm that Puerto Rican radical organizations are targets of harassment, frame-up, and deadly provocation by local red squads and the FBI. Grand jury "fishing expeditions" also victimize Puerto Rican militants by smearing them and throwing them in jail if they refuse to participate.

Racism

From its inception, U.S. imperialism has used racism to help justify the savage repression and superexploitation of the peoples in its colonies and semicolonies. Whether the inhabitants are Black, Brown, or Yellow, they are considered and treated as inferior.

Puerto Ricans are no exception. Although there is considerable diversity in color among Puerto Ricans, reflecting their Spanish, Indian, and African origins, all Puerto Ricans are considered racially inferior according to imperialist ideology and are therefore targets of racist indignity and injustice.

Race prejudice in Puerto Rico is not as intense or institutionalized as in the U.S. Many Puerto Ricans who in their country are considered white find that in the U.S. they are all "colored." In the U.S. the racist mentality categorizes any one vaguely associated with African, Asian, or Latin American descent as part of the colored world. Puerto Ricans in the U.S. are surrounded by a hostile society where racism is woven into every aspect of life. They are confronted by the fierce hatred spawned by centuries of racial prejudice and are all "spiks" in the eyes of the ruling class.

One of the consequences of this racial oppression is that dark-skinned Puerto Ricans are particularly subjected to abuse and discrimination. It is even more difficult for them to find jobs and decent housing. Since the days of slavery, racist ideology in the U.S. has considered Black to be "bad and ugly" and the blacker people are the more inferior they are.

Women

Puerto Rican women suffer the added burden of sexual discrimination and abuse characteristic of capitalist society. They are especially the victims of the prejudices and traditions of machismo and the Catholic church.

Discrimination makes it more difficult for them to obtain decent jobs than either Puerto Rican men or white women, and their incomes are lower. This pressure is intensified by the fact that one-fifth of the Puerto Rican women over the

age of fourteen in the U.S. head households and are the principal breadwinners for their families.

The problems of working and maintaining families are compounded by the obstacles placed in the way of economic independence. Child-care facilities, already too expensive and inadequate, are being cut back. And the right to choose whether or not to have a child is far from being won. Despite the 1970 repeal of the New York State law restricting abortions and the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortions, there are still numerous barriers—especially the expense—to obtaining them. Furthermore, reactionary forces are trying to roll back the gains that have been won by imposing more and more restrictions on the right to abortion. Puerto Rican women are especially affected by these barriers and attacks, because the greatest increase in the number of abortions in New York City in the past five years has been among Puerto Rican women.

The right of Puerto Rican women to choose whether to have children is also violated by the large number of forced sterilizations. In 1972-73 there was a 180 percent rise in the number of sterilizations performed in New York City hospitals that service predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhoods. Racist hospital administrators and doctors who want to help limit the growth of the Puerto Rican population use subterfuge and blackmail to force sterilization on Puerto Rican women. Many hospitals also force hysterectomies on women who don't need them in order to provide practice for interns.

Oppressed as part of the working class, as a national minority, and as women, Puerto Rican women today have a special stake in fighting for the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA, if ratified, would be a weapon in the hands of women in much the same way as the 1974 Supreme Court decision declaring the right of Spanish-speaking students to an equal education is a weapon in the hands of the Puerto Rican community.

Women are the principal organizers and activists of many struggles demanding child care, housing, and education in the Puerto Rican community, and there is a growing acceptance of feminist ideas among them.

The Puerto Rican Movement

A radicalization of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. began in the late 1960s and continues today. It developed in response to the miserable conditions in which Puerto Ricans are forced to live and was inspired by the explosive rise of the civil rights movement, the development of Black nationalism, the rise of the mass anti-Vietnam War movement, and the political radicalization in Puerto Rico. While this radicalization's impact has been primarily on youth, it has reached all layers of the Puerto Rican population and has established itself as an important part of the class struggle in the U.S. It has been a catalyst for a wide range of struggles and has led to the

birth of new organizations that are demanding a better life immediately, not four or five generations from now.

The new Puerto Rican movement burst onto the political scene in 1966 with a revolt against police brutality in Chicago's Northwest Side. Since then Puerto Ricans have been involved in strikes, campus struggles, the antiwar movement, prison revolts, and demonstrations against cutbacks in social services. They have fought against inequality in education, against racial and sexual discrimination in employment policies, and for better treatment for veterans.

Most of these actions have been led by local organizations and coalitions that emerged from the struggles themselves, such as the Young Lords and the Por los Niños coalition in Manhattan's Lower East Side.

Some organizations, such as the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund and Aspira, have initiated significant legal suits for equal rights against the government and employers. But they have generally not engaged in or initiated mass actions.

Defense committees have been established to defend victims of political persecution. Most notable were the cases of Carlos Feliciano, a framed-up Nationalist Party militant who was finally released in 1975; and the five Puerto Rican Nationalists railroaded to jail in 1950 and 1954. They are Lolita Lebrón, Oscar Collazo, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores, and Andrés Figueroa Cordero. They have been in jail longer than any other political prisoners in the Americas.

As in the Black community, government-financed antipoverty agencies, most of them with ties to the Democratic Party, have assumed the leadership of many actions in order to tame them and channel them into the framework of capitalist politics. As a result a number of militant community leaders have been bought off or co-opted.

Fight for Equal Education

The fact that Puerto Ricans speak Spanish is used by the ruling class and its apologists to rationalize their discriminatory policies. They push the racist concept that Spanish-speaking residents do not deserve the same pay, working conditions, housing, or standard of living as English-speaking workers.

The response of Puerto Ricans and other Spanish-speaking minorities, especially Chicanos, has been to fight for the constitutional right of their children to an equal education. In a 1974 decision, *Lau v. Nichols*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that placing non-English-speaking students in the same curriculum as English-speaking students, with no attempt to take special compensatory measures, is a denial of equal education to non-English-speaking students and a violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The long struggle for bilingual and bicultural

education led to this landmark decision, but, like the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation, it will not be implemented without a fight. The first major test of the *Lau* decision came in New York City where the board of education was sued by Aspira, a federally funded organization set up to help Puerto Ricans gain a college education. A federal court decree based on the *Lau* decision agreed to by both sides ruled that special classes for all children who cannot function in English had to be instituted by September 1975.

This decision raised the hope that major progress would be made in bilingual-bicultural education. However, many school administrators, with the aid of racist teachers, are sabotaging attempts to set up classrooms for Spanish-speaking students. The decree says that when children are able to function in English they are to be moved back into monolingual English classrooms. This ability to function in English is determined by inaccurate, teacher-controlled tests and may only mean the child knows enough to hear commands to sit down or keep quiet from a monolingual English-speaking teacher. This undermines bilingual-bicultural education and leads to cutbacks in the hiring of bilingual teachers.

The implementation of the *Lau* decision received another blow when the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare issued a memorandum in April 1976 instructing its offices that bilingual education is not required to provide equal education for non-English-speaking students. This is a retreat from HEW's previous position.

The fight for bilingual-bicultural education in some cities has been accompanied by the demand for parent control over the hiring of administrators and teachers, curricula, and allocation of funds. Puerto Rican parents insist on this to fully implement bilingual-bicultural programs and to ensure that teachers and administrators aren't abusing their children.

Another aspect of the struggle for bilingualism is the insistence that the language of Cervantes is just as good as the language of Shakespeare. Puerto Ricans desire to become part of the work force in the United States, which means becoming proficient in the tools, customs, and language of the shop, factory, restaurant, or institution in which they work. But they have the right to maintain their knowledge of Spanish and their own cultural heritage. For many Puerto Ricans Spanish is a tie to their country of origin, and it provides access to a broader world and culture that would be narrowed by the loss of their language.

District One Struggle

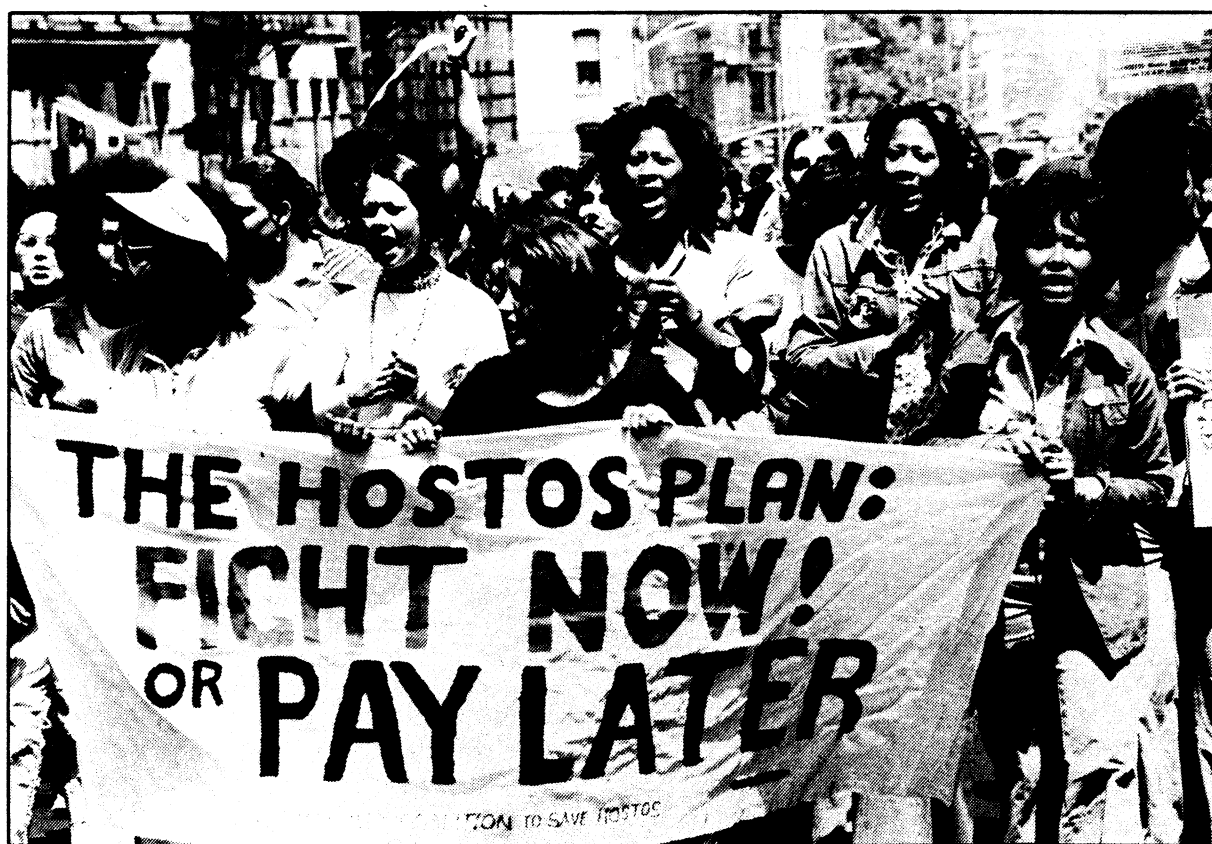
The struggle against racism in New York City's Community School District One is one of the most significant movements in which Puerto Ricans have played a leading role. It grew out of the 1967-68 citywide struggle of Blacks and Puerto Ricans to combat inequality in education. In 1967 three districts were set up in the city as experiments in decentralization. They included Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn, a district in Harlem, and a district in the Lower East Side, part of which included what is now District One.

When the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district school board tried to hire Black teachers and institute new teaching methods more in tune with the needs of Black and Puerto Rican students, the United Federation of Teachers, led by Albert Shanker, called a racist strike to beat back this move and discourage similar initiatives in other districts.

This reactionary action defeated the Ocean Hill-Brownsville struggle. It led to the weakening of a proposed decentralization law that would have given parents more say in the running of schools in the communities of the oppressed minorities. Despite its many deficiencies, the law that was adopted in 1969 has been used by Black and Puerto Rican parents as a weapon in the struggle against racist inequality in the schools.

In the Lower East Side, parents challenged the 1968 strike by opening nearly all the schools and keeping them open with parent volunteers. This was when Puerto Rican, Black, and Chinese parents in the district first forged a bloc.

In the first school board election, in 1970, the UFT leadership successfully elected a majority of its supporters to the District One board. However, parent struggles in the next two years forced resignations and new appointments until the pro-



May 10, 1976, demonstration

Andy F. Corlette



The South Bronx. Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans live in this devastated section of New York.

Dick Roberts

community-control forces won a majority in 1972. One of its first moves was to appoint Luis Fuentes, a veteran of the 1968 Ocean Hill-Brownsville struggles, as superintendent. It also hired more competent Spanish-speaking administrators and paraprofessionals, established more bilingual and bicultural programs, and moved the district office to where it was more accessible to parents.

However, since then the pro-Shanker forces have reestablished a majority on the board, removed Fuentes, and reversed most of the other advances instituted by the parents.

The District One fight has highlighted the central demands Puerto Rican parents are raising to combat inequality in the schools. These include more funds to improve schools in their communities; more bilingual programs to help students learn basic subjects in their own language; and parent control over curricula, hiring, and allocation of funds for the schools in the Puerto Rican communities.

Despite its ups and downs this parent-led struggle has been a model because of the way it has drawn together a broad array of forces in direct-action struggle. It successfully avoided the pitfall of basing its leadership and finances on government-financed antipoverty agencies and Democratic Party clubs, which have derailed countless other community struggles. It has used direct action such as picket lines, demonstrations, and rallies; court suits against illegal and undemocratic moves by the city administration, the board of education, and the UFT leadership; and election campaigns for school board.

The District One struggle has played an important role in combating Albert Shanker's demagoguery by exposing the racist policies and attitudes of the UFT officialdom. It has served as a beachhead in the struggle against Shankerism and has been an example to other oppressed communities and to rank-and-file teachers looking for allies in the struggle against cutbacks and layoffs.

Student Movement

The radicalization among students in the 1960s and 1970s found its reflection among Puerto Rican students. This became particularly visible when Puerto Ricans and Blacks in New York's City University system waged a militant strug-

gle for admission to the colleges. The city university system had boasted of its free tuition policy but through competitive examinations had succeeded in maintaining an almost totally white enrollment.

Black and Puerto Rican students took over the City College of New York in 1969 and held it with the support of the community. Their demand for open admissions was finally granted despite protests from both liberal and conservative politicians that this was "racism in reverse" and would "lower educational standards."

In 1970 in the South Bronx Puerto Ricans won the struggle to have a college set up in their neighborhood. Eugenio María de Hostos Community College, the only public bilingual college in the country, was established by the New York City Board of Higher Education.

The educational system, when it deals with Puerto Rican history and culture at all, does so in a distorted and dishonest way. At many colleges throughout the Northeast, students demanded and won Puerto Rican studies programs to counter this attempted obliteration of the Puerto Rican culture and heritage.

The open admissions victory brought a dramatic rise in the number of Puerto Ricans entering the city university system. The total number, in comparison to the Puerto Rican population, was small, but seemed to open up new hope that Puerto Ricans would now be able to enjoy a change in their status and standard of living. The hope was to be shortlived. In 1976, in the context of the general offensive against the working class in New York City and cutbacks in social services, the city university budget was cut, free tuition abolished, open admissions ended, and Puerto Rican studies programs slashed.

Underlining the racist nature of the cutbacks, the board of higher education voted to close Hostos. This attack was aimed at the entire Puerto Rican community that uses the facilities, night classes, and special programs. The attack on Hostos galvanized numerous protests, including marches and rallies and a take-over of the school. The threat posed by the beginnings of an alliance between students and the Puerto Rican community forced the government to retreat and provide funding for Hostos for at least one more year.

The Young Lords

The 1966 Northwest Side rebellion in Chicago prepared the ground for the Young Lords Organization. It had been a street gang but evolved into a political organization under the influence of the rebellion.

The emergence of the YLO in Chicago in 1968 inspired a group of Puerto Ricans in New York, the Sociedad de Albizu Campos (Albizu Campos Society), to affiliate with the Chicago group the following year. Unlike the Chicago organization, the New York leadership was composed principally of student activists, some of whom had been radicalized on the campuses and influenced by the Students for a Democratic Society. The two groups coexisted in a common formation for about six months, but split because their different backgrounds made it difficult to establish an authoritative national apparatus. The Young Lords Party, as the New York group was named after the split, initiated a series of actions: dumping garbage in the already filthy streets to force the sanitation department to clean them up; taking over a church to serve the community's needs; and a dramatic though shortlived take-over of Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx in order to get better medical care and end racist practices. The Young Lords Party received wide media coverage and won sympathy from the Puerto Rican community for its actions despite the fact that the majority of the community did not go along with its ultraleft rhetoric.

The impact of the Black movement on the Young Lords Party was clearly shown by their emulation of the Black Panther Party, by the major role Black Puerto Ricans played in its leadership, and by the fact that some of its leaders had previously been in the Black Panthers while others left the YLP to join the Black Panthers.

Like the Panthers, the Young Lords were victimized by police harassment and infiltration. The government's disruption campaign was facilitated by the Young Lords' ultraradical rhetoric. Like many youth groups at the time they were attracted to Maoism and by 1972 the party had degenerated into a Maoist sect. It was renamed the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization. Most of the original leaders left or were driven out of the PRRWO.

The PRRWO's sectarianism prevented it from effectively mobilizing support for the October 27, 1974, pro-independence rally at Madison Square Garden. The chief preoccupation of the PRRWO was to expose what it termed the "revisionist" slogan of "A Bicentennial Without Colonies," around which the largest pro-independence demonstration in the U.S. up until that time was built. Its use of physical violence against opponents within the radical movement and its sectarianism has cut it off from effectively participating in struggles. The result has been to narrow its supporters to a few colleges in New York City. Its influence on the Puerto Rican community is nil.

Puerto Rican Socialist Party

The Puerto Rican Socialist Party, which until 1971 was called the Pro-Independence Movement, is a major radical party in Puerto Rico. It has been operating in the U.S. since 1959, but has grown and become more active since 1971. It has established chapters in cities outside of New York, including, among others, Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Newark.

The PSP has been influenced politically by the colonial revolution, particularly the Cuban revolution, and the heritage of the nationalist movement in Puerto Rico. It has generally supported the positions and policies of the Cuban Communist Party for more than a decade. This is not surprising considering the historical links between the revolutionary movements of the two countries and the Castro regime's refusal to abandon its active support of Puerto Rico's independence despite intense pressure from Washington.

Both the Cuban CP's active support to guerrilla warfare in Latin America and its adaptation to the Moscow Stalinist line have influenced the PSP. But in spite of its close relations with the Cuban CP, the PSP has not merged or affiliated with the pro-Moscow Stalinist parties in the U.S. or Puerto Rico. It maintains its own distinct identity and political policies. The PSP attempts to avoid taking sides on the big debates between the major tendencies in the international workers' movement by invoking solidarity within the "socialist camp." This notion of unity led the PSP to support the capitalist popular front regime in Chile and to hail the imperialist MFA government in Portugal. It has also led to silence or acceptance of many reactionary policies of the Stalinists, including the repression of dissidents by the bureaucratic regimes in China and the Soviet Union.

In 1974 the PSP branch in the United States established a student organization, the Federation of Puerto Rican University Students (FUSP), and has become involved in community and student struggles. Most prominent has been the struggle to preserve Hostos Community College in New York City.

However, the basic policies and program of the PSP in the United States are determined by the party's campaigns in Puerto Rico. The political axis of its activities in the U.S. is organizing support for those campaigns.

To its credit the PSP, more than any other organization in the U.S., has waged an extensive propaganda campaign against U.S. colonial oppression of Puerto Rico. It was the prime initiator and organizer of the mass rally in Madison Square Garden in support of Puerto Rican independence and the July 4, 1976, "Bicentennial Without Colonies" demonstration in Philadelphia.

As the most prominent fighter in the U.S. for Puerto Rico's independence, the PSP is capable of attracting considerable support. Being part of a larger party in Puerto Rico also facilitates the PSP's ability to exercise an influence beyond its own forces in the U.S.

A major step taken by the PSP was the announcement of a slate of candidates for the 1976 elections in Puerto Rico. This broke with its past policy of boycotting the colonial elections. While the PSP organized support in the U.S. for these candidates, it had little to say about what Puerto Ricans should do in the U.S. elections.

Flowing from its concentration on building support in the U.S. for the struggle in Puerto Rico is its concept that, at this time, Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and Puerto Rico need a single *Puerto Rican* party.

In practice they counterpose this to drawing together in a centralized revolutionary socialist party the most conscious leaders of all sectors of

the U.S. working class, including the Puerto Rican national minority living in the U.S. The centralized power of the capitalist state in the U.S., however, dictates the need for such a party.

Despite political differences with the PSP, the Socialist Workers Party seeks to establish discussions with leaders and members on the best way to defend Puerto Rican rights in the U.S., how to advance the struggle for independence, and how to best advance the socialist revolution in the U.S. Wherever possible we try to participate in united actions.

Democratic Right to Equal Representation

Although Puerto Ricans come to the U.S. as citizens with the legal right to vote, run for office, and work without special permits, the ruling class has deliberately denied them their rights and tried to exclude them from political life. Literacy tests, English-only ballots and voting instructions, and racist gerrymandering are the principal means they have used to accomplish this. Consequently most communities with Puerto Rican majorities are represented by non-Puerto Ricans in city councils, school boards, state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress.

For a long time Puerto Ricans have been waging a struggle against these restrictions and for the democratic right to be *included* in the political life of the U.S. and to be *represented* by Puerto Ricans. As a result several important victories have been won. In 1973 a federal court ordered New York City to have bilingual ballots and voting instructions for the first time in both the general election and the school board election. This ruling was upheld by a 1974 court decision and extended to require Spanish-speaking personnel at the polls. In 1975 Congress extended the 1965 Voting Rights Act another ten years and broadened it by making bilingual elections mandatory in districts where more than 5 percent of the voters do not speak English.

However, despite these important rulings and laws, Democratic and Republican election officials still try to find ways of circumventing them.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has documented the serious undercount of Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and other Hispanic minorities by the Bureau of the Census in 1970 and noted that this has reduced the number of districts that qualify for bilingual ballots and instructions.

The emergence of Puerto Rican Democratic Party clubs, which attempt to replace the older, more established Democratic machines in the barrios, is a distorted reflection within capitalist politics of the struggle for the democratic right of Puerto Rican representation.

The most prominent Puerto Rican elected official is Herman Badillo, who was elected to U.S. Congress from the South Bronx in 1970. Badillo is pointed to as a symbol that Puerto Ricans can "make it" in U.S. politics. When he ran for mayor of New York in the Democratic primaries in 1969 and 1973, many Puerto Ricans hoped he would be elected and would do something to alleviate the intolerable conditions they face.

Significant sectors of the ruling class also backed him. They believed a Puerto Rican mayor, supported by Puerto Ricans and many Blacks, would be more effective in maintaining the support of these oppressed minorities to capitalist politics and demobilizing their struggles. They favored a course similar to that followed by the ruling class in other major cities where Black Democrats have been elected mayors.

Badillo has carefully demonstrated his loyalty to big business. In response to the New York City budget crisis he demagogically opposed wage increases for city workers on the grounds that they take funds away from the Puerto Rican community. This ploy advanced the ruling-class goal of dividing the working class by pitting one sector against another. He refused to support the Por los Niños campaigns in New York's District One and he opposes independence for Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rican elected officials have joined with their Black and Chicano counterparts to form caucuses and press their demands in legislative bodies and the Democratic Party. In New York Black and Puerto Rican legislators have formed their own caucus in the state legislature. Prominent Puerto Rican Democrats, including Badillo, have joined with Chicano elected officials and others of Latin American heritage to establish

the National Hispanic Caucus affiliated with the Democratic Party. It pressed for planks in the 1976 Democratic Party platform designed to encourage Americans of Latin American heritage to vote for Democratic candidates.

Although Puerto Rican clubs and caucuses in the Democratic Party reflect greater participation of Puerto Ricans in politics, they are not a form of independent political action. On the contrary, they encourage *dependence* on one of the capitalist parties responsible for perpetuating the oppression of Puerto Ricans. And reliance on either the Democratic or Republican party will not advance the democratic rights of the Puerto Rican people any more than it will the struggle of the working class as a whole.

Independent Political Action

The two-party system is the way the capitalist ruling class maintains its monopoly over the country's political life. It owns and controls the Democratic and Republican parties, which are equally committed to preserving the capitalist system and its evils of war, racism, and exploitation.

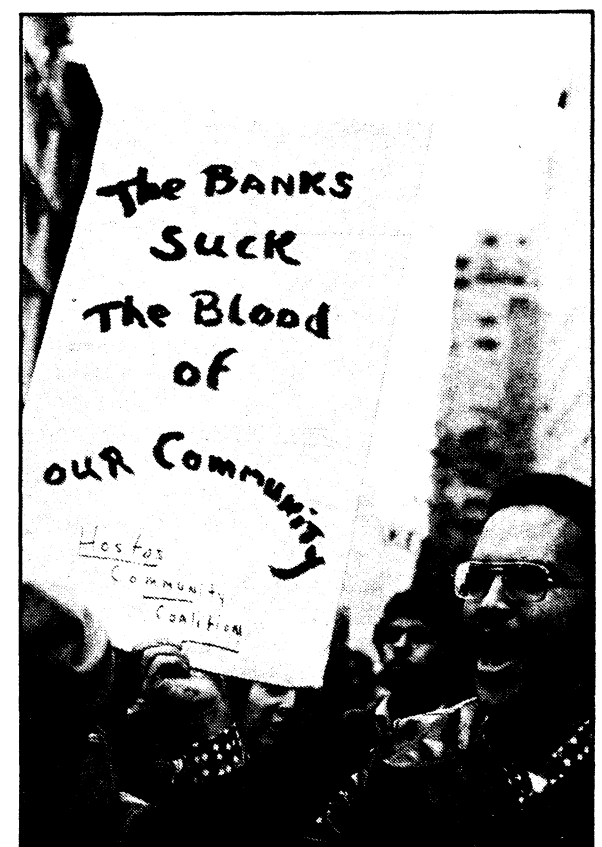
Illusions are deliberately fostered that the working class and the oppressed national minorities can win reforms and improve their condition by supporting their "friends" in these parties. But reliance on either of these parties facilitates the ruling-class aim of diffusing and co-opting independent struggles of the masses.

To advance its own goals the working class must break from the capitalist parties and steer a course of political independence. Its mass actions must be independent of these parties—not dependent on funds or favors from them, not limited by a desire to avoid embarrassing them, and not subordinated to getting them elected. Independent political action means putting nothing ahead of the demands and interests of the working class and oppressed national minorities.

In order to break the two-party stranglehold, the working class needs to form its own political party to give direction and reinforcement to its struggles. A mass revolutionary workers' party is needed to lead the struggle to replace the capitalist rulers and establish a workers' government.

A giant step in this direction would be the formation of a labor party based on the organized power of the unions. This would not be a labor version of the Democratic and Republican parties or a vote-catching machine for up-and-coming "labor politicians." It would be a new type of party that strengthens the independent mobilization of all sectors of the oppressed and helps aim their force at the common enemy. Workers running as independent labor candidates on a local level can help set an example and point the way to a nationwide party of labor.

Since the 1960s there has been considerable discussion about independent political action in



Lou Howort

the Black and Chicano communities and some attempts made to establish independent Black and Chicano parties. Mass independent parties based on either the Black or Chicano communities, both of which are overwhelmingly working class, would also be a significant step forward in breaking with the capitalist parties and laying out a course of political independence for the working class. They would be powerful tribunes and organizers of their communities.

Within this strategic framework of independent working-class action, and as part of the struggle by Puerto Ricans to be included and represented in the government, Puerto Ricans should consider running their own independent candidates against those of the Democrats and Republicans. Campaigns for these candidates would strengthen the struggles of Puerto Ricans and would give them an independent voice in the electoral arena. The concentration of Puerto Ricans in big cities, especially New York, means that state and city legislators and a few members of Congress could be elected who would for the first time be beholden to no one but the Puerto Rican community, whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the bankers and bosses and their Republican and Democratic hirelings. It would also be an important example to the labor movement and other oppressed national minorities to break from capitalist politics.

So far there have been very few examples of independent Puerto Rican candidates. The Socialist Workers Party has endorsed these candidates whenever they have run for office independently of and in opposition to the capitalist parties. We have supported them, as in the case of José Fuentes for state assemblyman in New York City in 1965, even if they were not socialist and in spite of our criticisms of their programs.

The Puerto Rican Struggle and the Labor Movement

The American labor movement is potentially the most powerful ally of the Puerto Rican struggle, but under its present class-collaborationist and self-serving leadership it is indifferent or hostile to the struggles of the most oppressed groups. Its record in respect to Puerto Ricans is particularly miserable.

Today Puerto Ricans are often barred from more skilled jobs by unions that act as job trusts for white workers. Most notorious are the United Federation of Teachers in New York City and the building-trades unions.

In New York City, for example, where 23 percent of the students in the public schools are Puerto Rican, only about 1 percent of the teachers are Puerto Rican. This is the bitter fruit of Shankerite opposition to affirmative-action programs and preferential hiring to help move toward equality for Blacks and Puerto Ricans. It is part and parcel of the same racist policy behind the UFT leadership's opposition to full bilingual-bicultural education and its fierce struggle against Puerto Ricans and Blacks having a say over the administration of the schools in their communities.

The unions with the largest number of Puerto Rican workers today are the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees (District 1199).

Puerto Ricans in the ILGWU have second-class status. No Puerto Ricans are on its executive board and few hold staff positions. Thousands of Puerto Rican garment workers are employed in sweatshops that the ILGWU officials refuse to help organize.

Both AFSCME and District 1199 reflect the growth of unionism among public and social service workers in the past fifteen years. They have brought thousands of new forces into the labor movement, including Blacks and Puerto Ricans, and have tended to feel more pressure to support social struggles. AFSCME, for example, supported the Por los Niños campaigns in New York's Lower East Side.

However, today public and social service employees are a major target of the ruling-class offensive to drive down wages, working conditions, job security, and social services, and to divide the working class. Massive layoffs of public employees have hit Puerto Rican workers particularly hard as they are being laid off in disproportionate numbers.

The bureaucratized leadership of these unions is demonstrating its bankruptcy by counting on

collaboration with capitalist politicians rather than class-struggle methods. They desperately attempt to defend their dues base of a shrinking number of relatively more privileged workers in their unions rather than chart a course to fight for the broader social needs of the class as a whole.

This narrow policy facilitates the ruling-class strategy of dividing the working class by pitting workers in the private sector against public workers; public employees in different departments against each other; employed workers against the unemployed, students, and welfare recipients; workers with greater seniority against those more recently hired; and white workers against Blacks and Puerto Ricans. This dead-end scramble for fewer jobs and funds especially victimizes Puerto Ricans, who have lower seniority, greater unemployment, and proportionately more welfare recipients.

For labor to lead the fight for even the most elementary needs of the working class, a new kind of leadership is needed. The development of a class-struggle left wing in the union movement is necessary to provide this leadership. It will use class-struggle methods to fight for the workers' interests and to champion the social struggles by the oppressed, and it will map out a political course for the unions independent of the two

istent or inadequate, and pesticides endanger the health of the workers. Farm workers get no overtime pay, no fringe benefits, no job security, no promotions, and no unemployment insurance. Growers overcharge them for food, beer, wine, and cigarettes, and they shortchange their paychecks.

The outrageous treatment of seasonal farm workers has generated protests, strikes, legal actions, and a union organizing drive.

A drive to organize Puerto Rican tobacco workers in Connecticut was undertaken by the Farm Workers Association (Asociación de Trabajadores Agrícolas, ATA). The ATA seeks to replace the Puerto Rican government as bargaining agent and negotiate higher wages. This drive had its highest peak so far in 1974 when it threatened to call a strike and received broad support, including the endorsement of United Farm Workers leader César Chávez and the Connecticut State Labor Council, AFL-CIO. In 1975 the drive was set back by the growers' decision to hire mostly local unemployed workers. The ATA has since merged with the California-based United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO, and is also trying to organize in the labor camps in southern New Jersey.

The attempt to organize Puerto Rican farm workers faces special difficulties because farm



The South Bronx

Dick Roberts

employer parties. It will lead the fight for a labor party based on the organized power of the unions. A labor party will be a crusader for the Puerto Rican struggle for equality, the organization of Puerto Rican farm workers, independence for Puerto Rico, and the release of the five Puerto Rican Nationalist political prisoners. Puerto Rican unionists will be in the forefront of developments toward the formation of a class-struggle left wing and the creation of a labor party.

Farm Workers

There are tens of thousands of Puerto Rican seasonal workers employed mostly in agriculture on the East Coast. There is no accurate count of how many come each year and the number varies from year to year depending on the capitalist business cycle in the U.S. A portion of those who come (an estimated one-fourth in 1974) are employed under contracts negotiated between contractors' associations and the Puerto Rican government. The contractors then supply labor to both smaller farms and corporate farms. Workers under these contracts are supposed to get the minimum wage, but the growers usually end up cheating them out of the full amount of even this pittance. The rest of the migrant workers have no contracts and suffer even worse conditions.

Conditions for all Puerto Rican farm workers are barbaric and inhuman. Housing is crowded and unsafe, field sanitation facilities are nonex-

workers are not guaranteed the legal right to organize and bargain collectively.

Relationship with Other Oppressed National Minorities

Most Puerto Ricans are concentrated in cities where there are also large populations of other oppressed national minorities, especially Blacks and Chicanos. Usually the Puerto Rican barrios are next to or overlap with the communities of these oppressed nationalities. The similar nature of their oppression naturally leads to common struggles and sometimes common organizations. The Por los Niños coalition in District One in New York's Lower East Side united Puerto Rican, Black, and Chinese parents in a common fight for equal educational opportunities. Although there were frictions between the different components of this alliance, unity was key in sustaining this struggle for so long.

The Attica prison revolt in 1971 was also an example of Blacks and Puerto Ricans uniting around demands that affected both groups.

The struggles of each oppressed national minority have reciprocally influenced each other. Victories won by Puerto Ricans fighting for bilingual ballots and education in New York and Boston reinforce struggles by Chicanos in Texas and Colorado demanding the same thing. The rise of the Black movement in the 1960s particularly helped stimulate the radicalization of both Chicanos and Puerto Ricans.

Puerto Ricans also live in or next to communi-

ties with many undocumented workers, especially from the Caribbean and Central and South America. One of the largest communities, an estimated three hundred thousand, comes from the Dominican Republic. In the New York metropolitan area there are 1.5 million persons without legal papers, according to government estimates.

Some employers will not hire Puerto Ricans, using the excuse that they could be "illegal" Dominican or Guatemalan workers posing as U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico. This underlines the importance of not allowing the employers to turn Puerto Ricans against undocumented workers and the importance of the Puerto Rican movement supporting the struggle for the rights of "illegal aliens" to jobs, unemployment benefits, and all other social services and opposing all deportations.

Although there are many points of collaboration between Puerto Rican and other oppressed minorities, the ruling class tries to pit each against the others. School officials in Boston, for example, have tried to take advantage of court-ordered busing to undermine bilingual-bicultural programs. These programs are concentrated in a few schools, and the school board tried to disperse Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans throughout the school system. Moves of this type must not be allowed to divide Blacks and Puerto Ricans fighting for the same goal—an end to inferior schools for their children. School busing need not be carried out at the expense of bilingual-bicultural programs.

The ruling class also tries to incite hostilities by getting Black and Puerto Rican antipoverty agencies to fight each other over the few crumbs doled out by the federal government.

In respect to collaboration with other forces, Puerto Ricans can best guarantee that their demands and needs will not take a second place if they unite themselves in their own independent organizations. This will both strengthen their struggle against the ruling class and help reinforce collaboration with their allies.

Assimilation or Self-Determination?

The large stream of Puerto Ricans to the U.S. in the past thirty years means that more than one-third of all Puerto Ricans now live in the United States. According to the 1970 census, about 45 percent of these were born in the U.S., compared with 25 percent in 1950, and many of those born in Puerto Rico came to the U.S. at a very young age. Thus, the outlook of an increasing proportion of Puerto Ricans is being influenced by life in the barrios of the U.S.

Puerto Ricans, unlike European immigrants before them, are not being assimilated, that is, becoming another "ethnic" group with simply residual cultural characteristics of their homeland. While more Puerto Ricans in the U.S. are becoming better educated and a thin layer of lawyers, educators, public officials, and politicians is emerging, there has been no significant improvement in the condition of the great majority of Puerto Ricans compared with the rest of the population. The gaps between the unemployment rates and income levels of Puerto Ricans and the population as a whole are not narrowing. The segregation of Puerto Ricans into inferior schools and housing is not disappearing.

The fact that Blacks, who have been in America for 350 years; Chicanos, who were annexed 130 years ago; and Native Americans, who were here before the Europeans, have not been integrated into capitalist American points to the unlikelihood of this road for Puerto Ricans. The American "melting pot" has never included nonwhite national minorities.

Like all nationally oppressed peoples, Puerto Ricans have the right to self-determination. The depth of pro-independence sentiment and agitation in Puerto Rico and the dynamic of the class struggle there have led revolutionary socialists to support the demand for an independent, sovereign Puerto Rico.

However, for Puerto Ricans in the U.S. the solution to the question of self-determination could take other forms. For example, it is not excluded that the masses of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. will choose to return to their country and become part of an independent Puerto Rico.

They could also choose: to integrate into a socialist United States; to establish a separate state in the U.S.; to create a federation of councils exercising community control of the Puerto Rican communities; or some other solu-

tion. This decision assumes the removal of the capitalists from power and the establishment of a workers' state. Which solution will be chosen depends on the experience of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and the course of the class struggle and economic developments in Puerto Rico and the U.S.

Whichever course is adopted, it will be the obligation of the American labor movement to defend it. If Puerto Ricans return to an independent Puerto Rico or establish a separate state on U.S. soil it will be the responsibility of a workers' government in the U.S. to provide all the material assistance necessary.

There is no indication that the masses of Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. view themselves as a people radically different from Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico. Furthermore, there is considerable political and cultural interchange between them.

Puerto Ricans in the U.S., however, are also getting more involved in the political life of the U.S. as they fight back against the specific forms of oppression they face here. They are establishing organizations, organizing protests, and running for political office. Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, which makes this process easier than for other national minorities, such as Dominicans, Haitians, and *mexicanos*, who face deportation for political activity.

Many of the social and cultural pressures, deprivations, and abuses experienced by Puerto Ricans living as a minority in the U.S. are different from those in Puerto Rico where the vast majority is Puerto Rican. Life in the barrios leads to different political experiences, social outlooks, and cultural tastes, especially among the younger generation that has never lived—or lived only a few years—in Puerto Rico.

This generation is seeking its own identity. Puerto Rican writers, artists, and musicians are trying to express the unique feeling and values of the *Nuyoricans*. The Young Lords emerging from Puerto Rican street gangs in the late 1960s and early 1970s were an authentic political expression of the particular resentments and aspirations of Puerto Ricans growing up in the U.S.

If present trends continue, the younger generations, which are more rooted in the life of the United States, will play an increasingly important role in the Puerto Rican community. What changes this will bring in attitudes, cultural traditions, and ties to Puerto Rico remain to be seen.

Program for the Struggle of Puerto Ricans in the U.S.

Puerto Ricans in the U.S. are engaged in a twofold fight. As an oppressed national minority they are fighting for equality and self-determination. In this role they are one of the allies of the working class.

At the same time they are part of the working class in the U.S., struggling for emancipation from capitalist exploitation.

Neither side of this combined struggle can achieve its goals without revolutionary action that replaces the present capitalist rulers with a workers' government, opening the road to socialism.

Both struggles are woven together and one cannot win without the victory of the other. The struggle against national oppression cannot succeed without the revolutionary mobilization of the working class as a whole. And no workers' government will be established if the labor movement subordinates or opposes the fight of Puerto Ricans and other oppressed national minorities for their immediate needs and democratic rights.

In the fight for full social and national emancipation of the Puerto Rican people, which culminates in the socialist revolution, Puerto Ricans should not subordinate their struggle to a spurious unity with the labor movement based on the class-collaborationist policies of the labor bureaucracy. On the contrary, the independent mobilization of the Puerto Rican people is one of the factors impelling the radicalization of the working class as a whole, helping to create the conditions for unity on a class-struggle basis.

The combined character of the struggle of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. requires a program that will mobilize Puerto Ricans around both immediate and democratic demands for equality and national liberation and transitional de-

mands that help the working class cross the bridge from their immediate aims and present level of consciousness to revolutionary socialist conclusions.

The central problems of special concern to Puerto Ricans are discrimination in employment, education, and housing, language discrimination in all aspects of social and political life, and lack of genuine representation in legislative and political bodies.

To combat job discrimination Puerto Ricans are calling for preferential hiring and upgrading. They are demanding that employers not be allowed to use layoffs to reduce the proportion of Puerto Rican workers, and that civil service examinations be held in both Spanish and English.

To end inequality in education Puerto Ricans are demanding bilingual-bicultural programs with competent teachers so that every Puerto Rican student can be educated in the language of their choice. Open admissions are called for to give every Puerto Rican student an opportunity to attend college.

Puerto Ricans are demanding an end to housing discrimination and the right to live in neighborhoods of their choice.

To end all language discrimination competent Spanish-speaking personnel are required in all public facilities, at the polls, and in the courtrooms. Bilingual ballots and voting instructions are necessary to provide equal voting rights. Spanish-language books in the prisons must be provided.

Puerto Rican women are demanding that the added oppression they suffer be ended. They are demanding the right to equal pay for equal work, an end to forced sterilizations, the right to have legal and safe abortions, and adequate free child-care facilities.

Puerto Ricans are also demanding control over the institutions and affairs of their communities in order to help guarantee their democratic rights.

Puerto Ricans need to break from the parties of their oppressors, the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties, and run independent Puerto Rican candidates where feasible.

This program, which is essential to the struggle against inequality, does not present answers to all the key questions facing Puerto Ricans. For example, in respect to jobs, Puerto Ricans will be among the most consistent and militant fighters for jobs for all. To achieve this goal, the first requirement is a massive program of public works. Also needed is the immediate reduction of the workweek, with no reduction in take-home pay, in order to spread the work among those who need jobs.

The program against inequality is thus part of a broader working-class program. The demands, method, and strategy for this program are outlined in the Socialist Workers Party's 1975 resolution *Prospects for Socialism in America*, especially the section, "Labor's Strategic Line of March."

This program is based on the perspective that the American workers must see the big social and political questions facing all the exploited and oppressed of the United States as issues of direct concern to them. It is rooted in the knowledge that only when the working class mobilizes its own independent collective strength, on the political as well as economic field of battle, can it successfully chart a course to the establishment of a workers' government.

The Socialist Workers Party

The American working class has the momentous task of wresting state power from the most powerful ruling class in all of history. The necessity to carry out this mission is being demonstrated by the breakdowns and crises of the capitalist system. But the working class will need something it does not yet have—its own mass revolutionary party.

We are confident that explosive events will open the door to rapid changes in the political consciousness of the working class and lead to upsurges out of which a mass revolutionary socialist party can emerge. However, this can only happen if the cadres of this party are assembled beforehand around a clear perspective and program. This is what the Socialist Workers Party is doing.

Only a party that is deeply rooted in the working class, especially among its most op-

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BOOKS

Lenin and the Bolsheviks

A Fresh View

By William Gottlieb

The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd

By Alexander Rabinowitch. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1976.

The Russian revolution of October 1917 was the decisive event of our epoch. For the first time in world history, the working class took power into its own hands and held it against the assaults of the capitalist world.

Yet no event in modern history is surrounded by a greater mass of mystification and falsification than the October revolution. The self-proclaimed heirs of this revolution trample daily on its most basic principles. In the sixtieth year after the revolution, these officials dare not even mention the great majority of the revolution's leaders in a favorable context.

Today, however, resistance to Stalinist rule is rising, not only in the Soviet Union but also in Eastern Europe and China. The logic of the demands of workers and progressive intellectuals in these countries for socialist democracy is toward a return to the spirit and norms of the October revolution and the Bolshevik party.

Not all fighters against the Stalinist dictators are interested in the truth about the Russian revolution. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, for instance, has done much to expose the crimes of the Stalin era in such books as *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *The Gulag Archipelago*. In reaction to the crimes of the bureaucracy, however, Solzhenitsyn has become an admirer of the old capitalist-landlord-dominated society that the Russian revolution overturned. He bitterly hates the revolution and all forces associated with it.

In *Lenin in Zurich*, a "historical novel," Solzhenitsyn presents a collection of fantasies about the revolution and its leaders. His imaginary Lenin is a supervillain of the comic book variety.

The descriptions given by most academic historians in the capitalist world—and particularly in the United States—scarcely improve on Solzhenitsyn's production.

The most common thesis is that the October revolution was a coup d'état by the totalitarian Bolshevik party, driven by Lenin's cruel lust for personal power. The Bolsheviks overturned, we are told, a highly democratic but weak-willed govern-

ment headed by Alexander Kerensky, thus derailing Russia's evolution toward Western-style democracy and plunging the nation into a new tyranny.

A striking exception to this traditional academic distortion, Prof. Alexander Rabinowitch's *The Bolsheviks Come to Power* will help to clear the air of many of these falsehoods.

Rabinowitch, a professor of history and director of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University, had wide access to original sources both in the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Bolsheviks Come to Power does not seek to provide a broad overview of the revolution and its basic causes. Rather, it centers on a detailed examination of the events in Petrograd from the "July Days"—the abortive upsurge of the Petrograd masses that ended with the arrest of Bolshevik leaders—to the victory of the Bolshevik-led insurrection of October 25 (old calendar) that marked the birth of soviet power.

Rabinowitch's credentials and background are not those of a revolutionary Marxist. This makes the convergence of his history with those of Bolshevik historians such as Trotsky on some key questions all the more striking. He demolishes the standard bourgeois interpretation of the Bolshevik revolution by simply presenting the facts.

One example of this is Rabinowitch's description of the Bolshevik party. The standard textbooks and histories purveyed by the capitalists present Lenin's party as a totalitarian elite with an internal organization that permitted no dissent and assured lock-step obedience to dictatorial commands. Stalinist historians basically agree, adding only that those accused of marching out of step with the leaders were "counterrevolutionaries."

Democracy in The Bolshevik Party

Professor Rabinowitch appears genuinely surprised to discover that this description of the Bolsheviks is not founded in fact. He writes of the organizational procedures followed by the Bolsheviks in the following way:

"The general direction of Bolshevik activity in 1917 was set by the Seventh All-Russian Party Conference in April and the Sixth Bolshevik Party Congress of late July and early August; between such national assemblies it was determined primarily by the majority vote of a democratically elected party Central Committee. At the same time, amid the chaotic, locally varying, constantly fluctuating conditions prevailing in Russia in 1917, the Central Committee, at the top of the Bolshevik organizational hierarchy, was simply unable to control the behavior of major regional organizations. Except in a broad, general way, it rarely tried."

Rabinowitch concludes: "Perhaps even more fundamentally, the phenomenal Bolshevik success can be attributed in no small measure to the nature of the party in 1917. Here I have in mind neither Lenin's bold and determined leadership, the immense historical significance of which cannot be denied, nor the Bolsheviks' proverbial, though vastly exaggerated, organizational unity and discipline. Rather, I would emphasize the party's internally relatively democratic, tolerant, and decentralized structure and method of operation, as well as its essentially open and mass character—in striking con-

trast to the traditional Leninist model.

"As we have seen, within the Bolshevik Petrograd organization at all levels in 1917 there was continuing free and lively discussion and debate over the most basic theoretical and tactical issues. Leaders who differed with the majority were at liberty to fight for their views, and not infrequently Lenin was the loser in these struggles. . . .

"In 1917 subordinate party bodies like the Petersburg Committee and the Military Organization were permitted considerable independence and initiative, and their views and criticism were taken into account in the formation of policy at the highest levels. Most important, these lower bodies were able to tailor their tactics and appeals to suit their own particular constituencies amid rapidly changing conditions. Vast numbers of new members were recruited into the party, and they too played a significant role in shaping the Bolsheviks' behavior."

This picture of the Bolsheviks reflects the vibrant and often stormy internal life of the party, a far cry from the "totalitarian" monolith of conventional historiography. It was precisely this extensive democracy that made it possible to achieve the striking unity in action of the Bolsheviks at key points such as the October revolution.

The influence on the author of more traditional academic interpretations of Bolshevik practices is evident when he contrasts the actual party Lenin led to the "traditional Leninist model." He tries to explain the development of this "striking contrast": "In 1917 Lenin's prerevolutionary conception of a small, professional, conspiratorial party was discarded and the doors opened wide to tens of thousands of new members who were by no means without influence, so that to a significant degree the party was now both responsive and open to the masses."

Rabinowitch holds that Lenin changed his fundamental conception of the party—rejecting the "Leninist model"—after the revolution broke out. Rabinowitch's error may flow from misunderstanding what Lenin meant when he proposed "conspiratorial" methods and the building of a party composed of "professional revolutionists," and from identifying this with the phony "Leninist model" advocated by Stalin and practiced by the Stalinist parties today. In addition, Rabinowitch does not seem to take account of the fact that organizational forms of all political groups were affected by changing conditions of greater or lesser repression in the country as a whole.

The small size of the Bolshevik party during the years before 1917 was hardly a matter of Lenin's choice. It was a result of the relative isolation of the party in the period of reaction following the defeat of the revolution of 1905 and during the patriotic wave that followed Russia's entry into World War I.

The "conspiratorial" methods of the party stemmed from the repressive nature of the tsarist regime, which recognized virtually no democratic rights and dealt especially harshly with the workers movement. Lenin's tactics were aimed at defending a beleaguered revolutionary party against police raids—not at carrying out a revolution behind the backs of the masses of workers and peasants. Lenin always criticized the "social revolutionary"

terrorists for moving in the direction of the latter kind of "conspiratorialism." Actually, the biggest conspiratorial operation was that of the tsarist regime itself, with its web of informers and provocateurs carrying out disruption of the workers movement.

However, the use of "conspiratorial" methods did not make the Bolsheviks a bureaucratically controlled party like the Stalinist parties today. Prior to Stalin's takeover, the Bolsheviks always permitted internal tendencies and factions, except when temporary, exceptional restrictions were thought to be necessary for a brief period in the aftermath of the civil war following the revolution. Deep-going debates were held over questions ranging from the attitude to be taken toward the elections to the tsarist Duma, to the validity of dialectical materialism. Congresses of elected delegates were held that voted on basic policy.

Lenin's idea of professional revolutionists meant rebels trained in Marxism with a lifelong commitment to the struggle for socialism. This concept of party cadres was not dropped in the events of 1917. The growth of the party into a mass organization made the skills of such dedicated revolutionists more important than ever, and made it possible to win many more fighters of this type.

At the same time, the establishment of a wide range of democratic rights in the wake of the February revolution made most of the methods that had been developed to foil tsarist repression unnecessary. This big shift in the objective situation made it possible for the democratic side of the Leninist party to fully flower.

The democratic practices of the Bolsheviks helped make it possible for the Bolsheviks to accurately reflect the revolutionary aspirations that gripped the masses as a whole. Rabinowitch writes that the "aspirations of the factory workers, soldiers, and sailors as expressed in contemporary documents . . . corresponded closely to the program of political, economic, and social reform put forth by the Bolsheviks at a time when all other major political parties were widely discredited because of their failure to press hard enough for meaningful internal changes and an immediate end to Russia's participation in the war."

A Bolshevik Election Campaign

As a mass workers party, the Bolsheviks expressed the workers' feelings and interests on matters of everyday concern as well as on the great issues of the day.

An example of this cited by Rabinowitch is the Bolshevik campaign for the Petrograd City Duma:

"The Bolsheviks had laid ambitious plans for their campaign, and as the day of reckoning approached, party officials nervously took stock of all that remained undone. Still, party workers had managed to organize an impressive number of political rallies and meetings to inundate working-class districts of the capital with campaign leaflets. The party's efforts had received a great boost with the appearance of *Soldat* and *Proletarii* [Bolshevik journals] just as the campaign became intense. Moreover, worsening economic conditions and the unpopular policies of the government and the majority socialists obviously worked to the Bolsheviks' advantage, a situation which they exploited to the fullest. 'Each worker and soldier is going to have to decide for himself



Russian factory workers hold political meeting. Helping Bolsheviks to gain mass influence in 1917 revolution, says author Rabinowitch, was 'the party's internally relatively democratic, tolerant, and decentralized structure and method of operation.'

whether he wants workers to wallow in the mud and stench of the ghettos, without schools or light, without adequate transportation facilities,' declared an editorial in *Soldat* on election eve. 'If this is what he wants then he should vote for our opponents. On the other hand, if he wants those streets in the working-class suburbs that are now breeding places for disease to be sanitary, if he wants to see them paved and lighted and surrounded by schools and gardens, let him vote for the Bolsheviks.' The same day's issue of *Proletarii* claimed: 'Only our party is striving for fundamental, radical changes in city government. Only our party favors shifting the entire tax burden from the poor to the rich.'

While demonstrating that the bourgeois portrayal of the Bolshevik party was false, the author shows that the description of the Provisional Government by many bourgeois and social-democratic historians as highly "democratic"—perhaps even "too democratic"—was also false.

Actually, Kerensky—together with the capitalist-led Kadet party, the general staff of the army, and other procapitalist forces—was maneuvering to set up an authoritarian regime. He saw the existence of a mass working-class and peasant movement as a threat to his rule. In particular, he sought to break and abolish the power of the soviets.

The soviets were councils of elected delegates that sprang up in the working-class districts at the time of the February revolution. They soon spread throughout the country, encompassing the peasantry and army units. They became the most representative and au-

thoritative organizations in Russia. The unelected Provisional Government survived only because the soviets allowed it. Kerensky's aim was to eliminate this situation of "dual power" and consolidate a capitalist government under his sole command.

The relationship between the "democratic" Kerensky and the rightist General Kornilov, who eventually attempted a military coup, was explained by Rabinowitch: "Yet, if Kerensky had now moved distinctly closer to Kornilov politically, there remained a crucial difference between the two men which goes far toward explaining the events that followed: Kerensky and Kornilov each viewed himself (and not the other) as the strongman in a new authoritarian government."

Far from being dedicated to "democracy" against Bolshevik "totalitarianism," Kerensky competed with Kornilov for the role of Russia's Pinochet.

In the end, the bourgeoisie and the army chose Kornilov over Kerensky as their preferred instrument for counterrevolution. In order to salvage the remains of his personal power, Kerensky was forced to call on the soviets and workers parties, which he had hoped to restrict or crush, to combat Kornilov's coup at the end of August.

The Bolsheviks' sensitivity to the fundamental interests of the masses was demonstrated when they rallied to the defense of the democratic gains of the Russian revolution against Kornilov, despite their loathing for Kerensky's policies.

The Bolsheviks Come to Power describes the party's response to

this crisis: "Military Organization leaders [the Military Organization was the group within the Bolshevik party that organized Bolshevik activity in the army and workers defense guards], like their counterparts in the Petersburg Committee, channeled much of their effort to help defend the revolution through specially created organs such as the Committee for Struggle, other nonparty mass organizations, and the soviets. Working within these institutions, Bolshevik Military Organization members played a prominent role in helping to mobilize and arm large numbers of workers, soldiers, and sailors, and giving programmatic and tactical direction to their efforts. The party's official stance in the crisis was summed up in a policy directive which the Central Committee cabled to twenty key provincial Bolshevik committees on August 29: 'In the interest of repulsing the counterrevolution, we are working in collaboration with the Soviet on a technical and informational basis, while fully retaining our independent political position.'"

Thus the Bolsheviks relied on the mass organizations in defeating Kornilov, while maintaining the party's policy of absolute independence of Kerensky and opposition to his capitalist government. Unlike the misnamed "Communist" parties of today, which use the fight against fascism or reaction as an excuse for supporting capitalist politicians, the Bolshevik party never accepted Kerensky's program in fighting reaction. They had no confidence in the reformist parties that supported Kerensky. Nonetheless, they were on the front lines of the common struggle to crush Kornilov's insurrection. This

stance sparked a big increase in popular support for the Bolsheviks.

Defense of the Revolution

When the Bolsheviks won predominant influence in the Petrograd Soviet and it appeared likely that they would win the majority in the coming All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Kerensky began to move toward a decisive confrontation with the soviets. One of his moves in late October was to order the transfer of the Petrograd garrison, which he regarded as too radical, to the front. The government sought to isolate the garrison by turning the soldiers already at the front against it.

The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries put before the Petrograd Soviet a resolution calling on the garrison soldiers to start preparing to move to the front. To cover their left flank, the reformists proposed that a special soviet committee be set up to prepare military defense plans that would inspire popular confidence—a concession to popular antagonism to the Provisional Government and its war policy.

"The Bolsheviks countered this proposal," Rabinowitch writes, "with a significantly more militant one, hastily scratched out by Trotsky, repudiating the Kerensky government as the ruination of the country and proclaiming that Russia's sole hope of salvation lay in immediate peace. The resolution embodying this proposal accused the bourgeoisie, along with Kerensky, of preparing to turn over Petrograd, 'the main fortress of the revolution,' to the Germans. Affirming that the Petrograd Soviet could in no way take responsibility for the government's military strategy and, in particular, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, it insisted that the way to assure survival was to transfer power to the soviets."

The resolution called on the garrison to come to battle readiness and proposed arming the workers in order to "facilitate the revolutionary defense of Petrograd and the safety of the people from attacks being openly prepared by the military and civil Kornilovites." It proposed the creation of a "revolutionary defense committee" (later named the Military Revolutionary Committee). As Rabinowitch notes, "These preparations were intended as much to protect the revolution from the government and the right as from the Germans."

Although the Menshevik-Social Revolutionary motion carried in the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, the Bolshevik resolution got an overwhelming endorsement from the soviet as a whole.

By presenting the plain truth in a few simple sentences geared to the basic needs and consciousness of the working masses, the Bolsheviks were able to expose and defeat Kerensky's effort to deprive the Petrograd Soviet and the Petrograd working class of the support and protection of the garrison. The Military Revolutionary Committee became a key element in the organization of the October insurrection, which removed Kerensky and installed the soviets in power. The struggle over the garrison strengthened the conviction of the workers and peasants that this move was necessary to save the revolution.

Rabinowitch gives a dramatic account of the October 10, 1917, meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee that voted to lead an insurrection against Kerensky's

Provisional Government, and to create a new workers' and peasants' government based on the soviets. He describes the arguments of "moderate" Bolsheviks, represented by Lev Kamenev and Grigory Zinoviev. They favored waiting for the Constituent Assembly, which Kerensky had promised to convene.

However, Lenin was convinced by the Kornilov insurrection and Kerensky's continued efforts to consolidate personal power that the bourgeoisie would prevent the convening of the Constituent Assembly. (Talk of "postponing" it was rife at the time.)

He pressed for an insurrection that would occur before the Congress of Soviets set for October 25—at which it was now certain that the Bolsheviks would have a majority. In a revolutionary situation, Lenin realized, time is of the

essence. Delay could demoralize the worker and peasant masses who wanted immediate and decisive action; it might enable Kerensky to strike a treacherous blow against the soviets.

The end result of the debate was that the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviets, headed by Trotsky, seized power on October 25 just as the All-Russian Congress of Soviets was convening—assuring the establishment of soviet power in an inspiring and thrilling moment in world history.

Enraged at the removal of the Provisional Government—which had lost virtually all popular support—the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries walked out of the Congress of Soviets. The result was the formation of the first all-Bolshevik government, not because the Bolsheviks wanted it that

way—they left seats vacant in the cabinet for the other socialist parties—but because the other socialist parties refused to recognize the authority of the triumphant soviets as the sole power.

Shortly thereafter the Bolsheviks formed a coalition with a revolutionary peasant formation, the Left Social Revolutionaries—a coalition that lasted until the Brest-Litovsk peace in 1918.

Rabinowitch holds that "only in the wake of the government's direct attack on the left was an armed uprising of the kind envisioned by Lenin feasible." The masses supported the Bolsheviks "because they believed the revolution and the congress to be in imminent danger."

The masses were correct in their judgment. The history of revolutions, from Germany in 1848 to Chile in 1973, illustrates that the

failure of the revolutionary masses to take full power into their hands leads to the triumph of the most brutal reaction.

What the workers, soldiers, and sailors wanted was to take command of their fate. If the transfer of power to the soviets placed the Bolsheviks at the head of government, it was because the Bolsheviks alone represented the will of the revolutionary workers and peasants for a decisive break with the old order, a point well illustrated by Professor Rabinowitch.

In spite of its limitations, this book is recommended as a truthful, factual, and therefore a rather daring and original interpretation—for an academic historian in this country—of the decisive battles of the Russian revolution.

LETTERS

Editors: I disagree with the moralistic contempt for white jazz musicians reflected in Michael Smith's informative review ["Black Music, White Racism"] appearing in the January ISR.

There were white blues, jazz, and swing artists of equal artistic stature to such Black greats as Charlie Parker and Big Mama Thornton. To name some I would refer to the 1920s and 1930s recordings of Gene Autry, Hank Snow, and Jimmie Rodgers. I would further mention Bob Wills, Bill Boyd, Tommy Duncan, and Little Roy Wiggins. These names signify a trend rather than rare exceptions.

Mezzro is quoted as saying that "jazz is a Black man's game." This is as false as saying "country music is a white man's game." These are shortsighted views. Few people today know, for example, that both

banjo and fiddle are instruments of Black origin.

There has always been a complex and creative interplay between Black and white ethnic musics (though of course within the context of a fundamentally racist society). Yet this interplay is only a national aspect of an international exchange. The Sons of the Pioneers did great things with great Mexican music. Gene Autry did a tribute to Bessie Smith as Leadbelly did a tribute to Autry's "Springtime in the Rockies." Muddy Water's early recordings show shades of oriental influence. Billy Holiday's immortal "My Man" was originally a German cabaret song. Her "Gloomy Sunday" was of Hungarian origin.

As a recent and grateful discoverer of the "Chicagoans," I would like to turn Mezzro's approach around. It was not through Harlem streets that Mezzro learned jazz. It was through jazz that he learned Harlem streets. Hank Williams once said, "If order to be a good country singer, you have got to survey a lot of farmland from across the back side of a

mule." I disagree.

Bob Schwartz
Miami Beach, Florida

Editors: I am an Afro-American prisoner confined within a Siberian-like place called Clinton Correctional Facility. A few days ago I was fortunate enough to be given the January 1977 issue of the *International Socialist Review*. I found it extraordinarily informative.

Of particular interest was the book section. The article entitled "Black Music, White Racism" was deeply moving, and I would like to applaud Mr. Michael Smith for his empathy and eloquence.

I am personally acquainted with the terrible suffering Black artists often experience in their attempts to express the things they see, feel, and think. The intertwined barbed-wire barriers of racism and capitalism sometimes force Black artists into psychologically consoling escape routes of lonely self-destructiveness; because they (we) cannot get rightful recognition, and feel futile in their attempts to bridge

or break through the barriers, they sometimes seek the consolation of "staying high."

I have wandered somewhat from the primary purpose of this letter, which is to request your help. One of the books under review in Mr. Smith's article is *Bird Lives! The High Life and Hard Times of Charlie (Yardbird) Parker* by Ross Russell. The very limited library here doesn't have a copy of the book, and I do not have the necessary funds to order it. I was wondering if you might be able to assist me in acquiring a copy. I want to understand the meaning of Charlie Parker's life, the "why" of both his beauty and suffering. The life of Charlie Parker will, I'm sure, mirror the peculiar existential predicament that many Black people, particularly artists, find themselves in. How can they (we) find meaning and fulfillment in this plastic cage called America? How can we discover and express our essences in this land of hate and dollar signs?

A prisoner
New York

...Puerto Ricans

Continued from page ISR/9

pressed sectors, can lead the American working class and its allies to power. This means systematic work in all sectors of the mass movement to recruit the most capable fighters to the party. There is no way that the working class can achieve its aims unless it brings together in a common fighting party the most resolute revolutionists of the working class and the best fighters from all national minorities—Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican. The brutality and centralized power of the capitalist state dictate that the working class and its allies have the greatest possible centralization and cohesion in their political leadership.

Puerto Rican militants, concerned first and foremost with the struggles of Puerto Ricans, may at first see no reason or advantage in belonging to a proletarian party with broader perspectives and concerns. However, revolutionary activity in the labor, Black, Chicano, women's, student, and other mass movements provides a means of enlisting allies for the Puerto Rican movement and of strengthening the interconnections between all the various expressions of the class struggle and the Puerto Rican struggle. In a party that includes revolutionists from other sectors of the working class, Puerto

Ricans will help sharpen the understanding of their allies about the needs of Puerto Ricans and strengthen the program of the working class in respect to the Puerto Rican struggle.

The SWP believes, and acts on the belief, that the working class has no interests that come ahead of or are higher than those of the Puerto Rican struggle. It believes that the working class cannot achieve its goals without the Puerto Rican people and other nationally oppressed peoples achieving theirs.

Membership in the SWP also means being politically part of an international revolutionary movement. While reactionary legislation prevents formal affiliation to the Fourth International, the SWP, since its founding, has been an integral political component of the world party of socialist revolution.

For Puerto Rican revolutionists, being part of an international movement means being armed with a world outlook and program that helps give direction to the revolutionary struggles in both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Puerto Rican Fourth Internationalists who live in the U.S. and are politically active in the Puerto Rican movement and class struggle here are part of the Socialist Workers Party. Those who live in Puerto Rico or move from the U.S. and become part of the struggle there are members of the SWP's sister organization, the Liga Internacio-

nalista de los Trabajadores (Internationalist Workers League).

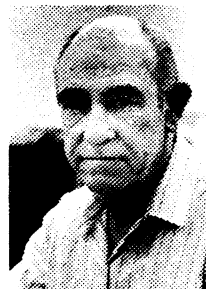
While the working-class struggles in Puerto Rico and the U.S. have their own dynamic and distinct peculiarities, they are very much interconnected because of the colonial relationship between the two countries. Collaboration in a common international movement between revolutionists in the two countries is essential to working out political perspectives and encouraging mutual assistance.

In order to establish itself more firmly in the Puerto Rican movement and win more Puerto Rican members, the SWP has to devote more attention and energies to the Puerto Rican struggle. The SWP membership around the country has to become better educated and more familiar with Puerto Rican history and the current tendencies and organizations in the Puerto Rican movement.

Our proletarian orientation and unconditional support to the struggle for Puerto Rican liberation give us optimism that we will succeed in winning Puerto Rican revolutionists. But this will only be achieved with systematic work and serious application to the task. It will be a fundamental test of our capacity as a revolutionary party.

National Picket Line

Frank Lovell



The Louisiana story

plant in Fitzgerald, Georgia.

Despite the discouraging results of many NLRB elections, UAW organizers have not yet devised ways to bring the workers together without going through this laborious government-supervised procedure.

The next UAW target is a GM steering gear plant in Athens, Alabama, with 250 workers. GM also has two small unorganized Delco-Remy plants in Louisiana and Mississippi.

At these small plants in the South white workers are threatened by management that the union will bring in Blacks to take the best jobs. They are also told that the union means strikes, layoffs, and plant closings.

The antiunion propaganda may be convincing to workers with only local experience. At the Monroe plant just before the union election, Barry Ciaschini, a twenty-eight-year-old worker making \$5.51 an hour, told reporters he did not want the union. "I used to put in twelve hours a day, seven days a week for \$2.30 an hour and no overtime," he said. For Ciaschini GM was the best company, and he was the happiest worker. "The union will take my money," he said, "but will it listen to me?"

Fortunately for Ciaschini most workers didn't share his feelings.

The new contract of UAW Local 1977 in Monroe was ratified by the membership and workers received back pay retroactive to January 10. The new wage scale, effective March 14, is a raise of more than eighty dollars a week for press operators.

This does not answer Ciaschini's question about whether the union will listen to him. But one thing is certain—a lot more workers will listen to union organizers as the word gets around that voting for the union means higher wages.

Of course, there is more to it than that. Workers in the South will not win union recognition and higher wages without some big class battles. The open-shop employers will not give in easily, and neither will their political agents at all levels of government.

But in the heat of these battles the workers will not only join the union. They will make it their own.

Continued from page 10

Gay Academic Union held last fall.

Thom Willenbecker of Boston College had the nerve to repeat the paper he presented at a Boston-area gathering. His basic thesis is that Marxism and the sexual revolution are mutually exclusive, as Marxists are preoccupied with "production" to the point of only judging procreative sex as socially acceptable in a socialist schema.

Willenbecker bases this madness on one quotation by Marx:

"The direct, natural, and necessary relation of person to person is the relation of man to woman. . . . From this relationship one can therefore judge man's whole level of development. . . ."

(From Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Volume III, pages 295-296, International Publishers, New York.)

At a gathering discussing the nature of gay sexuality, that sounds like pretty nasty stuff—all that talk about "natural relationships" (as opposed, we are led to assume, to "unnatural relationships").

Unfortunately Willenbecker forgot to mention the context in which Marx wrote. He was writing a polemic against the utopian concept of the "community of women," saying that the common ownership of women was not the solution to the private ownership of women (marriage). The problem was the concept of ownership, whether private or common.

The question of homosexuality didn't enter Marx's thoughts at all, as it didn't enter most people's thoughts at the time.

As I mentioned, we may have reached full circle in bourgeois criticism of Marx. Twenty-five years ago Marxists were accused of giving philosophical ground to all sorts of un-American and unnatural sexual practices. Now the line is that Marxists are really conservative and even reactionary in their sexual outlook.

Ken Withers, organizer, Northeastern University Gay Student Organization
Boston, Massachusetts

More on Bakke protests

Two events may be added to the California protest activities against the Bakke decision, which you reported on recently (*Militant*, March 11).

On February 16 the Student Coalition Against Racism at the University of California at San Diego sponsored a campus protest rally attended by 150 students. Speakers from three campus unions and six other campus and community groups assailed this racist judicial ruling.

The following week MEChA chapters from five area campuses mobilized 200 for a noon picket line at the federal building. The mostly Chicano picketers chanted and sang enthusiastically for two hours.

The spirit of the activists in these protests should give the Supreme Court something to think about when they "impartially" decide this case.

Mark Schneider
San Diego, California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if your name may be used or if you prefer that your initials be used instead.

It may not be a landmark achievement, but the new

United Auto Workers contract at the General Motors Guide Lamp Division plant in Monroe, Louisiana, is something that workers in Southern "right to work" states are likely to remember and talk about for several years. It is one of the breaks that will spur union organization.

General Motors says it built the Monroe plant and others in the South because of low-cost energy, tax inducements, new markets, the climate . . . everything

but the antiunion political environment and low wages.

The Monroe plant, which turned out 100,000 head lamps daily with only 641 workers last year, paid wages of about five dollars an hour. It is purely coincidental, according to GM officials, that that is two dollars an hour less than at the Guide Lamp "mother plant" in Anderson, Indiana, where the workers belong to the UAW.

Today GM pays the same wages in Monroe as Anderson. That's because the workers in Monroe voted to join the UAW.

The reason GM pays low wages in the South, say high-paid executives, is because corporate policy must conform to local standards.

The truth is that GM and all other corporations that are moving facilities from unionized industrial centers of the North to the nonunion South are seeking higher profits. These include General Electric and Westinghouse, all major tire and rubber companies, the auto corporations, and the textile and carpet manufacturers.

Few unions have made much headway in the South. Representation elections run by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) are barriers to organizing, not aids. Antiunion companies have been able to stall elections until most union-minded workers are fired or otherwise discouraged.

The UAW won the election at Monroe last December by a rather narrow 323 to 280 vote. The union had earlier suffered losses in two elections at an electric plant in Clinton, Mississippi, and one at a battery

Their Government

David Frankel



Scraping by on \$66,000

WASHINGTON—Pity the poor legislators. They are being asked to sacrifice.

Both the Senate and House of Representatives have placed a limit on earned income for their members of \$8,625 a year over the \$57,500 salary they receive. This, of course, will not affect income from family businesses or unearned income from stocks, bonds, interests, and real estate holdings. After all, there is a limit to how much sacrifice you can expect.

Is it possible to live on only \$66,000 a year? Some members of Congress have doubts.

According to the March 23 *New York Times*, Sen. Edmund Muskie (D-Maine) complained that "such a limitation might force him to sell one of his homes, send his son to a third-rate law school, or discourage his wife from purchasing clothing."

To the average worker making about one-sixth of what a member of Congress would be allowed under the new code of ethics, Muskie's dilemma may seem a little strange. But that just shows a lack of understanding about the special problems facing our lawmakers.

"The first year here was really hell," Colorado Sen. Gary Hart recalled in a recent interview with the *Washington Post*.

"You're always sending flowers for a funeral," Hart explained, "or wedding presents, or bar mitzvah gifts for the kids of somebody who worked on the campaign. It's nickels and dimes here and there, but you end up spending a couple of thousand a year on it."

As one of only five senators who reported a net worth under \$50,000 last year, Hart represents something of a hardship case. However, he was able to solve his problem by raising \$5,000 for a "constituent fund" to keep his campaign backers happy.

Other senators also seemed to handle such difficulties successfully. Hubert Humphrey, for example, has increased his net worth while serving in the Senate

from \$50,000 to \$637,000. A modest fellow, Humphrey says that "the increase in my net worth has resulted from hard work, good investments, frugality, and increased income."

Sure thing, Senator.

Even though you and I might be able to scrape by on \$66,000 a year—plus proceeds from real estate deals, stocks and bonds, and similar goodies—it's hard for people up on Capitol Hill.

If this ethics craze were to get out of hand, you could begin to get wild-eyed radicals talking about taking away the private elevators and dining halls reserved for members only. What self-respecting representative of the people would want to ride in a public elevator?

Rep. Charles Rangel of New York explained his view of things in remarks that appeared in the March 7 issue of the *Washington Post*. "There are just two kinds of people who work here," he said, "members of Congress and clerks. Some of the clerks are elevator operators. Some are secretaries. Some are chief counsel of committees. But they're all clerks."

Unfortunately for representatives of American democracy like Rangel, the working masses have not yet assimilated the proper attitude of reverence for their legislators. A recent Harris poll showed that public confidence in Congress stands at 17 percent. This is an improvement over last year's 9 percent, but hardly a rousing show of support.

It must have been particularly annoying for the august lawmakers—just as they were trying to clean up their image a bit with new ethics codes—to see the news reports linking Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater to figures in organized crime.

But something of the sort is to be expected every six months or so. As Mark Twain observed in 1897, "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly criminal class except Congress."

The American Way of Life

Real crimes against young and old

NEW YORK—Brutal crimes against the elderly by teen-age muggers have been hot material for daily papers, radio, and TV here since last fall.

Editorials, TV news specials, and prominently featured daily stories create a blood-chilling picture of the aged living as "prisoners of fear."

Politicians have joined the outcry, demanding more police and new laws to "get tough" with juveniles. Mayor Abraham Beame has made much ado of beefing up special cop details to stop crimes against the elderly.

Since various other Democrats have begun testing the wind in the race to win their party's nomination for Beame's job, each of them has given high priority to this "issue" of youthful violence.

Racism has been an important element in this whole to-do. Many of the reported mugging victims are elderly whites living in neighborhoods that have now become oppressed Black or Puerto Rican ghettos such as Crown Heights and the South Bronx.

After six months of being bombarded daily with outraged demands that special legal treatment of juveniles be junked, I expected to find nothing new when I began an article in the March 16 *New York*

Times headlined "Making the Punishment Fit Crimes Against Elderly."

But buried in the article, I discovered a stunning statistic: "According to New York City police department statistics, there was a 20-to-25 per cent reduction in crimes against the elderly from November 1976 to January 1977 compared to the three-month period a year earlier."

Rubbing my eyes and rereading the sentence, I exclaimed, "But this reduction coincides precisely with the launching of the nearly hysterical propaganda campaign!"

The statistic, of course, does not discount the very real horror of the acts committed by a handful of young people against a handful of old people. But it does throw into relief the phony nature of the current hullabaloo.

First of all, the bankers, bosses, and politicians behind this campaign obviously don't really give a damn about what happens to old people. They and their class are guilty of far more monstrous crimes against old people than a teen-age mugger could even conceive.

They are the ones who view the meager retire-

ment benefits most old people skimp by on as an extravagant "burden." They are the ones who are cutting back already inadequate medical and other social services for the elderly. They are the ones behind the phony gas shortage that left countless old people freezing in unheated apartments this past winter.

The real motive behind the propaganda about juvenile crime is to win public support for a cop crackdown on ghetto youth who face permanent unemployment and underemployment—because of the bosses' and bankers' profit system—and who are feared by the ruling rich as social dynamite.

Finally, even the small number of young people who *have* mugged helpless old people—and it is a small number—have only become capable of such brutality because of the brutality inflicted on them by this rotten, racist society.

The simple truth—always ignored by bourgeois publicists and politicians who rant about crime—is that the mugger, rapist, and murderer are themselves victims. Their antisocial acts are bred by the oppression necessary to the profits of the *real* "master criminals"—the capitalist master class.

—Lee Smith

Women in Revolt

Women welders need not apply

The following guest column is by Jo Della-Giustina.

SAN ANTONIO—Lois Austin applied for a welder's job with the H.B. Zachry Company here on June 28, 1976. She was told they weren't hiring.

But Austin's husband worked at the Zachry project where she was turned away. That evening he told her that two men had been hired as welders the same day.

Austin immediately called Bartell Zachry to demand an explanation. He conceded there might be a place for her, but that she would have to "prove herself"—prove that she wanted to work and could

weld. To do this she would have to first work in a metal fabricating shop, then maybe Zachry could place her as a welder later.

For seven months Austin worked in the shop and watched man after man move on to higher-paying welding jobs. When the project was completed February 4, Zachry laid her off. Austin reapplied, only to be told they "weren't hiring."

She filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The EEOC ruled there was no evidence of discrimination. Now it claims papers on the case are lost.

Austin plans to sue Zachry for discrimination. She charges that the firm employs no women other

than office workers and secretaries.

Austin is a member of the National Organization for Women. The San Antonio NOW chapter recently held a picket line in front of a Zachry-owned hotel to defend Austin's right to a welding job. Thirty men and women chanted, "Women unite, stand up and fight. Fight for women's rights!"

Austin would like to see this support continue. She thinks her case is important for all women.

"The price of everything these days is so high," she told me, "a lot of women find they *have* to work. I wanted a good-paying job. I hope that what I'm trying to do helps other women too."



Willie Mae Reid

By Any Means Necessary

Carter's point men

When Attorney General Griffin Bell was fighting to win command of the Justice Department, some unknown advisers taught him a useful strategy: enlist a number of Black lieutenants, they said.

Bell immediately began his search for recruits. He drafted federal Judge Wade McCree to serve as solicitor general and called up Drew Days to serve as assistant attorney general for civil rights.

Bell's strategy worked. He won command of the Justice Department. And like a good general, he personally went out to survey the field before mapping his next maneuver.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and United Nations representative Andrew Young were preparing to open another front. This would involve a complicated maneuver through the minefields of international diplomacy, where a misfired phrase could draw rapid counterfire from Carter administration enemies.

But Young had it all figured out. He told a *Washington Post* correspondent: "I told [Vance] that, if he did not mind, I would raise controversial points and talk about them. I said to Cy, 'You can

refute and modify what I say, but I'd like to be your point man.'"

So the secretary of state sent his point man on a reconnaissance mission to Africa. When he drew counterfire for remarking that Cuba may have played a stabilizing role in Angola, Carter and Vance disavowed the statement.

Bell—back from his survey of the field—was now prepared to launch his offensive. The Ford administration had left behind some ammunition—a legal brief before the Supreme Court urging strict limits on the extent of court-ordered school busing.

Mindful of his commander in chief's promise to cut spending, Bell decided to use this leftover ammunition. His fresh lieutenant, Drew Days, polished it up a bit and in mid-March fired it point-blank at the Wilmington, Delaware, cross-district busing plan.

You can't help marveling at the splendid performance of lieutenant Days and point-man Young. Both have displayed the mettle of battle-seasoned professionals. Both have proved they can carry out sensitive missions.

John Hawkins



What's more, both are in responsible positions, just as Carter promised Blacks during his election campaign.

Bell and Days took joint command of the Wilmington offensive.

Young or one of his junior point men is present at all cabinet and National Security Council meetings. This gives him direct input on foreign policy questions, as well as direct oversight of such key maneuvers as the Idi Amin affair and the military airlift to Zaïre.

So much for those who think these two are mere foot soldiers. They are strategically placed officers in the Carter machine, just like Lt. Comdr. Joseph Paul Reason.

Joseph Paul who?

Why, he's the closest Black to the president, according to *Jet* magazine. He's the man who carries "The Black Bag." He sticks close to Carter wherever he goes, because "The Black Bag" contains top secret military codes—just in case the commander in chief ever needs them in the event of a nuclear emergency.

OUT OF THIS FURNACE

Out of This Furnace by Thomas Bell. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976. 424 pages, \$3.50.

"Out of this furnace, this metal."

Thomas Bell tells the bitter story of steelworkers in Braddock, a mill town outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from the late 1800s through the CIO organizing drives of the 1930s.

The book—a historical novel—follows three generations of a Slovak family who fled the poverty and war of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Books

Djuro Kracha arrives in the United States in 1881. The crumbling of his illusions in America quickly sets in.

Kracha gets a job in the mill and works "from six to six, seven days a week, one week on day turn, one week on night." Bell describes it bluntly: "When human flesh and blood could stand no more it got up at five in the morning as usual and put on its work clothes and went into the mill; and when the whistle blew it came home."

One strength of *Out of This Furnace* is Bell's description of the oppression women suffered. Kracha's daughter Mary embodies that ordeal.

After she marries Mike Dobrejcek, Mary has to take in boarders to add thirty dollars to the monthly income. A family of four could take in perhaps six

boarders, since men on different shifts could take turns using the same bed.

Mary works from 4:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., seven days a week, cooking and washing for the boarders, as well as her own family. At age thirty-six she dies of tuberculosis.

When Taft is elected president in 1908, steel magnate Andrew Carnegie raises the workers' pay to seventeen-and-a-half cents an hour for unskilled labor and announces an accident plan.

As the 1912 election comes around, the foreman bullies the workers to vote a straight Republican ticket. Nonetheless, Mike is resolute. All the injustices he has suffered as a "Hunk" are sharp in his mind. "Is this what the good God put me on earth for, to work my life away in Carnegie's blast furnaces, to live and die in Braddock's alleys?" Mike asks himself. He casts his vote for Socialist Eugene Debs.

Soon after, Mike is killed in the blast furnaces. In Braddock it was an "exceptional month" when a man wasn't killed or maimed. But you didn't have to work there if you didn't want to, and the Carnegie Company generously allowed cripples injured in mill accidents to sit outside the plant gates on payday to beg.

Dobie, the Dobrejceks' oldest son, inherits a strong working-class consciousness. A high school dropout who can't tolerate the ridicule and miseducation he undergoes, Dobie finagles his way into a shop and becomes a skilled electrician.

When the 1919 steel strike breaks

out, sixteen-year-old Dobie sides with the workers' demands for a basic eight-hour day, collective bargaining, and one day off in seven.

As the strike gains momentum, the Pittsburgh papers label the strikers "foreigners and anarchists." Braddock's Catholic church is loyal to the company and declares that the strikers are "nothing better than cows and horses."

The 1919 strike fails, but the steelworkers' fight does not end. The book goes on to describe the successful Steelworkers Organizing Committee in 1937 through Dobie's eyes, telling what it was like when "CIO! CIO!" became "a chant, a battle cry shaking the country from coast to coast."

In those days, some 25,000 people lived in Braddock. Today there are only about 9,000. Most of the steelworkers now live outside the mill towns.

Recently I walked around Braddock's First Ward, the novel's setting. It's a forsaken town, left to ruin. Debris from past demolition crews line the area. Black smoke and poisonous fumes still pour down from the nearby steel works.

Some Braddock residents blame much of the town's woes on the newer Black residents. As Dobie described it at the end of the book, "... once it was the Irish looking down on the Hunkies and now it's the Hunkies looking down on the niggers. . . . And for no better reason."



Out of This Furnace was first published in 1941. But it soon vanished. David Demarest, of the English faculty at Carnegie-Mellon University, helped get the novel reissued and wrote the afterword for this new edition. According to Demarest there is "speculation" that the United States Steel Corporation bought up the first edition to keep it unavailable. He emphasizes that "it is only speculation"—but not hard to imagine.

The novel's reappearance is a welcome reflection of the new militancy among steelworkers and an insightful look at their history. On top of that, it makes very good reading.

—Martha Harris

Readers comment on 'Roots':

Since Omari Musa reviewed the TV production "Roots" for the February 11 issue of the *Militant*, several readers have written us to comment. Some of them wrote after reading an abridged version of Musa's review in the *People's Forum*, a newspaper published by the *People's Temple* in San Francisco. Reprinted below are excerpts from some of the letters we have received.

The *Militant's* feature coverage of the TV production "Roots" was right on the mark. It captured accurately, in my opinion, the reactions of many, many of those who saw it.

The fact that a major TV network presented such a powerful program is certainly another reflection of the deepening radicalization in this country.

The defenders of commercial television always claim that the viewing public in this country wants cop shows and game shows and similar crap. The success of "Roots" certainly proves that if people have a choice of watching something good, they'll do so.

W.L.
Los Angeles, California

Brother Alex Haley's book *Roots* is a magnificent hunt of truth and heritage. However, . . . time is long overdue for the field slave to speak for himself. Because the house slaves have been miseducated and indoctrinated to view the Black plight from a European perspective rather than an African perspective. Even in the case of *Roots* the house slave completely missed the revealing message.

Roots revealed the solution to exploitation, oppression, murder, rape, robbery, prostitution, unemployment, starvation, hunger, oil shortage, etc., etc. The solution

was revealed openly in the ABC series "Roots" in a thundering voice. Saying "Come Home, Come Home, my Daughters and Sons, and utilize your skills and knowledge to develop Africa. There isn't any future and fulfillment for Africans in white America!"

A prisoner
Tennessee

I felt so excited when I read Mr. Musa's examination of the most watched series in TV history, simply because he expressed my exact feelings in just the right words. I have written *People's Forum* thanking them for reprinting the article. I would also like to know how I can get the next issue of the *Militant*.

Gladys King
San Francisco, California

I was very glad to read your interpretation of "Roots." For me, it was difficult to reason how it would affect the many spectators across the nation. I know how easily things have been used against us though they were meant for good—so I just tried to talk to others and get their feelings.

Thank you for clarifying the issue and for analyzing the response of many who watched "Roots."

Laura Reid
San Francisco, California

I did not know about your paper before—but made it a point to secure a copy when I read the comments on "Roots" by your columnist Omari Musa.

The *People's Forum*, a local throwaway, mentioned the change in attitude toward the Black community—and the reminder to all that Blacks have been and still are fighting for freedom!

Thanks for saying it!
L. Marie Laroy
San Francisco, California

I read about your excellent publication in *People's Forum*, the newspaper published by Pastor Jim Jones and *People's Temple*.

It's wonderful to know that there are people around like you! May God bless you!

Mrs. A.M. Silver
San Francisco, California

Judging from the *Forum* article, I am very sorry I missed that issue of the *Militant*.

One sentence caught my attention particularly: "I suspect whites will be looking at Blacks a little bit differently, perhaps with a little fear and respect. . . ." Although I am Caucasian myself, I certainly hope this is one result of "Roots" and, to a certain extent, of Omari Musa's article. I have long deplored the discrimination Blacks have had to suffer, and I applaud whatever improves that situation.

J. Richardson
San Francisco, California

The impact of "Roots" should not cease but rather continue to raise the consciousness of people to the point they too will do something about it. Alex Haley and many others did something about it when it was so vividly put before the eyes and minds of millions.

The courage it takes for one to present this should make each person's motto be, "I will not let the impact of 'Roots' die." Thank you for giving others the opportunity to read this very interesting view of "Roots."

Florida Johnson
San Francisco, California



Steel Fight Back: after the election Interview with Jack Barnes

Question. What has been the response to your tour?

Answer. So far I've been to Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Houston. The biggest meeting was in Houston, where more than 150 people turned out. The other meetings drew from 80 to 125 people.

Unfortunately, I was in the Midwest during the extreme cold spell—the radio and TV were telling everyone to stay home, not to go out on the roads.

What was best was that in every city a number of steelworkers came to the meeting because they were interested in hearing what socialists had to say about the Sadlowski campaign.

This was very useful. It enabled me to have conversations with many steelworkers in different cities and different sections of the industry, to find out directly what they were thinking and their reactions to the Sadlowski campaign.

In addition, I found that among these steelworkers it wasn't socialism that was on the defensive, it was capitalism. Our presentation on what has happened in recent years in this country and in the unions fit into what had happened in their lives.

For many of them the big question was: how do you move toward socialism and how do their struggles in the union and on the job fit into the fight for socialism?

Of course, these were steelworkers who had been thinking a lot about politics.

Q. Based on your discussions and observations, what do you think was the effect of the red-baiting directed against Sadlowski?

A. I can't tell from personal experience, but I can tell what steelworkers in each of these cities told me. That is that the red-baiting was largely a fiasco.

Of course it affected some older workers, conservative workers. It helped establish—especially in the South—an atmosphere of intimidation around the election.

But the steelworkers I talked to believed that the red-baiting was a fiasco for McBride and Abel—if the ideas of Sadlowski were gotten out to workers.

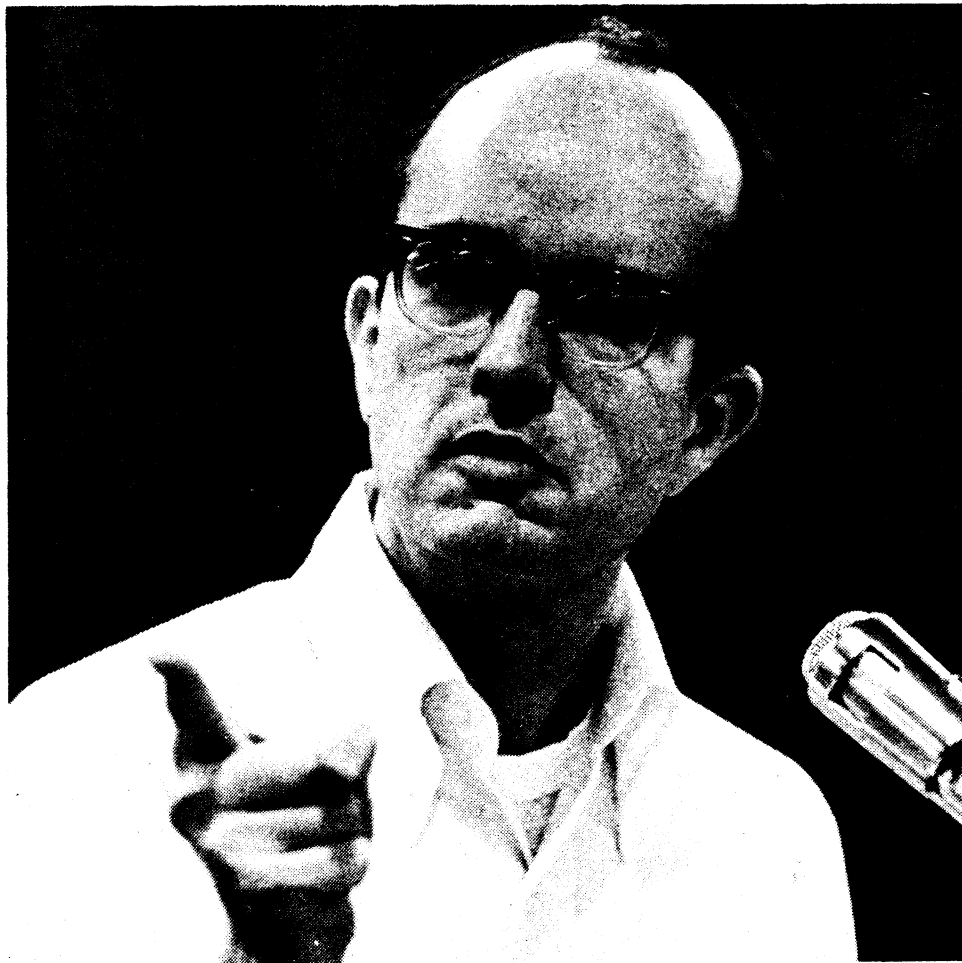
Every steelworker I met who was active in the Fight Back movement—and most of them did not yet consider themselves socialists—insisted that the reception they were getting convinced them that regardless of the red-baiting, when the ideas of Fight Back were gotten out, steelworkers in their majority would vote for Sadlowski.

In some ways this was best expressed by a can worker in Texas who had been unemployed for almost a year. I heard him interviewed by a reporter after he had cast his vote in the election. This was a worker in his forties. With his big cowboy hat and boots on, he would have been a lot of people's stereotype of a conservative white worker.

The reporter asked him, "What about these rumors that Sadlowski's a communist?"

He simply said, "Well, if Ed's a communist, I'm a communist. We've had enough of this leadership."

He didn't believe the red-baiting. But the main effect it had on him was it made him more interested in socialism. I think this was the overwhelming reaction among younger steelworkers,



Militant/Nelson Blackstock

Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers party, toured nine U.S. cities in January and February, speaking on 'Sادلowski's challenge in steel: its meaning for U.S. politics.' The Militant interviewed Barnes in New York a few days after the February 8 election in the United Steelworkers, in which administration candidate Lloyd McBride was declared the victor over Ed Sadlowski. McBride will succeed I.W. Abel as the union's president. This week we are printing the first part of the interview, in which Barnes comments on the voting results and the future of the Steelworkers Fight Back movement. The rest of the interview will appear in a future issue.

Black steelworkers, women, Chicanos.

Q. Do you think that your tour right before the election—which underlined the fact that socialists support Fight Back—gave credibility to the red-baiting and possibly hurt Sadlowski's chances in the election?

A. To the contrary! A socialist going around and speaking about Fight Back didn't add credibility to the red-baiting—just the opposite.

I'll tell you why: because everyone had already heard a thousand times that Sadlowski was a radical, a red, a socialist, a communist, or something like that. That had been spread around by the Abel-McBride machine, the news media, and the employers for months.

It was no surprise that socialists were supporting Sadlowski. The people who came to hear me wanted to hear our ideas about what the Sadlowski campaign meant and what its significance was.

The same holds true of the special four-page supplement the *Militant* put out on the steel election. Many of the workers who came to my talks had read it. Their thinking on it was very simple.

Everyone knows Sadlowski's a rabble-rouser, a red, or something like that. But there are still a lot of workers who don't know where he stands on the big issues affecting them.

They believed that things like the supplement gained votes for Sadlowski, as well as making people interested in socialist views.

Ed Sadlowski must have understood this, because he kept answering the questions about red-baiting by saying that red-baiting is the bosses' game. It's a tool to divide the workers, used by McBride to hide the real issues.

It was these issues—union democracy, the right to strike, the need for a union that stands up against the boss, and so on—that were decisive. Those who tried to avoid this straightforward answer and instead dodge the question would just fall into the hands of the red-baiters.

Q. What do you think of the election returns, which show a narrow victory for McBride?

A. Number one, McBride got a big chunk of his "victory" through ballot-box stuffing and cheating. The whole history of elections in the steelworkers union teaches us that is standard practice for the machine.

The fact that there were nearly a quarter of a million votes for the Sadlowski team that were counted points to the real victory—the beginning mobilization of thousands of steelworkers in a fight to take back their union. That was Fight Back's victory.

But I would say there is one basic reason why Sadlowski did not get more votes, why he did not get enough for a clearcut election victory.

That is simply that the Fight Back campaign was not announced early enough and was not organized in enough places to get its ideas out

systematically to all members of the union and to counter the red-baiting, outsider-baiting, and other slanders from McBride and the employers.

The places where McBride got his biggest votes were the places where the Fight Back campaign did not do systematic leafleting of the workers. That much is evident.

Even in the South and in Canada—where McBride's supposed margin of victory was amassed—Sادلowski could have gotten a much higher vote if Fight Back had been organized.

There were also a lot of myths about the pattern of voting. One was that Sadlowski would almost automatically carry basic steel, but lose all the small shops, and that the balance of these two factors would determine whether he could win. The results show this was oversimplified, to say the least.

The way steelworkers divided was not small shops versus basic steel, but according to their relative privileges, their age, and their political attitudes.

Sادلowski carried the vote in many smaller shops—which have lower wage scales, worse conditions, and worse union representation than basic steel—where the ideas of Fight Back were gotten out.

Sادلowski apparently did win a majority in basic steel—which is extremely significant as a vote of no-confidence in the Abel leadership just as it goes into the basic steel negotiations. It's a vote to repudiate the no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement in basic steel. This represents a great victory for Fight Back.

On the other hand, Sadlowski didn't win as overwhelming a majority in basic steel as some observers had expected. Some, I think, were counting on a bigger "traditional" protest vote from this section of the union.

What really happened was that Fight Back carried the vote of the younger workers, the Black workers, the low-seniority workers—those who voted.

But McBride often carried the most skilled, high-seniority, relatively privileged workers. That's the way it divided—the way one would expect when such basic class questions were being posed.

There's another phenomenon that steelworkers active in Fight Back told me about, and I think the vote bears it out. That is that many fewer Blacks, Chicanos, and younger workers in general went to the polls than Fight Back had hoped.

A big lesson of the election campaign is the degree of skepticism—I say skepticism, not cynicism—toward the union that was shown by these workers not bothering to vote.

They preferred Sadlowski, obviously. McBride and Abel had nothing whatsoever to offer them. But the union as they saw it, in their experience, had done so little for them—it had almost been an adjunct to the foreman, another enforcer of the employer's version of the contract, and of race and sex discrimination in hiring and on the job—that they simply weren't interested.

These are the hundreds of thousands of steelworkers who don't go to local meetings, don't take part in union politics, because they don't see the union as an instrument of change in their interests. A lot of these steelworkers didn't vote.

One of the big challenges to Fight Back is to overcome this skepticism toward the union that has been built up over decades by the bureaucratic, pro-company policies of the officialdom. Because these are the workers who are going to revolutionize the American labor movement.

I observed a couple of things related to this. One was in Houston. There Fight Back activists told me stories about selling Sadlowski T-shirts and sweatshirts to young workers, Chicanos, Blacks, who would buy them and wear them on the job as defiance of the boss and as a sign of solidarity with their friends who were for Fight Back—but who wouldn't join the union! Texas, of course, is an open-

shop state. That was how little the union had done for them.

The second thing, which Fight Back activists told me everywhere, was the lack of literature dealing directly with the problems of Black workers, Chicano workers, and women workers. I'm convinced this hurt the Fight Back effort.

Where the Sadlowski slate went and spoke—and where Black, Chicano, and women workers went and posed the tough questions—they laid out pretty good answers.

They stood for equal representation of minorities and women in the union leadership and staff.

They supported a whole series of specific steps against discrimination on the job and in the union.

They said the union power should be used to fight discrimination and segregation throughout society.

But the lack of literature directly addressing these needs, the failure to put this appeal to the most oppressed workers right in the forefront of the Fight Back campaign—this hurt.

Fight Back has not yet become a rank-and-file movement that mobilizes the Black workers, the women workers, the Chicano workers—and is in large part led by them. That, I think, is the biggest single weakness that must be overcome to build Fight Back in the months ahead.

Q. What was the sentiment among workers you talked with about continuing Steelworkers Fight Back as an ongoing movement?

A. Every single person I spoke to wanted to continue Fight Back. And they felt that nearly all the key Sadlowski campaign activists were also determined to continue the movement.

If the Sadlowski slate had won, they were convinced—not only by the speeches of the Sadlowski team but by their own experiences—that new people in office alone wouldn't solve a thing in the steelworkers union. Only the mobilization and organization of the ranks would do this.

In some ways the most important challenge before the Steelworkers Fight Back leadership is their willingness now to continue and organize in the confidence that they can attract not only the hundreds of thousands who voted for them but the millions more who they will reach.

What is important is to find a way to continue a national focus. Up to February 8 the national focus was the election. Now the Fight Back leaders have to find a new focus—a publication, a response to conditions in the mills, a response to the bosses' offensive that is going to keep coming down around jobs, wages, conditions, and victimization of militant steelworkers.

The direction of the movement is to reach out to workers in other industries. A Fight Back movement is needed in every union in this country.

This fight for union democracy, and the fight for workers' interests against the employers, will get a hearing as more and more conflicts arise. The conditions in this country, and the incapacity of the employers to give the kind of concessions that they gave in the past, are going to make millions and millions of American workers ready to fight back.

We're not going into a period of class peace and concessions by the capitalist class, but a period more like the 1930s. A period of attacks on the working class. You see it in the cutbacks in New York. You see it in the offensive against the public employee unions. You see it in basic industry. We're going to see it more.

These ideas of fighting back and democratizing the unions will get a big response, and a response way beyond the steelworkers union.

I think if there's initiative from those who led the Sadlowski campaign—and from those who organized and built the Fight Back movement across the country—there will be tremendous response.

(to be continued)

...behind defeat of 'common site' bill

Continued from page 9

Dunlop resigned when Ford vetoed the bill after authorizing Labor Department sponsorship of it.

There were no basic changes in the old Dunlop bill, only a few amendments insisted upon by Carter to ensure that the new legislation would not be an aid to organizing the home construction industry, which is almost completely nonunion.

President Robert Georgine of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department testified that the bill was designed to minimize work stoppages. "It was drafted by Dunlop in consultation with both union and

employer groups," reported the *AFL-CIO News*, "and Georgine told the Senate panel that he supports it."

Officials of the building-trades unions hoped the bill would stabilize labor-management relations and guarantee the survival of the craft unions, even if their existence remained anemic.

The campaign against the bill was led by the open-shop contractors and supported by all major employer associations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, Business Roundtable, and the vitriolic National Right to Work Committee.

The vote of Congress demonstrates that its members respond to the dictates of the employing class, not the blandishments of the union bureaucrats.

And what about Carter? He had promised to sign the common-site bill . . . if Congress passed it. But the administration made not the slightest effort to push the bill through Congress.

Every single Democrat from Georgia, Carter's home state, voted against the bill. So did the vast majority of Democrats from all the southern states. They were joined by Democrats from Pennsylvania, Indiana, Washington, New Mexico, California, Nevada, and Oregon—who had voted for the bill in 1975.

All told there were 88 Democrats who joined with 129 Republicans to defeat the measure 217 to 205.

What the employing class was saying was that these are new times and they feel no need to make concessions to enlist the services of the union officialdom.

The craft unions in the construction industry have fallen on especially hard times. Big changes in the methods of building—unit prefabrication, new machinery, new materials—have eliminated many former skills.

The contractors no longer rely upon unions for a steady supply of skilled workers. Most nonunion contractors have their own trained work force of all-around mechanics, workers who can be used in a variety of jobs wherever needed.

At present about 60 percent of the construction industry is unorganized. This sector is growing. The contractors are convinced they are better off without unions.

Union officials, try as they will, have been unable to convince these employers otherwise. The building-trades unions have agreed to lower wages, longer hours, new work rules, and reduced health and pension benefits.

But such desperate maneuvers by the union officialdom to "win jobs" for unemployed union members do not satisfy the contractors.

The retreats by union officials are used by the employers to discredit unions. This is a common tactic of the National Right to Work Committee. It claims nonunion workers are better paid, enjoy more steady work, and are free from union discrimination.

One claim is that unionized contractors employ an estimated 8.5 percent Blacks and other minorities, while nonunion contractors hire 11.2 percent. The fact is that nonunion contractors are no more willing to hire and train minorities than unionized contractors.

But the union officials go along with the racist hiring practices and make themselves culpable as accomplices. This discredits the unions—and not only in the eyes of Black workers.

The union officialdom's old alliance with the employers is being broken down—by the employers. And the policy of looking to friendly politicians in the Democratic and Republican parties to promote unionization and protect workers from the antilabor drive is a proven failure.

The union movement will regain its strength only when it undertakes to organize and mobilize workers, and gives up trying to organize the employers and capitalist politicians.

Labor will gain political influence only when it puts its extensive electioneering machinery to work to elect working men and women to public office—representatives of the working class who will campaign against the big-business Democratic and Republican parties.

These are the unmistakable lessons of the votes in Congress against union-supported legislation.

Because of their training and the soft life they lead, there are few union officials who will draw this conclusion. And on that account there are more kicks in store for them.

Steel notes...

FIGHT BACK ANNOUNCES NEWSPAPER: A March 21 mailing from Steelworkers Fight Back announces that "within the next few weeks" Fight Back will publish the first issue of a regular international newspaper. It will be called the *Voice of Steelworkers Fight Back*. "It is written by steelworkers and for steelworkers," the mailing says. "The initial issue will contain a detailed description of the election protest and reports on how the campaign was conducted throughout the U.S. and Canada."

SUBSCRIBE NOW! More than 300,000 copies of the first issue will be printed, according to the Fight Back mailing. To raise money to publish the paper, Fight Back is asking its supporters to immediately send in ten dollars for a year's subscription. It also urges activists to sell five (or more) additional subscriptions to co-workers. Becoming a charter subscriber to the *Voice of Steelworkers Fight Back* is an important way to show support for the ongoing movement for union democracy in steel. Make checks payable to Steelworkers Fight Back and send to 9271 South Chicago Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60617.

'IN FOR THE LONG HAUL,' SAYS SADLOWSKI: Accompanying the newspaper announcement is a letter from Ed Sadlowski thanking Fight Back supporters for their work in his campaign for president of the United Steelworkers. Sadlowski summarizes the evidence of fraud in the February 8 election and the reports on the Fight Back slate's protest of the results. "One thing's for sure," he says, "whether or not we get a re-run [of the election], we're in this for the long haul, and in the end our movement to reform this union will win."

Sadlowski continues: "We've already made a lot of progress. Jim Balanoff from our organization won by a huge margin to succeed me as District Director in Chicago-Gary. Linus Wampler won as Director in Minnesota and the Dakotas. And more than ever before, the people in this union who want to make it a democratic progressive force are pulling together. Thousands of rank and file steelworkers—many of them never involved in union affairs before—now have a stake in this fight and want to keep going. Now we're going to put out a national publication and dig in for the long haul."

Sadlowski urges steelworkers to subscribe to the new paper and notes: "Our paper will help us strengthen our organization—and it's organization we'll need to revitalize our union."



NEW ENGLAND ACTIVISTS MEET: Fight Back activists from across New England met in Meridan, Connecticut, on March 27 to plan an ongoing rank-and-file movement in District 1. Representatives came from Worcester and Boston, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; and Bridgeport and other cities in Connecticut. They discussed a statement of purpose that stresses strengthening the union in the fight against the employers by developing union democracy and unity among all sections of the union. They also decided to publish a newsletter, the *District 1 Steelworkers Voice*, that will be distributed along with the national Steelworkers Fight Back paper.

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO KNOW: Fourteen steelworkers in Gary, Indiana, have been fighting for six years for the right to inspect and copy their local union's financial records. The fourteen, members of Local 1014 at U.S. Steel, filed suit in 1971 against local President Harry Piasecki demanding that he account for \$25,000 in local funds and open the local's financial books.

They recently came a step closer to opening those books when a federal appeals court upheld a lower court ruling that Piasecki must comply with their suit. John Fritz, a spokesperson for the fourteen, called the decision a "legal milestone reaffirming rights basic to the labor movement."

The international union provided lawyers for Piasecki for five years as he fought the suit. Piasecki was the major pro-McBride candidate for District 31 director in the February election and is now trying to overturn the victory of Fight Back candidate Jim Balanoff.

Opening the records is likely to provide valuable information on how union money was used to build up Piasecki's local machine.

—Andy Rose



Shakur found guilty

By Willie Mae Reid

At 2:20 p.m. Friday, March 25, Assata Shakur (Joanne Chesimard) interrupted her Muslim sabbath to hear the verdict in the New Brunswick, New Jersey, trial.

The all-white jury of seven women and five men spent twenty-two hours over three days to decide Shakur was guilty on all eight counts: the first-degree murder of Trooper Werner Foerster on May 2, 1973; second-degree murder of Zayd Malik Shakur, one of her two car companions; four separate charges of assault and battery against Trooper James Harper; and two arms charges.

Shakur's attorney, William Kunstler, said he will appeal the conviction.

The jury had to decide between the testimony of Trooper Harper and Assata Shakur. Harper testified that Shakur fired the first shot. Under cross-examination he admitted his current version of the shoot-out was different from his testimony to a grand jury and police reports.

Shakur took the stand in her own defense. She testified that Harper shot her while her hands were raised. Three medical experts testified that her wounds supported her description of events.

At a news conference at the Middlesex County Courthouse after the verdict, Kunstler called the trial "an empty charade."

"On the first day I thought we had a chance," he said. "But the white element was determined to destroy her. . . . We have been fighting four years of adverse publicity. . . ."

After the jury brought in its verdict, Shakur stood up and denounced the jury as racist. "I am ashamed that I have even taken part in this trial," she said. "You have convicted a woman who had her hands in the air."

Presiding Judge Theodore Appleby ordered her out of the court. Moments later he had Shakur returned to sentence her to life for the murder of Foerster. Sentencing on the remaining seven charges will be scheduled later.

Kunstler then charged that one juror reportedly left the sequestered jury residence during the trial. Shakur's appeal will include this irregularity.

Shakur still faces a felony murder charge in Kings County in Brooklyn.

The Assata Shakur Defense Committee organized continual support actions at the courthouse. The committee released a news statement condemning the conviction as part of "a long history of government attacks on Black leaders."

Rich Ariza, Socialist Workers party candidate for governor of New Jersey, joined 100 Shakur supporters March 24 in a picket line. Ariza blasted the conviction as an example of "racist injustice in New Jersey" that has imprisoned other victims such as Hurricane Carter and John Artis. The socialist candidate pledged his support to efforts to reverse the verdict.

Nine years later

No answers on King assassination

By John Hawkins and David Frankel

U.S. Rep. Floyd Fithian took the floor March 22 to argue for extending the House Select Committee on Assassinations. What he had to say, he announced, was "critically important to the coming debate on renewing the life" of the committee.

Congress will decide by March 31—five days before the ninth anniversary of King's April 4, 1968, assassination—whether to continue funding the assassinations investigation.

After a flurry of rhetoric, Fithian read into the record an article on a recently released Gallup opinion poll. It's easy to see why Fithian was concerned:

- Sixty-nine percent of all those polled rejected the official version of King's assassination—84 percent of the Blacks polled and 67 percent of the whites.

- Only 18 percent believe the government version that James Earl Ray was acting alone—20 percent of the whites and 5 percent of the Blacks.

- This suspicion of the government's version of the King assassination is consistent among all ages and income classifications. And the trend toward disbelief of the government's version is growing.

No poll was needed to prove the depth of sentiment for a reinvestigation of King's assassination.

Congress established the Select Committee on Assassinations last September in response to that growing sentiment—especially deep among Blacks. Of course, the committee never intended to go too far. Malcolm X's assassination was not even included among those to be investigated.

But many in Congress apparently prefer not to play with dynamite, even with most stringent safety precautions. This goes for the Carter administration too.

On February 18 the Justice Department released a report on the FBI's investigation of the King assassination.

Not surprisingly, the Justice Department cleared the FBI of any involvement in the assassination and upheld its investigation of King's murder.

In the process of clearing the G-men, however, the report admits that the FBI carried out what a top official called a "no holds barred" war against King.

According to the report, the FBI had five informers operating in the Black movement in Memphis, where King was shot. One FBI agent was spying

on striking Black sanitation workers King had come to support.

The Memphis Police Department (MPD) also had its informers—one of them was standing in the courtyard of King's motel at the moment the assassin struck. "From the time of Dr. King's return to Memphis on April 3, 1968, until the time of his assassination, he was under physical surveillance by the MPD," the report states.

The FBI's campaign extended to Coretta King, widow of the slain civil rights leader, and to Rev. Ralph Abernathy and Rev. Andrew Young, now U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

The FBI, the report confirms, resorted to break-ins, electronic surveillance, and slander in its campaign against King.

While admonishing the bureau for its Cointelpro-type methods, the Justice Department upholds the FBI's investigation and surveillance of King:

"Attorney General Kennedy as well as several other Department officials were sincerely concerned with King's association with alleged communist members. . . ."

In the Justice Department's eyes, a citizen's political views determine her or his rights. This is spelled out in their report: "The conclusion that the investigation's continuance was unwarranted is based on the following task force finding:

"The Bureau to date has no evidence whatsoever that Dr. King was ever a communist or affiliated with the CPU-SA."

If King had been a communist, the report implies, the "no holds barred" war against him would have been justified.

Meanwhile, little more than a month after the Justice Department issued its report clearing the FBI, the March 23 Louisville *Courier-Journal* reported the disclosure by an ex-Louisville policeman of a conspiracy to assassinate King.

The former policeman, Clifton Baird, described the plot in a letter to U.S. Rep. M. Gene Snyder.

Baird stated that he was offered \$500,000 to murder King. He had tape-recorded the conversation and sent it to Snyder also. Baird identified at least three FBI agents and a number of high-ranking Louisville police officers as conspirators in the assassination plot.

This new information reopens the questions the Justice Department sought to close. In and of itself it is

sufficient proof of the need for an ongoing investigation.

The House committee staff itself, in the short time it has had to operate so far, has listed some 600 "unresolved questions" in the murder of King. The Justice Department report and the Baird letter and conversation raise even more.

Some of the questions that remain unanswered are:

- Where and how did James Earl Ray obtain the money he lived on between his escape from prison in April 1967 and his arrest in London in June 1968?

Ray is known to have visited Acapulco, Mexico; Birmingham, Alabama; Los Angeles; Montréal; Chicago; New Orleans; Memphis; and Atlanta during this period.

After the assassination he flew from Toronto to London, to Lisbon, and back to London. He was on his way to Brussels when he was captured.

Ray also bought a new car, expensive camera equipment, and other articles. But the FBI has only been able to account for \$664.34 Ray earned as a dishwasher shortly after his escape from prison. And it has not been able to link him with any robberies or burglaries committed in this period.

- Why didn't Tennessee authorities insist on a full interrogation of Ray and a full statement from him in return for the plea-bargaining whereby he received a ninety-nine-year sentence rather than the death penalty?

- Did the FBI know of the plot to assassinate King before it took place?

Given the thorough and complete surveillance of King by the FBI, it is unlikely that they did not follow all rumors and leads on people or groups out to get him. The FBI knew every move he made. Such information could easily have been passed on to potential assassins. The Baird letter and conversation strengthen this suspicion.

- Did the Memphis Police Department, undoubtedly working closely with the FBI, have knowledge of the assassination before it took place? What was their agent doing in the courtyard below King's apartment balcony?

These and many other questions remain unanswered. They are not closed by the Justice Department report. The only way the American people will ever be able to find out if the FBI's "no holds barred" assault on King included murder is by opening the secret files for public scrutiny.



Gandhi's defeat & the fight for democracy

By Peter Seidman

The message delivered by India's toiling masses in the March 16-20 elections should be an inspiring one for socialists all over the world.

After twenty-one months of emergency rule featuring heavy attacks on their unions, an attack on basic human rights through the forced sterilization of millions, and abrogation of their democratic rights, the Indian workers and peasants struck back. They ousted Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Congress party, which has ruled India since it won independence in 1947.

Gandhi justified her personal dictatorship by claiming that curbs on democratic rights were necessary to safeguard and foster vital "progressive measures" from "a deep and widespread conspiracy."

Many thought that Gandhi's demagogic appeals would confuse and demobilize opposition among the "backward" masses. But as protests deepened, Gandhi decided she could best prolong her rule by pulling a quick election—virtually a plebiscite—that would serve as a mandate. Recent good harvests, as well as the muzzling of tens of thousands of dissidents whom she had imprisoned, fueled her hopes.

But the election was converted by the masses into something more real than Gandhi had counted on. As the April 4 issue of *Time* magazine reported:

"Since Mrs. Gandhi imposed authoritarian rule so effortlessly in June 1975, many friends of India had sadly concluded that the nation's rural masses were preoccupied with matters of food and livelihood and cared little about such transplanted blessings of democratic society as freedom of speech, assembly and the press, and due process under the law. . . . the Indian masses demonstrated eloquently that this was not so."

What are the lessons of this remarkable demonstration of the concern of the Indian masses for democratic rights?

Gandhi's imposition of emergency rule followed the same pattern as that of other capitalist governments such as Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and In-



Indians in Bihar celebrating the defeat of Gandhi

donesia. What she aimed at was driving down the standard of living of the workers and peasants. Such attacks occur more and more frequently in this epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

Hence for the masses, the fight for democracy is more than a struggle for formal equality before the law. It is a fight for a decent standard of living and freedom to organize to obtain it.

In the semicolonial and colonial countries, just as in the advanced capitalist sectors, the fight for democracy goes hand in hand with the fight against tying the unions to the state, against government attacks on labor militants, and against national oppression.

As the Indian Trotskyists of the Communist League pointed out in their election manifesto, none of the capitalist parties in India offer a real alternative to the long-range pattern of increasing attacks on democratic rights: "Anti-working-class measures will increase rather than decrease under any bourgeois party."

The Indian Trotskyists explained that despite claims by the victorious Janata party "to fight for democracy

against the dictatorship of the Congress," genuine democracy means that the workers, who are the majority, must make all the decisions "in management, production, and profit in their factories, mills, mines, and farms. This is not possible unless the exploitative capitalist system is eradicated."

Through their massive vote of protest, the Indian workers and peasants have placed heavy pressure on the new capitalist regime. They are demanding freedom for the thousands of political prisoners. They are insisting on a halt to the forced sterilization campaigns. They have already won concessions on these issues as well as formal termination of the state of emergency regulations.

The period ahead constitutes a valuable interlude during which the masses can make great gains in fighting for their rights and building a revolutionary party.

Of course, as in similar interludes like those in Argentina and Portugal, the capitalist rulers will do everything possible to regain the offensive. This is dictated by their anxiety to maintain investments and profits. And in this they will have the backing of Washing-

ton, which has been hypocritically hailing India's resumption of the title, "the world's largest democracy."

This means that socialists, who stand for replacing the capitalist system with the superior system of socialism, can win over increasing numbers by championing the Indian masses' struggle for democratic rights against the government and for freedom from imperialist domination.

But for this, absolute clarity is needed. One obstacle to winning the masses to revolutionary socialism, for example, is the shameful example set by the Communist party of India, which supported the state of emergency and backed Gandhi's Congress party during the election. The Communist party of India (Marxist)—the other major wing of Indian Stalinism—supported the capitalist opposition parties.

Such betrayals in the name of socialism make it all the more imperative for revolutionary-minded militants to give high priority to the struggle for democratic rights. In countries breaking out of a totalitarian straitjacket it can become the key issue for a time, as is clearly the case in India.

...S. Africa

Continued from back page

vania. Others had come from southern New Jersey and Delaware.

The demonstration was endorsed by the Philadelphia chapters of Operation PUSH, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, National Organization for Women, and Puerto Rican Socialist party.

Other endorsers included Black Independent Political party, African Peoples Revolutionary party, Black Political Cadre for Social Change, State Rep. David Richardson, Philadelphia party leader Charles Bowser, and Socialist Workers party.

Motalepula June Chabaku, a resident of Soweto who is studying in the United States, told the rally, "You are very much involved. You are fighting for us and we are fighting for you. Drive the U.S. out of my country so we can have our rights. . . . It is the might of all of you that will win the battle."

Rashida Abdul-Ahad, March 26 coalition leader, told the rally, "Today is just the beginning. We have to build a movement that can force the government out. Every demonstration has to be bigger and stronger to make that a reality."

Tony Austin, national coordinator of NSCAR, also spoke. "Be wary of the maneuvers of President Carter and Andrew Young," he said. "They're testing the waters in Zaïre. So while we demand U.S. out of southern Africa, we must also demand that the U.S. keep out of Zaïre."

At the rally's conclusion the coalition announced a meeting to plan future activities.

New York

By Omari Musa

NEW YORK—Two hundred people picketed South African Airways demanding, "Majority rule in southern Africa now! End U.S. complicity with apartheid." The March 26 Coalition Against Apartheid sponsored the picket and rally.

Leon Harris, president of the Village-Chelsea branch of the NAACP, blasted the role of U.S. corporations in southern Africa and demanded they "get out of South Africa."

The rally applauded when Khotso Seatlholo—a leader of last June's Soweto rebellion—was introduced. Seatlholo told the rally, "I'm happy to see people in the U.S. moving against the racist South African regime."

He was applauded again when he pointed out how the U.S. media makes the victim the criminal. "We need new dictionaries," Seatlholo said. "The U.S. media defines Africans defending themselves as violence, and peace when Africans are shot down by the racists."

Melvin Chappell of the New York Student Coalition Against Racism called attention to U.S. aid to Zaïre. "What the U.S. government is doing is preparing for further intervention in Africa. We say to Carter and Andrew Young, 'U.S. Out of Africa.'"

Other speakers included David Sibeko, Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania; Forbes Karimakwenda, New York chairperson of the African National Council of Zimbabwe; Robert Earl Jones, actor and member of the Village-Chelsea NAACP;

Elombe Brath, cochairperson of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition; and Robert Des Verney, Socialist Workers candidate for New York City comptroller.

South-wide NSCAR meet

By John Hawkins

In a telephone interview with the *Militant*, NSCAR national coordinator Tony Austin announced plans for a southern steering committee meeting of NSCAR.

"The major topic of discussion will be what to do next in the fight against U.S. complicity with the racist southern African regimes. The successful March 26 demonstrations and the tours for Khotso Seatlholo and Tsietshi Mashini have firmly laid the basis for ongoing work around southern Africa.

"We'll also be discussing our campaign in defense of busing and school desegregation, our antideportation work, our work in opposition to the death penalty, and what students can do to reverse the Bakke decision, which threatens minority admissions programs on the campuses."

The steering committee meeting is scheduled to begin at noon Sunday, April 10, in Room 460-461 of the Georgia State University Student Activities Building. For more information write NSCAR, 612 Blue Hill Avenue, Dorchester, Massachusetts 02121. Telephone: (617) 288-6200.

Julius Hobson, rights leader, dies in D.C.

By Omari Musa

Julius Hobson died March 23 after a long struggle with bone cancer and leukemia.

Hobson was a product of the civil rights movement. He served on the executive board of the Washington NAACP during the late 1950s and as president of the local Congress of Racial Equality chapter in the early 1960s. He was so feisty the CORE national leadership expelled him in 1964.

He directed his fire at the Big Three: discrimination in housing, employment, and education—the central arenas in the fight for Black rights.

He sued the Washington public schools. *Hobson v. Hansen*, won in 1967, abolished the tracking system used to keep Black students at the lowest educational level. The decision by Judge James Skelly Wright was one of the landmark school desegregation rulings.

Hobson led pickets and boycotts of downtown merchants who refused to hire Blacks. The demonstrations won

job opportunities for Blacks in many stores and businesses.

He participated in the anti-Vietnam War movement and was one of the movement's more prominent leaders in D.C.

Hobson was elected to the school board in 1968 in the first local elections held in Washington during the twentieth century. At the time of his death he was on the city council.

A leader of the Statehood party, Hobson saw statehood as key to bringing equal representation to the District. In 1972 he was a vice-presidential candidate, Benjamin Spock's running mate on the People's party slate.

Hobson was a firm advocate of democratic rights. In 1971, for example, he defended the right of James Harris, Socialist Workers candidate for nonvoting delegate to the U.S. Congress, to be on the ballot.

Hobson spent more than twenty years fighting racism and injustices in D.C. and will be remembered for the fighter he was.

Calendar

BOSTON: FENWAY-SOUTHEND RELIGION IN THE U.S.—ORGANIZED ALIENATION? Speakers: Lee Artz, SWP; Ken Withers, gay activist, Protestant Community Social Ethics Group. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4620.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
THE FBI AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. 2 Central Square. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Cambridge Socialist Forum. For more information call (617) 547-4395.

CINCINNATI
THE SELLING OF MARILYN MONROE: THE DESTRUCTION OF A WOMAN BY CAPITALISM. Speaker: Melissa Singler, SWP. Wed., April 6, 8 p.m. University of Cincinnati, Tangeman University Center, Room 402 (Art Gallery). Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (513) 631-8372.

CLEVELAND
TWO CLASSES ON THE CHINESE REVOLUTION. Speaker: Fred Feldman, SWP. Sat., April 2, 2300 Payne Ave. Donation: 75¢ per class. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (216) 861-4166.

INDIANAPOLIS
ROOTS OF PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE: DEIRYASSEIN 1948 TO LEBANON 1977. Speakers: Prof. Raja-e Busaillah; Rima Najjar; Dave Ellis, SWP. Also a slide show, *Palestine is the Issue*. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. IUPUI Campus, 925 W. Michigan, Lecture Hall 104. Ausp: Militant Forum.

NEW YORK: THE BRONX
CLASSES ON THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM. Wednesdays, 8 p.m. 2271 Morris Ave. (near 183rd St.) Ausp: SWP. For more information call (212) 365-6652.

NEW YORK: CHELSEA
WHAT'S BEHIND CARTER'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS. Speakers: Dan Styron, SWP; Robert DesVerney, SWP candidate for comptroller of New York City. Fri., April 8, 7:30 p.m. 200½ W. 24th St. (near 7th Ave.). Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 989-2731.

NEW YORK: QUEENS
SOCIALIST MAYORAL CAMPAIGN RALLY. Speakers: Catarino Garza, SWP candidate for New York City mayor; Jane Roland, SWP candidate for city council president; others. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. (Reception at 7 p.m.) 90-43 149th St. (just off Jamaica Ave.). Donation: \$1. Ausp: Queens Socialist Workers 1977 Campaign Committee. For more information call (212) 658-7718.

PHILADELPHIA: GERMANTOWN
THE ROOTS OF BLACK WOMEN'S OPPRESSION. A panel discussion. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. 5950 Germantown Ave. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (215) 844-2874.

PITTSBURGH
J.P. STEVENS BOYCOTT: LABOR'S DRIVE TO ORGANIZE THE SOUTH. Speakers: Bill Patterson, chairperson, J.P. Stevens Boycott Committee, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers; Rachael Maines, Center for American Needlecraft. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. 5504 Penn Ave. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (412) 441-1419.

ST. LOUIS
SOCIALIST WORKERS CAMPAIGN RALLY. Speakers: Helen Savio, SWP candidate for mayor; Mary Pritchard, SWP candidate for comptroller; Willie Mae Reid, 1976 SWP candidate for vice-president. Sat., April 2, 7:30 p.m. 6223 Delmar. Donation: \$1. Ausp: St. Louis Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (314) 725-1571.

ST. PAUL
BLACK LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM. Speaker: Greg Peterson, member of SWP and Minnesota Committee on Southern Africa. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. 176 Western Ave. North. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 222-8929.

SALT LAKE CITY
STEELWORKERS FIGHT BACK: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SADLOWSKI CAMPAIGN. Speakers: Chris Cordova, steward, USWA Local 481, Kennecott Copper, and Fight Back leader in Utah; Wayne Holley, member USWA Local 2701; Stuart Schwab, former member, USWA Local 481, member SWP. Sat., April 2, 7:30 p.m. YWCA, 322 E. 3rd St. South. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (801) 521-6624.

SEATTLE
PROSPECTS FOR SOCIALISM IN AMERICA. Speaker: Nat Weinstein, SWP National Committee. Sat., April 2, 8 p.m. Ethnic Cultural Center, 3931 Brooklyn NE, Chicano Room. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign and YSA. For more information call (206) 524-6670, 522-7800, or 329-7404.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: ADAMS-MORGAN
HALT LEGAL LYNCHING: SPEAK-OUT AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY. Speakers: Jim Giles, imprisoned two years on a framed-up rape conviction; representative of SWP. Fri., April 8, 8 p.m. All Souls Church, 16th and Harvard St. NW. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum and Community for Creative Nonviolence. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

National N.O.W. Conference April 22-24, 1977

RALLY for the ERA

With strong voices and banners held high, N.O.W. marches from the Cadillac Hotel to Kennedy Square to greet the Second Decade with a rally for the Equal Rights Amendment. Join us for this public statement and celebration of our strength and unity! Bring state and chapter banners, signs and posters.

Friday, April 22 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Start in front of Cadillac Hotel

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As N.O.W. enters its second decade, our strength will depend both on learning new skills, and developing those skills we already have. Toward that end, the 1977 National Conference has planned more than 100 workshops, with sections for both "beginners" and more experienced activists. Here's just a sample:

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- Battered Women
- Women in Poverty
- Women and the Media
- Displaced Homemakers
- Lesbian Rights

The Older Woman

The Homemaker and Feminism
Women and the Arts

The Nuts and Bolts of Organizing:

- How to Attract New Members
- How to Run a Meeting

The Second Decade:

- Forming a Concrete Agenda for N.O.W.

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State College: YSA, c/o Lynda Joyce, 169 W. Prospect, State College, Pa. 16801. Tel: (814) 234-2240.

RHODE ISLAND: Kingston: YSA, c/o Box 400, Kingston, R.I. 02881.

TENNESSEE: Knoxville: YSA, P.O. Box 8344 Univ. Station, Knoxville, Tenn. 37916. Tel: (615) 525-0820.

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STOP THE DEPORTATIONS

Roundup in San Diego

By Mark Schneider

SAN DIEGO—A massive dragnet organized by the U.S. Border Patrol, San Diego Police Department, and California Highway Patrol deported 1,906 "illegal aliens" to Mexico in thirty-six hours here March 19-20.

Cops set up at least five "check-points" around the county and stopped all cars with Chicano passengers, demanding to see identification. For thirty-six hours San Diego County's Chicano residents were living under a virtual state of siege.

Herman Baca, leader of the National City Ad Hoc Committee on Chicano Rights, blasted the operation as "a serious threat to the 250,000 Chicanos in San Diego County."

"This comes right on the heels of the Immigration and Naturalization Service's request for another \$86 million," Baca explained. "They know fully well that if they build up the statistics they can present it as a big crisis."

A massive campaign by politicians and the press is under way here against immigrants from Mexico who

have no work or residence permits, the so-called illegal aliens.

On March 7, a county agency released a 206-page report designed to create an "alien" scare. It was covered in the *San Diego Union* under the headline, "County's alien flow heaviest in nation—59,705 employed here."

The following week the *Union's* opinion poll column blared, "Illegal alien hiring opposed by majority."

And local papers have been carrying daily articles on border crime, blaming Mexicans for a rising crime rate.

Attorney General Griffin Bell joined in the campaign when he spoke before a lawyers' group here in mid-March. He called for increasing the Border Patrol and hailed new "imposter proof" ID cards for "aliens" who do have residence permits.

This racist propaganda has had an impact, says Herman Baca. "We need to educate our own community and society as a whole."

"A lot of people are confused," Baca said. "What's needed is a real united-front educational campaign."

Manuel rips 'la migra'

By Harry Ring

LOS ANGELES—"Two thousand deported from San Diego in thirty-six hours. Los Angeles? San Antonio? Houston? Tucson? In which city will *la migra* strike next?"

With these words, Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, assailed the mounting attack on immigrant Mexicans who have no residence or work permits, the so-called illegal aliens.

Pointing to the huge dragnet operation in San Diego, Manuel stressed that it was the logical result of the propaganda campaign against Mexicans.

"Every kind of paper has joined in, from the most reactionary to the so-called liberal ones, and it has been spreading to every part of the country."

"From the *Los Angeles Times* to the *New York Times* we read the same lying stories about immigrants without visas. 'They're stealing our jobs and robbing our homes,' they tell us. 'They're padding our welfare rolls and

infecting our daughters with venereal disease.'

"This racist poison is being promoted by the government to whip up a hysteria," Manuel charged. "Unable to solve the problem of unemployment, they want to blame Mexicans for the problem."

"But they want to do more than that," the socialist nominee warned.

"Secretary of Labor F. Ray Marshall is proposing that all workers be required to have computerized ID cards to get a job," Manuel said. "This will provide the government and employers a ready-made blacklisting apparatus and open the door to all kinds of police-state tactics."

"We must all stand in solidarity with the undocumented workers," Manuel said. "It is not only a matter of justice for them, it is a matter of self-defense for us."

Manuel concluded his statement by calling on the labor movement and Black and Chicano organizations to join in demanding full human and civil rights for undocumented workers.

U.S. out of Africa Hands off Zaire

Protests against U.S. complicity with the racist regimes in southern Africa occurred in many cities March 26.

The following are reports from Boston, Philadelphia, and New York.

Next week's *Militant* will report on actions in other cities.

Boston

By Lee Artz

BOSTON—"No U.S. aid to apartheid!" The chant echoed loudly as 300 demonstrators marched through the narrow streets of downtown Boston March 26.

The enthusiastic march and rally were organized by the March 26 Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa.

The march proceeded without incident until it reached the rally site at the federal building. There thirty racists, led by Dan Yotts, were waiting to disrupt it. According to police, who admit knowing of the planned disruption in advance, the thugs were members of the so-called South Boston Marshals.

"Niggers go back to Africa! Leave South Africa alone!" shouted the racists.

The marchers chanted back, "No to racism from Boston to South Africa!"

The leader of the group, Yotts, flew into a frenzy. He and others slapped and punched demonstrators, including Robb Wright, march defense captain. The police simply watched. One cop was spotted winking at the attackers.

Wright organized the marchers into a solid wall. While avoiding a physical confrontation, the marchers held their ground. Then coalition leaders moved the rally to the Boston Common.

At the rally six speakers voiced the crowd's support for Black majority rule in southern Africa.

Skip Knight, a Harvard student and March 26 coalition leader, chaired the rally.

Tsietsi Mashinini—first president of the Soweto Students Representative Council and leader of the June 16 rebellion that rocked South Africa—was the featured speaker. Mashinini repeated the theme of

all his speeches in the United States: "Make this the beginning of a movement to get your country out of my country."

Hattie McCutcheon, March 26 coalition spokesperson, said, "Carter hypocritically talks about human rights in the Soviet Union while 18 million sisters and brothers in South Africa are gunned down when they resist their oppression."

"Remember what this government did in Vietnam. They'll do it in Africa too, unless we build a movement to stop them."

Maceo Dixon, a leader of the Socialist Workers party, explained: "Zaire and Uganda are being used to whip up racist hysteria for U.S. intervention in Africa. We must say no. We must say Black majority rule now. We must say U.S. hands off Zaire. U.S. out of South Africa."

Prof. Feiko Cudjoe, assistant chairperson of the Harvard University African studies department, drew applause when he said, "We have won a victory here today. We are holding our rally just like we said we would."

Malik Shafiq of the National Student Coalition Against Racism and MIT political science Prof. Wellard Johnson also spoke.

Philadelphia

By Jon Hillson

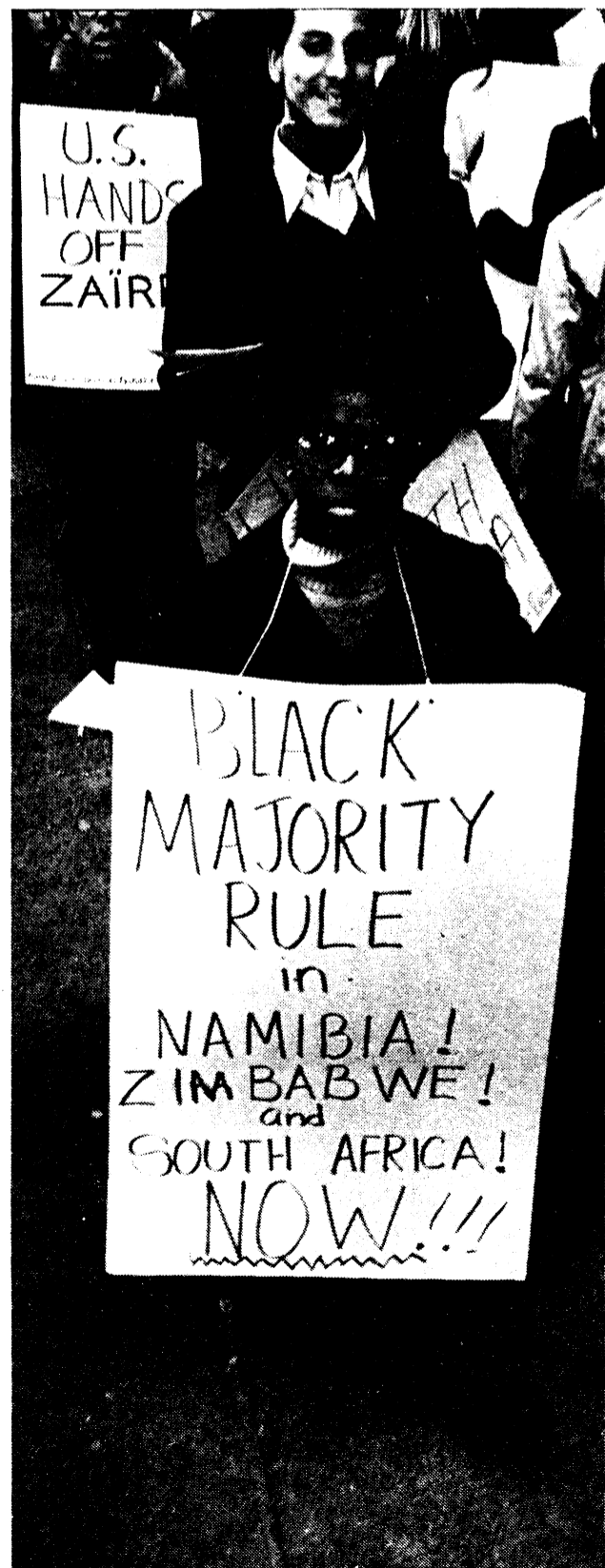
PHILADELPHIA—Nearly 400 demonstrators took to the streets here March 26 to protest U.S. involvement in southern Africa.

The action's size was especially impressive in light of the Philadelphia transit workers' strike.

The protest, called by area chapters of the Student Coalition Against Racism and the March 26 Coalition Against Apartheid, wound its way from the north Philadelphia Black community to a downtown rally site at city hall. The majority of the marchers were Black.

Some of the protesters had journeyed from Lancaster, Bethlehem, and State College, Pennsylv-

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Militant/Barry Chann