

# THE MILITANT

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

## MY STORY

by Hector Marroquin

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would be my  
death sentence'

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## How can the Palestinians win their rights?

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## Mine strike

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## THE MILITANT

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**BOY SCOUTS AND IRAN:** The Boy Scouts have been offered a plush, 2,500 acre site in Iran for their 1979 World Jamboree. A letter urging the scouts to turn it down appeared in the January 17 *New York Times*.

"Could we ask the Boy Scouts to turn down such a great offer on such a flimsy basis as a moral revulsion to one of the most oppressive regimes in the world? Could we ask the Boy Scouts to reject the best that money can buy just because Iran has one of the highest rates of executions in the world, no valid system of civilian courts and a history of torture which is beyond belief? . . ."

The letter was from Anthony Ziemba, the 1974 National Boy Scout of the Year.

**TRENTON SEVEN SENTENCED:** Seven workers at the Chrysler Trenton Engine Plant in Detroit have been sentenced to a week each in jail. The charges stemmed from plant walkouts last summer as the inside temperature hit 130 degrees. Chrysler singled out several union stewards for disciplinary action. In response, the entire plant walked out and stayed out for a week.

Chrysler found a judge willing to grant an injunction against picketing. The seven were arbitrarily charged with violating the court order and fired.

Both the UAW local and international union refused to aid in the defense.

The seven are free on bail pending appeal.

**FARM STRIKERS DEMAND BERGLAND RESIGN:** Leaders of the American Agriculture Movement, which began a nationwide farm strike December 14, have called for the resignation of Agriculture Secretary Robert Bergland.

The AAM was reacting to a January 9 speech by Bergland. The secretary of agriculture rejected the farmers' demand that the government guarantee them a price for their crops that would assure them a decent living. He said it would mean "a system of bureaucracy that is too much like the system in the Soviet Union, which is rigid and unresponsive."

"When you get into government guaranteeing," Bergland argued, "you're looking at disciplines that no one is prepared to accept."

**GRAND JURY VICTIMS STILL IN JAIL:** Three Latinos—José López, Roberto Caldero, and Ricardo Romero—remain in jail for their refusal to cooperate with a Chicago federal grand jury investigation into the Puerto Rican independence movement. The three were turned down January 6 on their appeal for release.

A federal judge ordered the prisoners held until the grand jury term runs out at the end of January. Their attorneys argued that further imprisonment was not going to get them to cooperate.

A fourth grand jury victim, Pedro Archuleta, was released, but he will be transferred to a New York City prison. He has refused to testify before a grand jury there.

**HOUSTON RALLY FOR GAY RIGHTS:** One thousand people rallied at Houston's city hall January 9 in response to the appearance of antigay bigot Anita Bryant at a meeting of the Farm Bureau. The action was called on four days notice by the Gay Political Caucus and several individuals.

**LIFE IS HARD, AND DANGEROUS, TOO:** Businessmen are unhappy with a proposal from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to reduce exposure to cancer-causing chemicals on the job to the "lowest feasible level."

"Why should we have a no-risk policy in the work place?" demanded Paul Oreffice, president of Dow Chemical January 13. "We take a risk every day we get out of bed."

**MUSLIM LEADER RESIGNS:** Abdul Haleem Farrakhan, a leading spokesperson for the World Committee of Islam in the West (formerly the Nation of Islam, or Black Muslims), announced his resignation in December. According to the Baltimore *Afro-American*, Farrakhan said he felt the dropping of Black separatist beliefs had led to a weakening of the organization.

Farrakhan declared he did not intend to start a new organization.

**BALLOT REQUIREMENTS UNCONSTITUTIONAL:** The U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld a lower court ruling making an Illinois election law unconstitutional. The law requires independent or new party candidates to gather signatures of 5 percent of the number of voters in the last election to get on the Chicago ballot. That

meant nearly 36,000 in the last Chicago mayoral race. Statewide offices required only 25,000.

The decision stemmed from a suit filed by the Socialist Workers Party in 1977.

Attorneys for the state election board have declared their intention to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**409 ON DEATH ROW:** A year after Utah executed Gary Gilmore, 409 men and women await the death penalty around the country. Although no one has been executed since Gilmore, "it is entirely likely that there will be some executions in 1978," warned Henry Schwarzschild, director of the ACLU capital punishment project.

Two Black men, Johnny Harris and Donald Thigpen, are scheduled to die in Alabama in March.

**ZIMBABWEANS FACE DEPORTATION:** Two Zimbabwean students expelled by Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh have been told they will be deported February 5 if they are not enrolled in classes.

The two were part of a group of eight who refused to take part in the school's "Zimbabwe Project," the goal of which was to train administrators for a future puppet Black regime in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia).

The other six Zimbabweans announced January 17 they had been accepted at other schools. They are no longer in danger of deportation.

**BLACKS HIT ROBESON PORTRAYAL:** A group of fifty-six Black artists, scholars, and politicians has issued a "Statement of Conscience" condemning the portrayal of Paul Robeson in the play bearing his name, which is scheduled to open on Broadway. Robeson's career as an actor and singer was severely injured by the anticommunist witch-hunt of the 1950s.

"... It is unthinkable to portray *this* man as a naïve if noble giant, fighter for palliative reforms which have since come to pass, manipulated by individuals and forces beyond his powers to ultimately become [a] tragic if heroic victim, . . ." the statement, which appeared in the January 11 issue of *Variety*, declared.

The "Statement of Conscience" refers to the play as a "rewriting of history."

Signers included Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, novelist James Baldwin, choreographer Alvin Ailey, author Maya Angelou, and Sister Koko Farrow of the United Church of Christ.

—Arnold Weissberg

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# YSA CONVENTION

## Young Socialist Alliance plans drive to defend Marroquin, reverse 'Bakke'



Delegates from San Antonio YSA chapter listen to convention deliberations

Militant/Anne Teesdale

### By John Hawkins

DETROIT—The seventeenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance, held here over the New Year's weekend, opened and closed on a note of determination to meet head on the problems and challenges confronting American youth.

Through five days of reports, discussions, workshops, classes, and rallies, the 140 delegates from YSA chapters in forty-four cities assessed the organization's work over 1977 and charted its activities for 1978.

The convention attracted more than 540 members and supporters of the YSA from thirty-one states. Delegates and observers came from 15 high schools and 100 colleges and universities, reflecting the extent of the YSA's activity on the country's campuses.

A highlight of the convention was its thoroughgoing internationalism, reflected in the large number of guests from abroad who brought greetings to the convention.

A total of forty-seven international guests from fourteen countries attended the convention—from as nearby as Canada and Puerto Rico and as far away as Australia and New Zealand.

In addition, John Linder, editor of the *Young Socialist*, presented a special report to the convention on "The World Political Situation Today." Coverage of this aspect of the convention will appear next week.

### Defend Héctor Marroquín!

Heading the list of political campaigns launched at the convention is the fight to win political asylum for Héctor Marroquín, a member of the YSA and Socialist Workers Party. This young Teamsters union activist and former Mexican student leader is fighting Washington's attempts to deport him back to Mexico, where he faces a series of political frame-up charges. (See coverage elsewhere in this issue.)

Although returning to Mexico would almost certainly result in Marroquín's imprisonment and torture—and likely his death—the U.S. government is determined to deport him.

But the convention showed that Marroquín's supporters—especially in the YSA and SWP—are equally determined to prevent his deportation.

The first point on the convention agenda was a special presentation on the Marroquín defense by Linda Jenness, a member of the SWP Political Committee and the party's candidate for president in 1972.

Marroquín spoke next and was met by a standing ovation. "You have contributed to saving the life of

a comrade struggling against deportation, struggling to obtain the elementary right of political asylum."

Delegates elected Marroquín honorary chairperson of the convention, and later he was elected to the new YSA National Committee.

Defending Marroquín was also the central topic at several convention workshops.

### Overtake 'Bakke'

The convention also placed a top priority on the fight to overturn the *Bakke* decision. Delegates voted to throw the YSA's energies into building the April 15 March on Washington to defend affirmative action. That protest was called last November by the National Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision, (NCOBD), and has been enthusiastically endorsed by the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR).

In his report, "The U.S. Capitalist Offensive and the Tasks of the YSA," YSA National Secretary Chuck Petrin placed this fight to win equal rights for women and oppressed minorities against the backdrop of the deepening crisis of American capitalism.

"Carter wanted to restore confidence in the idea that this government is everybody's government—mine, yours, no matter what your occupation is or who your friends are," Petrin said.

But a recent Harris poll shows "that idea isn't catching on," Petrin said. "The government is considered to be as much an alien, uncaring government of the rich, for the rich, under the Carter administration as it was under Nixon or Ford."

The biggest problem Carter faces in winning the confidence of the American people is a stagnant world economy, Petrin continued. The White House is following a policy "of making the world working class pay through the nose for the corporate profit crisis."

As examples, Petrin pointed to the current union-busting drive against the coal miners, continuing high unemployment, tax hikes for the poor and giveaways to the rich, and massive cutbacks in funds for education and other social services.

### Education crisis

"The crisis in education today dramatizes . . . that it is not possible for the ruling class to pull off its offensive on the economic front without attacking the social gains that oppressed minorities, women, and youth have come to see as rights," Petrin said.

The rulers' assault on affirmative-action

programs—symbolized by the *Bakke* case—comes in this context.

"Affirmative action was no small concession for the ruling class to make," Petrin said. "It struck a blow at the kind of inequality which capitalism thrives on."

"The kind that allows employers to pay lower wages to women and oppressed minorities than they do to white males."

"The kind that allows the government to spend less money on social services in the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican communities than anywhere else."

"The kind that allows both the employers and the government to pit one section of the working class against another as a means of obscuring capitalism's inability to provide a decent standard of living for everyone."

This is the real importance of the *Bakke* case, Petrin continued.

The U.S. Supreme Court will not make its ruling on *Bakke* "on legal or constitutional grounds," Petrin said. "All that is secondary. It will be decided from the standpoint of what is in the best interests of the ruling class, based on a cold-blooded assessment of politics."

"What can the ruling class get away with? How much can it steal back in one fell swoop? What will the repercussions be? What kind of protest movement is visible and vocal? That's what the nine judges will be mulling over."

The *Bakke* case will be a focus for all the YSA's political work this spring, Petrin said. "It is an issue that ties together all our work in the Black movement, the Chicano movement, the women's movement."

### Breadth of activity

Discussion under Petrin's report illustrated the breadth of political activity the YSA has participated in over the past year

Roberta Frick, a delegate from Salt Lake City, pointed to the important role the YSA can play in educating the American public about the *Bakke* case.

"I think we can say," Frick said, "that the ruling class has had a degree of success in complicating and misrepresenting this case to the American people."

She described a successful debate on the *Bakke* case that the YSA at the University of Utah initiated along with other campus organizations. "The local TV news station covered the debate,"

*Continued on next page*

# ...YSA convention



Militant/Peter Archer

YSA members singing the 'Internationale'—anthem of the world working-class movement—at close of convention.

## Continued from preceding page

Frick said, "and focused in on a member of the YSA who explained clearly the importance of quotas to achieve affirmative action.

"We have three-and-a-half months before the national demonstration in Washington to go back and educate and organize," Frick said.

## Support coal miners

Bronson Rozier of the Lexington, Kentucky, YSA described that chapter's work in support of the seventeen-month-old strike for union recognition by coal miners in Stearns, Kentucky. It contained important lessons for campus support to the current nationwide United Mine Workers strike.

First, the chapter organized a forum at the University of Kentucky where a number of strikers and members of the Stearns Justus Mine Women's Club spoke.

"Out of this initial meeting, twenty people signed up to do ongoing support work, many of whom helped us in forming the Lexington University of Kentucky Stearns Strike Defense Committee."

Since its formation, Rozier said, the committee has distributed a fact sheet on the important strike issues, circulated a petition demanding removal of state police from Stearns, and held a benefit for the strikers that drew 500 people and raised \$1,200.

"The miners and women's club members are really excited that support has spread and that college students are involved," Rozier said.

## Nuclear power

Ike Nahem of the New Orleans YSA pointed to the work of that chapter in the anti-nuclear power movement. The YSA plans to step up its participation in this important new struggle this spring.

"The demonstrations at Seabrook, New Hampshire, last spring organized by the Clamshell Alliance signified the shifting of gears for the anti-nuclear power movement in this country," Nahem said.

Nahem pointed to the growth of anti-nuclear power alliances across the country. Many of these groups are breaking out of the confining strategy of lobbying and legal suits and onto the path of direct action against the power companies and the government.

"The role the YSA can play in this movement is very important," said Nahem. "We can draw on the examples of the big antinuclear protests in Europe and our perspective of organizing a broad movement, reaching out to the unions, women's groups, and the oppressed nationalities.

"We should begin thinking about how we can participate in these coalitions across the country and help strengthen this movement," Nahem said.

## March on Washington

Further discussion on the *Bakke* fight took place in the report by Osborne Hart, the YSA's national antiracist work director.

Hart explained that the danger posed by the *Bakke* ruling reaches far beyond the campus, threatening affirmative-action gains on the job as well. It has already inspired a rash of suits to

overturn affirmative-action programs; in at least one case, a California judge explicitly used the *Bakke* ruling as a legal precedent.

This assault on equality in employment and education, Hart said, runs parallel to the rulers' attacks on school desegregation, open housing, and abortion rights.

"If *Bakke* is upheld," said Hart, "the precedent will be set that can lead to a reversal of civil and human rights gains of the past two decades. That's why the *Bakke* case is so important."

## Broad coalitions

"The NCOBD call for spring protests has the potential to lead to a broad national action coalition against the *Bakke* decision," Hart continued.

"We want to go on an *all out* campaign to involve everyone we can in this national march. This means using our base on campus to involve other student groups and organizations such as the National Organization for Women, NAACP, LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens], the Urban League, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

"The roots are there—a date for action and people already in motion. A national movement to reverse *Bakke*—that's our goal. And the YSA's perspective is to help build such a movement."

Hart said that the key to getting this movement off the ground is organizing strong campus coalitions to maximize student participation in the march. The National Student Coalition Against Racism has decided to make this its major spring activity. NSCAR played an active role in getting out the word about the October anti-*Bakke* protests called by NCOBD and the Black American Law Students Association (BALSA).

Already BALSA, student government leaders at

the City University of New York, and NSCAR have begun discussing perspectives for building student participation. Campus coalitions can also take the *Bakke* issue to trade unions and other organizations off the campuses.

One of the many greetings received by the convention was from Charles Ogletree, national chairperson of BALSA. Ogletree congratulated the YSA on its work in the anti-*Bakke* movement.

## Chicano struggle

Miguel Zárate, in his report "Chicano Liberation and the YSA," pointed to the importance of the *Bakke* case to young Chicanos.

Chicanos make up more than half of the 20 million Hispanics in the United States, he said. A majority speak Spanish as their first language.

"Yet despite our growing numbers, we continue to be grossly underrepresented on college campuses. In California, for example, Chicanos constitute 16 percent of the population, yet less than 3 percent ever make it to college."

What small progress has been made in opening higher education to Chicanos, Zárate said, was the result of protests in the 1960s that won increased enrollment for oppressed nationalities. In the Southwest these struggles were often organized and led by Chicano students.

The fight to defend these gains, Zárate said, is closely linked with the struggle for bilingual-bicultural education. "So long as the government continues to deny Chicanos the right to an equal education in primary and secondary schools," he explained, "we must insist that they make up for their racist discrimination and provide 'special admissions' programs to get us into their universities.

The April 15 march and protest activities leading up to it provide an important focus for Chicano students, Zárate said.

At the same time, Zárate said, the YSA will continue its activity in the struggle against deportations of undocumented immigrants.

He pointed to the National Chicano/Latino Conference on Immigration and Public Policy held in San Antonio last October 28-30 as "the most significant event in recent Chicano history." The YSA played an important role in making the conference—which drew 1,500 activists from the United States and Mexico—a success.

The need to expose the fraud of Carter's immigration plan underscores the importance of education around this issue, Zárate said.

"Despite all of the Carter administration's rhetoric about 'human rights' and creating a 'more humane' immigration service, the number of arrests made by INS agents reached a record high in 1977, second only to 1954's government sponsored 'Operation Wetback.' Over the past year, more than 1,017,000 immigrants were deported. This was a 20 percent increase over the year before," said Zárate.

Through its participation in NSCAR, Zárate said, the YSA will continue its campaign against deportations of undocumented immigrants this spring, reaching out to Chicano student and community groups and to all those willing to take up this important struggle.

## Women's liberation

In her report, "The YSA and the Fight to Defend Women's Rights," YSA National Chairperson Cathy Sedwick pointed to the emergence of the wo-

## YSA elects officers



CATHY SEDWICK



CHUCK PETRIN



BETSY FARLEY

To help lead the YSA in carrying out the convention's decisions, delegates elected a new national committee composed of YSA leaders from across the country.

The incoming national committee met immediately after the convention and elected national officers for the coming year.

Cathy Sedwick, twenty-three, was reelected national chairperson. Sedwick joined the YSA in 1975 while active in the Black student movement at Indiana University Southeast.

Reelected as YSA national secretary was

Chuck Petrin. Petrin, twenty-five, joined the YSA in 1970 while active in the anti-Vietnam War movement. He was a national staff member of the National Student Coalition Against Racism. In addition, Petrin has been editor of the *Young Socialist*.

Twenty-four-year-old Betsy Farley was reelected YSA national organizational secretary. Farley joined the YSA in 1971 in Minneapolis. In 1976 she coordinated youth support work for the Socialist Workers Party presidential election campaign.

—J.H.



# Who came to the convention?

By Peter Archer

More than 500 people came to Detroit over the New Year's weekend for the national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance.

Who were they?

Why did they come?

Why did they choose socialism as a solution to the problems facing young people in this country?

At a convention workshop on the fight against nuclear power I met **Helen Kuester** from Louisville, Kentucky.

"I was living in the Chicago area and was a little bit involved in the environmental movement and women's liberation," she said.

Later, she moved to Louisville. There she and some friends "had the idea of forming an alliance that the environment groups in the Ohio Valley could join. So we formed the Paddlewheel Alliance."

Through her organizing activities in the women's liberation and anti-nuclear power movements, Kuester said, "I came to realize that I was fighting the same thing all the time." She realized that the problem wasn't just an individual power company. "They're not going to stop nuclear power if they learn about the use of solar energy to replace it. They *know* about solar energy. The reason they don't stop nuclear power is because they make money."

Kuester met YSA members who were active in Paddlewheel. "They made a lot of sense," she said. So much sense that she decided to join the YSA.



HELEN KUESTER

Militant/Peter Archer

A friend from Chicago introduced me to **Millie and Angela Thomas**, members of the YSA active in high schools on the West Side of the city.

Millie heard about the YSA "when I went to a meeting with my mother. This was a meeting for Gary Tyler's mother, Juanita Tyler." Tyler is a Black youth who has been framed for a murder he didn't commit.

"Ms. Tyler was talking about how her son got into trouble, even though he didn't do anything. I was interested in that, so I wanted to find out more. I started going to more and more meetings, reading the *Militant*, and finding out about the YSA. So I decided to join."

Angela wasn't yet a member of the YSA, but she was planning to join. "My mother and sister got into it, and they had some meetings over at the house that I sat in on. They were talking about Malcolm X and what he did, and Martin Luther King. So I



MILLIE THOMAS

Militant/Peter Archer

started reading the *Militant*."

The conditions at the schools they attend are very bad, said Millie. "Teachers are more often absent than the students. Sometimes I'll come to school and talk about these things to my counselor, but she doesn't pay any attention."

"I would like to talk to the people there about socialism. Maybe someone could come over to my school and talk to the students."

"If you don't know what socialism's about, there are books that will help you understand," she added. She pointed to several pamphlets she was reading: *Women's Liberation and Socialism* by Linda Jenness and *What Socialists Stand For* by Stephanie Coontz.

**Tony Travers** from Triton College in Chicago was eager to talk about why he is a socialist. "If you look at the Democratic Party and the Republican Party you say, wow,

neither party has really done anything for the people.

"President Carter made all these promises. Promises, promises. He cannot keep these promises. Only reason he said he was gonna do all these things was so he could get elected.

"There's a name for it: Trickeology."

**Lucia Robledo** is chairperson of the MEChA at City College in San Diego. Earlier this year "some socialists came to a class to talk about the San Antonio conference against racist deportation." I thought it was pretty good, so I went to the conference."

During that conference, CASA, a sectarian Los Angeles-based organization, tried to cloud the discussion by launching a red-baiting attack against the YSA. "I don't like this," said Robledo. "I think it's really bad, not only for us but also for the Chicano movement, because they're getting divided."

Robledo was impressed by the way members of the YSA and Socialist Workers Party answered the red-baiting attacks. During discussion on the Chicano report to the YSA convention, Robledo explained to the delegates, "CASA's sectarian attitude was what convinced me I should join the socialist movement, because I saw that socialists accept anyone to join the movement. We don't ask anyone for papers or, for that matter, for a certain color of skin or language."

"¡Unidos Venceremos!"



Convention reporters Osborne Hart (left) and Miguel Zárate.

men's liberation movement as "one of the most far-reaching and dramatic of all the radical changes which have taken place in this country."

Over the past ten years, Sedwick explained, this movement has won many gains for women such as abortion rights and increased employment and education opportunities. In addition, it has transformed society's attitude toward women and raised the expectations of millions of young women.

Today, Sedwick said, abortion rights and past affirmative-action gains are under attack.

She pointed to action by the Supreme Court, Congress, and state legislatures over the past year denying poor women Medicaid funding for abortion, and allowing public hospitals to refuse to perform abortions.

Linked to this assault on abortion rights is a stepped-up use of forced sterilization against women of oppressed nationalities and other poor women.

Sedwick also stressed the threat to women posed by the *Bakke* case.

"Affirmative-action programs have helped women break down some of the barriers of sexist discrimination and have given legitimacy to their claim for better paying jobs," Sedwick said.

The April 15 March on Washington must become the cause of the women's movement, she said. It can serve as an example of the type of action needed to defend women's rights in all arenas.

Mobilizing campus women to march on April 15 will be the YSA's major task in the women's movement this spring. In addition, the YSA will continue its activity in defense of abortion rights and for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, and against forced sterilization, attacks on gay rights, and cutbacks in child care.

Through all of its activity this spring—from defending Héctor Marroquín, to building the April 15 March on Washington—the YSA will be meeting young people interested in socialist answers to society's deepening problems.

The YSA wants to win these socialist-minded youth to its ranks, and to expand the YSA onto new campuses. Proposals for how to do this were the topic of a report by YSA National Organizational Secretary Betsy Farley.

One of the best ways will be the spring circulation campaign for the monthly *Young Socialist* newspaper. This drive will be combined with sales of the *Militant* by YSA members on campuses and at high schools.

Farley proposed that the YSA endorse and build campus and high school support for the 1978 campaigns of Socialist Workers Party candidates for congressional, senatorial, and statewide offices across the country.

Farley also outlined plans to field two-week regional teams organized by YSA chapters and SWP branches to visit campuses in their surrounding areas. Such teams in past years have helped the YSA expand its membership and influence on outlying campuses, while expanding the circulation of the socialist press and mobilizing support around

important political issues such as the defense of Marroquín and the anti-*Bakke* campaign.

Farley pointed to the successful completion of the YSA's \$19,000 fall fund drive, and proposed a \$20,000 fund drive for the spring.

Farley also assessed some organizational changes initiated by the YSA two years ago. While these changes helped to root the YSA more firmly on college and high school campuses, she said, they also made regular collaboration between the YSA and SWP more difficult.

Farley stressed the need for both organizations to work together to increase collaboration in the year ahead.

"We can use the experience and the lessons learned through the party's nearly forty years of existence to our benefit in our work in the student movement," Farley said.

Presenting greetings to the convention on behalf of the SWP Political Committee, Malik Miah also stressed this need for increased collaboration. Miah pointed to the important role the YSA has played since its founding both in bringing revolutionary socialist ideas to a whole generation of radicalizing youth, and in winning new members to the SWP. He also pointed to the increased importance that the YSA's work among students will take on as the radicalization among American workers deepens.

## Join the YSA

You've been reading about the Young Socialist Alliance national convention. So you know what the YSA will be fighting against this year—racism, sexism, unemployment, education cutbacks, deportations, political repression. If all this is your fight too, then you belong in the YSA. Help us win a socialist future for youth and working people. Join the YSA!

- ☐ I want more information about the YSA.
- ☐ I want to join the YSA.
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# Newark socialist hits bomb threat

By Joe Soares

NEWARK—Rich Ariza, the Socialist Workers Party 1977 candidate for New Jersey governor, has released a statement demanding the immediate arrest and prosecution of the persons responsible for bomb threats made on the Newark offices of the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance.

The socialists received daily bomb threats over the telephone January 11-13. The threats were made by persons identifying themselves as members of the "Cuban Anticommunist Command." The callers said, "We're going to get you" and, "Your offices will be blown up in fifteen minutes." Each call ended with the fascist slogan, "Heil Hitler!"

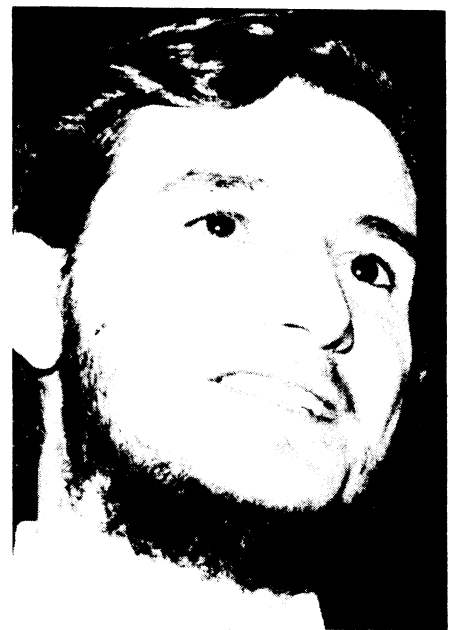
Immediately after each of these phone calls, the Newark police department's bomb squad was called in to search the premises.

The statement released by Ariza

noted that the FBI, CIA, and other government agencies have a long history of hiring anticommunist Cubans to carry out violence against dissidents in the United States. In addition, documents released through the suit against government spying filed by the SWP and YSA have exposed a systematic drive by the government to disrupt and destroy the socialist groups and intimidate their supporters.

"But we will not be intimidated," Ariza asserted. "Nor will we allow the 'Cuban Anticommunist Command' or any other right-wing terrorist outfit to prevent us from reaching the American people with our ideas."

Ariza urged that "all supporters of democratic rights unite in denouncing these attacks and call upon the government to immediately prosecute those responsible."



RICH ARIZA: 'We will not be intimidated by right-wing terrorists.'

## P.R. power workers fight gov't strikebreaking

By José G. Pérez

A strike by 6,000 employees of the government-run electric company in Puerto Rico has become a major test of strength between the labor movement and the New Progressive Party administration of Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló. A year ago, Romero Barceló took office with promises of fairer treatment for public employees.

The Unión de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Eléctrica y Riego (UTIER—Union of Workers of the Electrical and Irrigation Industry) went on strike December 27 for a \$1.41-an-hour increase over three years and safer working conditions.

The strike is of particular importance because the UTIER is one of the largest and most strategic unions in Puerto Rico. Also, the government has apparently decided to make an example of the UTIER, refusing to offer any meaningful concessions.

The electric company has offered an eighteen-cent-per-hour yearly increase. The governor has reportedly ordered the company to hold any settlement to a maximum of thirty-one cents.

As usual, the company is pleading poverty, saying it has a huge deficit. But a panel of economists put together by the union concluded that the alleged deficit was created by clever bookkeeping, not lack of funds.

At a news conference December 28, Gov. Romero Barceló demonstrated the government's intransigence, threatening to call out the national guard against the strike.



National Guard during 1973 public employee strikes in Puerto Rico. New governor is threatening to call out guard against striking employees of government-run power company.

This is not an idle threat. In 1973, UTIER accepted an inferior settlement when the guard was mobilized against a series of public employee strikes. It was the first time the guard—a part of the U.S. armed forces—had been mobilized in Puerto Rico since 1950, when it was used to crush a proindependence rebellion.

As the UTIER strike entered its fourth week, negotiations were deadlocked and the guard had been put on alert but not called out. However, police and civil defense forces have been herding scabs and attacking picket

lines, and the government has carried out an intense red-baiting and violence-baiting campaign against the union.

The violence-baiting centers around charges that union members "sabotaged" company equipment, mostly by short-circuiting or downing power lines. The government has offered no proof for these charges, but two other explanations for the recurrent blackouts should be considered: that they result from lack of personnel due to the strike or that the "sabotage" has been carried out by the government to dis-

credit the strike.

The immediate target of the red-baiting has been UTIER President Luis Lausell Hernández. "I don't know how, knowing Lausell is a member of the PSP [Puerto Rican Socialist Party], the members chose him president of the union," Gov. Romero Barceló wondered aloud at a news conference.

Why the UTIER workers elected Lausell is no mystery. For years, Puerto Rican union members have been growing dissatisfied with union bureaucrats tied to the two big-business parties in Puerto Rico, the Popular Democrats and the New Progressives. The workers have increasingly turned to union activists associated with the independence movement in their search for a militant alternative leadership.

The UTIER workers haven't been cowed by baiting, threats, or police attacks. Their example is apparently sparking further public employee strikes.

On January 10, the 1,300 drivers and mechanics of the San Juan area bus system walked out after having threatened to do so since June, when the contract expired.

And on January 12, the head of the firefighters union said it, too, might strike to protest understaffing of the force.

This could lead to a situation parallel to that in 1973, when the national guard was mobilized to break several public employee strikes that had created a major political crisis for the government.

## Laos four years later: still a 'lunar landscape'

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

Several years after the end of the massive American bombing of Laos, the countryside continues to display the scars of devastation.

*Far Eastern Economic Review* correspondent Nayan Chanda, who was in the first group of foreign journalists allowed to visit the Plain of Jars since the Pathet Lao gained control of the country, described what he saw in the December 23, 1977, issue:

From the window of the low-flying C-123 transport, Laos' Plain of Jars resembles a lunar landscape, pock-marked as it is with bomb craters that are a stark testimony to the years of war that denuded the area of people and buildings. . . .

A few miles north of Long Cheng the rolling valleys and green savannahs of the plain unfold, still scarred by the ravages of war. At ground level, the signs of death and destruction are even more ubiquitous. Bomb craters are to be found everywhere; empty casings of anti-personnel mines litter the landscape. Not a single brick building remains standing, and every bridge on the pot-holed road that runs through the area is destroyed.

Chanda reported that, contrary to popular belief, the Plain of Jars had not been totally depopulated during the bombing. Several thousand peasants continued to cling to their land, hiding by day and tilling their fields by night. They refer to 1973, when most of the fighting ended, as "the year we came out of the *khum* [hole]."

Even now, the debris of war continues to take its toll. Since the end of the fighting, undetonated bombs embedded throughout the countryside have exploded, killing 267 persons and wounding 343 more in the province of Xeing Khouang alone.

Despite the massive devastation and the loss of most of the livestock during the war, the region has begun to make a modest recovery. Homes and villages are being slowly rebuilt and food production is increasing, although it still supplies only half of the area's annual needs. Vietnamese soldiers and workers are assisting in the reconstruction of the road network.



U.S. air war in Southeast Asia: deadly effects continue to take toll



## A big step forward

# 'Intercontinental Press,' 'Inprecor' merge

By Steve Clark

With this issue of the *Militant*, our readers will begin reaping the gains of a big step forward for the world Trotskyist movement.

The news-gathering resources of *Intercontinental Press* and the English edition of *Inprecor* (*International Press Correspondence*)—a fortnightly Paris-based journal published in French, Spanish, German, and English—have been combined.

The *Militant* has based a good share of our international news coverage and analysis on material appearing in *Intercontinental Press*.

The merger means that we will now be able to draw on a greatly expanded

Shahak, head of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, on plans to expand Zionist settlements in the occupied territories.

- Eyewitness accounts of international struggles, such as Hugh Fyson's report from Wellington, New Zealand, on what was probably the largest demonstration in that country's history—against government plans to increase the powers of the secret police.

Analysis of international political developments from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism based on news reports in newspapers and magazines in many languages.

- Selections from various sources, including publications of parties affiliated to the Fourth International.
- Reportage on the women's liberation struggle around the world.
- Articles on developments in the Black struggle, with special emphasis on events in Africa.
- And documents of political interest to militants in the working-class movement, including resolutions and statements of the leading bodies of the Fourth International, as well as its sections and sympathizing organizations around the world.

Joseph Hansen, the editor of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, explains, "The merger of the English edition of *Inprecor* and *Intercontinental Press* follows the resolution of various internal differences in the world Trotskyist movement. This accomplishment demonstrates the capacity of the Fourth International, and organizations sharing its outlook, to carry on vigorous internal debates without splitting. One of the results will be greater cohesiveness and striking power in meeting the tasks facing the revolutionary movement."

According to Hansen, the magazine will need to expand in order to fully take advantage of the increased material that will now be available.

"The possibility of meeting this need," he adds however, "remains subject to the response of our readers,

both in making financial contributions and in enlarging the number of subscribers."

The *Militant* urges its readers to celebrate the merger by subscribing. We also hope that some readers will be

able to send contributions to *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* to help it get off to a good start.

We know our readers will benefit from the improved international coverage this merger will make possible.

Steve Clark is the managing editor of the *Militant*.

network of correspondents, making possible much better and more complete coverage of international events.

*Intercontinental Press* began in Paris as a labor press service under the name *World Outlook*. An editorial in its first issue (September 27, 1963) explained:

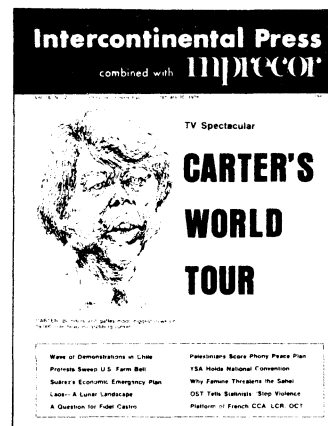
"The main aim of *World Outlook* is to provide specialized political analysis and interpretation of important events for the labor and socialist press. Factual studies and feature articles by competent observers and writers of independent views will also be a regular service.

"We will not observe any official or unofficial censorship, nor will we modify anything because of partisan considerations. Our commitment is to report the truth as accurately as we can without favor or slant."

Readers of the *Militant* know how well *Intercontinental Press* has kept to its founding pledge. Our *World Outlook* section is largely based on the magazine. This has allowed us to carry such features as:

- Interviews with prominent activists such as Romanian dissident Paul Goma on the miners' upsurge that challenged the bureaucratic regime in that country last summer; and Israel

## You don't know what you're missing, unless you read...



Frankly, 'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor' carries far more articles, documents, and special features about world politics than the 'Militant' has room for.

That's why 'Militant' readers should subscribe to this unique international newsweekly.

Working people in this country can't win victories against

unemployment, racism, and sexism without understanding how their struggles are joined with those of their brothers and sisters in other countries.

'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor' is published to help people struggling for a better world learn from each other's successes and setbacks. You can't afford to be without it. Fill in the coupon below and subscribe today.

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## 1,000 protest Iranian empress in NYC

By Rich Robohm

NEW YORK—A who's who of American politicians and corporation heads turned out to honor Iranian Empress Farah Diba Pahlavi at the New York Hilton on January 12. More than 1,000 uninvited guests also showed up—to protest at the Asia Society's dinner honoring the wife of the brutal dictator, the shah of Iran.

While such figures as Henry Kissinger, Nelson Rockefeller, and Mobil Oil Chairman Rowland T. Boone, Jr., toasted the "Shabanou" inside the heavily guarded hotel, contingents from several Iranian student groups marched outside against the shah and his repressive regime. The Committee

for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) also held a picket line (see box).

Surrounded by 2,200 cops in riot gear, the anti-shah protestors chanted, "Free all political prisoners, open the shah's jails!" and other slogans.

Despite the provocative police mobilization and the presence of a large pro-shah demonstration sponsored by the Iranian government, there were no incidents or arrests outside the hotel. Six people were arrested at various points during the empress's speech when they rose from their seats at the exclusive banquet to shout condemnations, and seven more were arrested in the hotel lobby.



New York demonstration against Iranian dictatorship

Militant/Diane Wang

## CAIFI picket line

NEW YORK—Playwrights Arthur Miller and Eric Bentley, novelist Kurt Vonnegut, and several other prominent literary figures joined an informational picket line sponsored by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) at the site of the Asia Society's dinner in honor of Empress Farah Pahlavi.

Many of those present represented American Center for PEN (Poets, Essayists and Novelists), including PEN President Richard Howard and Dore Ashton, chairperson of its Freedom to Write Committee. PEN has joined with CAIFI in supporting the efforts of Dr. Gholamhossein Sa'edi, a distinguished Iranian playwright and anthropologist, to visit the U.S. at the invitation of a number of publishers here.

In addition to demanding freedom for all Iranian political prisoners in general, said Iranian poet and former political prisoner Reza Baraheni, "our purpose is to make the Iranian government lift the ban on Sa'edi's travel request." Baraheni is honorary chairperson of CAIFI.



KURT VONNEGUT

One of the reasons for the shah's reluctance to let Sa'edi leave the country is undoubtedly that he still bears the scars of torture suffered at the hands of Iran's political police during his most recent period of imprisonment.

Also present on the picket line were journalist Nat Hentoff, activist Dave Dellinger, and author Kate Millett.

—R.R.

# Hubert Humphrey: the police-state liberal

By Cliff Connor

The *New York Post's* banner headline read: "Happy Warrior Is Dead at 66." A more accurate tag for Hubert Horatio Humphrey would have been "cold warrior," or "warrior against the Vietnamese people."

When it became known that Humphrey was dying, the major media began lauding him as one of the wisest and most benevolent statesmen ever to grace the stage of American politics.

But Hubert Humphrey was a prime architect and defender of American imperialist foreign policy. He bears a large share of the historical guilt for the massacre of countless thousands of Vietnamese—to mention only the worst of many crimes.

As Lyndon Johnson's vice-president, he was the country's most ardent war booster, making hundreds of speeches all over the world in defense of American aggression.

## Wonderful adventure?

"We're not only fighting to protect the freedom of Vietnam but of all Southeast Asia," he said in February 1965.

By 1967, the "happy warrior" was really exuberant. "This is our great adventure, and a wonderful one it is," he told staff members of the American Embassy in Saigon.

But in spite of his tireless prowar agitation, Humphrey was unable to rally many people to his cause. Instead, he earned the hatred of an ever-growing number of Americans who understood what was happening in Vietnam and were repelled by it. At a public appearance at Stanford University in 1967, for example, Humphrey had to leave hurriedly, pursued by 2,000 students and faculty members chanting, "Shame! Shame!" He later told *U.S. News and World Report* that the students were "hooligans—just a group of ruffians."

Humphrey also engaged in red-baiting tactics against the antiwar movement. Of the 1966 International Days of Protest he said: "Do you think those demonstrations were organized by some fine little social club? They were organized by an international apparatus. Ninety-five percent of the demonstrators are no more Communists than you or I. But the international Communist movement organized it and masterminded it."

Humphrey's red-baiting did not



'The happy warrior' on Vietnam: 'This is our great adventure, and a wonderful one it is.'

begin in the Vietnam War era. He had been practicing the art for decades, mostly against the labor movement. In fact, Humphrey's rise to political prominence came about through his red-baiting campaign to purge alleged Communist Party members from the Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party.

## Concentration camps

Although Humphrey managed to create a civil libertarian image for himself, his record shows him to have been an enemy of civil liberties. The clearest evidence of this occurred in 1950, when he worked to amend the infamous McCarran Act to set up concentration camps for dissenters during wartime. Six of these camps were actually constructed but were never used.

In 1952 Humphrey chaired hearings on "Communist domination of unions and national security." Although the hearings failed to produce any evidence of "conspiratorial activity," they did succeed in their real aim: to aid the

capitalists' drive to housebreak the CIO industrial unions by labeling all militant unionists as "reds" and facilitating their expulsion by conservative labor bureaucrats.

In 1954, even as the McCarthyite witch-hunt hysteria was beginning to subside, Senator Humphrey sponsored the Communist Control Act, outlawing the Communist Party. In arguing for this legislation, Humphrey exclaimed, "I want to come to grips with the Communist issue. I want senators to stand up and to answer whether they are for the Communist Party or against it."

Humphrey also built himself a reputation as an advocate of civil rights for Blacks. But he supported desegregation with words while backing the racists with deeds.

In May 1949, for example, Humphrey voted against a bill that would allow only states with desegregated school systems to receive federal money. "I wish every city in America would [desegregate]," the hypocrite

declared. "But, as much as I detest segregation, I love education more."

At the 1964 Democratic Party convention, Humphrey refused to back the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) against the segregationist, all-white regular party delegation.

As vice-president, Humphrey became coordinator of all civil rights enforcement in 1965. He had at his disposal the power to cut off all government contracts with any business that had discriminatory hiring practices. Of all the industries that do business with the government and control an estimated 20 to 25 million jobs, not one contract was canceled.

## Servant of rich

Throughout his long political career, Humphrey's primary role was as a central leader of the Democratic Party, one of the twin capitalist parties through which the American ruling class maintains its political monopoly. As such, his job was to serve the interests of a tiny, wealthy minority, while making it look like he was serving the interests of the majority. Hence his postures as "friend of labor," "friend of the poor," and so forth.

But, needless to say, a negligible portion of the \$13.6 million he collected for his 1968 campaign came from the "common people" who supposedly revered him.

His campaign financing practices, in fact, were not unlike those of the now-disgraced Richard Nixon. The Watergate scandal produced the revelation that in 1972 Nixon had received huge illegal contributions from dairy cooperatives. Further investigation revealed that Humphrey had also received huge illegal contributions from the same sources. Humphrey slickly managed to shift the blame to underlings, and as a result his 1972 campaign manager went to prison.

The last piece of legislation to bear Humphrey's name—the so-called Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill—continued Humphrey's record of worthless promises. This "full employment" act does not guarantee a single job or authorize the government to spend a dime to relieve unemployment.

Hubert Humphrey died a Democrat after more than three decades of absolutely loyal service to the American ruling class. That is why the capitalist press is now trying to make him a saint.

# New snag for gov't in search for FBI head

By Arnold Weissberg

It's not like the good old days for the director of the FBI. You're not supposed to let your agents try to disrupt Black groups; you're not supposed to let them spy on unions, women's groups, or socialists; and you're not supposed to let them carry out illegal burglaries.

Maybe that's why the Carter administration is having such a hard time finding someone to replace Clarence Kelley, the current top G-man.

Candidate after candidate has turned the job down, preferring to keep their old jobs and stay out of the spotlight.

Several candidates have been found unsuitable for various reasons, including possible connections to Las Vegas mobsters.

One of Attorney General Griffin Bell's current favorites, Federal Appeals Judge William Webster, has also run into some heavy weather. Bell offered Webster the job sometime around last Christmas.

Webster just happened to be in the middle of considering a case that has big implications for the operations of the FBI—the \$40 million suit against

government spying filed by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance.



GRIFFIN BELL

The SWP and YSA, as part of their case, are fighting to get information from secret FBI informer files. The FBI has used informers to steal documents from the two groups, and to burglarize their offices.

After a year of consideration and argument, Federal District Judge Thomas Griesa ordered the FBI to turn over eighteen of the secret files to the socialists' attorneys. The FBI, claiming "law enforcement" would collapse if the order was carried through, asked the court of appeals to order Griesa to back off.

The court of appeals set up a three-judge panel to hear the question. Webster was one of the three.

The panel said it couldn't order Griesa to reconsider, but suggested that he think it over. Griesa then announced that he would stick to his original order.

The FBI, stalling for time, asked Webster and his fellow appeals court judges to "rehear" the whole argument. That's where matters stood when Bell popped the question.

"Bell's action was an outrage," said Syd Stapleton, national secretary of

the Political Rights Defense Fund. PRDF is a civil liberties group that is organizing support for the SWP and YSA lawsuit.

"Suppose," said Stapleton, "that PRDF had offered Webster a high-paying job while he was thinking about the SWP case. I'd be sitting in jail right now for trying to bribe a judge."

This is not the first time the government has offered the top FBI post to a judge in the middle of a trial. The Nixon administration did it with federal Judge W. Matt Byrne, who was hearing the Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo case in the Pentagon Papers trial.

Coincidentally, the attorney for Ellsberg and the attorney for the socialists is the same man—Leonard Boudin.

Although Webster's conflict of interest has been reported by newspapers around the country, Bell has not taken him off the list of potential FBI directors.

Webster, some two weeks after being approached by Bell, finally said he would disqualify himself from the SWP and YSA lawsuit.



## 'Take the cause into your unions'

# 'Militant' readers urged to aid coal strike

By Nancy Cole

Members of the United Mine Workers have proved themselves far stronger and more united than pre-strike opinion molders tried to make out.

But it's a big-business steamroller that has the UMWA in range, and coal miners need the support of all working people in their strike for a new contract.

"The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance have pledged to help organize the broadest possible support to the striking coal miners," Lew Jones recently told the *Militant*. Jones is SWP national field organizer for the Northeast district, which includes the key coal-producing areas of western Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

At the recent national convention of the YSA, Jones pointed out, student



Militant/Nelson Blackstock  
SWP leader Lew Jones: 'Solidarity is important for whole labor movement.'

activists laid plans for campus activities to help get out the truth on the miners' fight (see pages 3-5).

"One of the most important ways to win support for the strikers is through other unions," Jones said.

*"We want to urge every Militant reader who belongs to a union to take the issue—the cause, if you will—of the coal miners on the job and into his or her union."*

Jones gave examples of planned union-sponsored support rallies in such cities as Pittsburgh and Morgantown, West Virginia (see box). But, he added, support activity is not and should not be confined to coalfield areas.

In addition to meetings where strike representatives can tell their side of the story, a number of union locals have passed resolutions in support of the strike. The AFL-CIO convention in December passed a resolution urging affiliates to aid the striking UMWA.

"These resolutions, whether or not they lead to further activity by a union local in support of the miners, are important to the strike. And they're important to the labor movement as a whole," Jones said.

For the strikers, they boost morale. "They show the miners that they're not out there all alone, that they're not viewed by other workers as the isolated 'strike happy' terrorists the news media would have us all believe.

"For the labor movement in general—and for the local union involved—these resolutions serve as examples of solidarity and lay the basis for reciprocity when that union itself faces a strike battle."

This is all true whether the action is a resolution, a contribution for the strikers (who receive no strike benefits), or a sizable support rally.

In many union locals there is little or no tradition of such solidarity. Even if a local declines to pass a resolution on

the coal strike, it's worthwhile to bring up the question.

"The issue will have been raised," notes Jones, "and many present will begin to look at the strike differently. Maybe before they had never thought to question lies about the strikers played up in the press, or maybe they had never before considered that unions should act in support of each other."

The offensive against working people—from the attacks on affirmative action to massive unemployment—have prompted a discussion among many trade unionists: *How can unions counter these attacks?*

Supporting other unions in their struggles—in this case, the UMWA's critical battle—is one of the answers to that question.

## Schedule of support rallies

Unionists in several cities are planning rallies and benefits in support of the United Mine Workers, on national strike since December 6. In addition to the three listed below, the UMWA reports events are tentatively scheduled for later in February in San Antonio, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

### DETROIT

In Detroit **Saturday, February 4**, United Steelworkers Local 2659 is sponsoring two events. At 10:30 a.m. and again at 6 p.m., Paul Fortney from the United Mine Workers and striking miners from Stearns, Kentucky, will keynote rallies, including folk singers and a showing of the film *Harlan County, USA*.

Letters of invitation have been sent to Detroit-area locals of the United Auto Workers, United Steelworkers, and other AFL-CIO affiliates. The rallies will be held at USWA Local 2659's hall, 14024 Fort Highway (between Northline and Eureka Roads) in Southgate. For more information call (313) AV4-8613.

### MORGANTOWN

A benefit and rally are planned for Morgantown, West Virginia, on **Friday, February 3**. The event is sponsored by the West Virginia University Stearns Mine Workers Support Committee and the Monongalia County Central Labor Council. Stearns strikers will speak and entertainers will include Hazel Dickens, Phylis Boyens, and David Morris.

The benefit will be held in the ballroom of the WVU student union at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (304) 292-4947.

### PITTSBURGH

The week of January 29-February 4 will be Support the Miners Week in western Pennsylvania. On **Sunday, January 29**, at 3 p.m., United Mine Workers District 5 and the Allegheny County Labor Council are co-sponsoring a benefit rally at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall in the Oakland district of Pittsburgh.

The benefit will feature UMWA President Arnold Miller and country and western music star Johnny Paycheck.

On **Wednesday, February 1**, striking miners from Stearns, Kentucky, will speak at the University of Pittsburgh and at the Community College of Allegheny County.

For more information, call (412) 281-9300.

## 'UAW, a part of miners' battle'

The United Auto Workers Skilled Trades Conference, which met in New Orleans December 13-15, approved a resolution in support of the United Mine Workers national strike.

The resolution said in part:

"Whereas UAW is very much part of the miners' battle. Our very existence as a union is due to the courage and farsightedness of the Mine Workers four decades ago in supporting the struggle of the Auto Workers for recognition of our union.

"We've had to endure the same kind of exploitation suffered by the Mine Workers, and we will continue to fight for the right to a safe work place so terribly important to the miners who have risked their very lives and health to earn a living for

their families in so dangerous an occupation, and;

"Whereas, it is completely unjust that the Mine Workers must be forced to strike for provisions that should be every worker's birthright—for adequate wages, for decent medical care, for safe working conditions, for a measure of justice on their jobs.

"Now therefore be it resolved that this UAW Skilled Trades Conference expresses its complete support of our brothers and sisters in the UMWA and our sympathy and outrage at their suffering and urges our union to take every possible action to assist and support our brothers and sisters in the Mine Workers during their national strike."

## Mine union: 88 years of struggle

Eighty-eight years ago—on January 25, 1890—the United Mine Workers of America was born.

Today the UMWA is battling for its life. It's a good time to recall the great contribution the miners have made to the U.S. labor movement.

In the early 1930s, the UMWA fought within the conservative, craft-divided American Federation of Labor for a turn toward organizing the millions of industrial workers.

The AFL tops refused, and the miners union led the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). The UMWA provided most of the organizers and funds for the pioneering CIO drives.

In the midst of World War II, when the government and employers had launched a sweeping attack on the living standards and rights of all

working people, the coal miners fought back. Their bitter struggle in 1943 cracked the wage freeze and turned the union-busting tide.

It was not the last UMWA strike to set an example for American workers. In 1946, a record-long strike won the miners wage increases and an unprecedented health and welfare fund.

In 1950, despite government threats to fire, fine, draft, and imprison strikers, the UMWA won another historic strike victory, defeating Truman's attempt to impose a wage freeze.

The government's use of Taft-Hartley injunctions against the 1950 strike sparked a wave of solidarity among the ranks of the CIO.

A number of locals of the United Auto Workers, for example, adopted resolutions for a twenty-four-hour national strike. General Motors locals

voted financial aid and organized food and clothing collections for the strikers. A city-wide Detroit labor caravan delivered aid to the strikers.

The stakes are every bit as high this time around. The ranks of the miners' union are again fighting a battle for all working people. Their victory or defeat will reverberate throughout the labor movement. They deserve and need the support and solidarity of this nation's unions.

—N.C.



UMWA President John L. Lewis addresses textile workers during CIO organizing drive. At right, UMWA march of children in early part of century.



## U.S. threat in Italy

The Italian people are looking for alternatives. Saddled with a corrupt and inept Christian Democratic government incapable of meeting their most elementary demands—let alone solving the deeper social crisis that has plagued Italy for the past ten years—they are looking for relief to the parties that claim to stand for the working class.

The fall of yet another Christian Democratic cabinet has prompted the Carter administration to intervene. On January 12 the State Department warned the Italian people that they had better not turn to the Communist Party.

“Administration leaders have repeatedly expressed our views on the issue of Communist participation in West European governments,” the statement said. “Our position is clear: We do not favor such participation, and would like to see Communist influence in any Western European country reduced.”

There should be no mistake—the Carter administration statement was a direct threat, intended to intimidate the Italian people. It should be viewed in the light of Washington’s past actions.

Documents published by the State Department in February 1975, for example, admitted that former President Harry Truman approved a secret recommendation that Washington “make full use of its political, economic, and if necessary, military power” to prevent a Communist victory in the April 1948 Italian elections.

Nor did the U.S. intervention, which included threatening naval maneuvers off the Italian coast, end with Truman. The CIA gave out \$6 million to right-wing Italian politicians just in the last month of 1976.

The Italian Stalinists of the Communist Party have promised to keep Italy in NATO, to help impose wage restraints and “labor discipline” on workers, and to rein in the radical students—if only they are let into the cabinet. But the American imperialists are worried about the high expectations that Communist participation in the government would arouse among the Italian masses and are willing to give their blessing to such a government only as a last resort.

In any case, it is the Italian people, not the imperialist government in Washington, who must decide their future. Carter’s intervention is in direct violation of their democratic rights.

## Still unemployed

The real significance of the latest government unemployment statistics lies not in the figures themselves, which are disputed, but in the solemn acclaim that has greeted them.

An official unemployment rate of 6.4 percent was hailed by President Carter and his top advisers as “good for the country,” “progress,” and a sign of a “healthy” economy. The “welcome news” that 6.3 million persons are out of work, wrote the editors of the *New York Times*, “means that the nation is closer to full employment than anyone had thought. . . .”

The message for working people is plain. We are supposed to consider it “normal” to have 6 or 7 million unemployed in this country. (The figure is closer to 10 million if the “discouraged” workers and those forced onto part-time schedules are counted.) These are *good times*. This is *economic recovery*. Don’t expect much better.

The official statistics themselves were met with widespread skepticism even among establishment economists, who described the sharp decline in unemployment as “implausible” and “incredible.” The government reported, for example, that the number of jobs jumped nearly 1.4 million from October to December. But of this increase almost 1 million was “seasonal adjustment”—which pays neither rent nor grocery bills.

Even taken at face value, the figures highlight the discriminatory pattern of persistent unemployment. Over the past year, the jobless rate for adult white men—who suffered the lowest unemployment to start with—declined the most. For white women and for Black men the year’s decline was much smaller. Unemployment for Black women declined hardly at all. And the official jobless rate for Black teenagers *increased* over the year from 34.8 percent to 37.3 percent!

Carter’s economic policies are a success, all right—for the capitalist class he represents, which profits from mass unemployment and racist and sexist discrimination.

For working people, on the other hand, these figures should inspire new determination to defend affirmative action and to fight for *jobs for all*—through useful public works and a shorter workweek at no cut in pay.

### Steelworkers on ‘Militant’

Thank you for printing the article in your December 16 issue about the working conditions, safety, and incentive plan here at Cerro Metals. The article started a lot of discussion about incentive pay, and we are thinking about future articles that might be of interest. Keep up the good work.

Ron Aguilar, Garvey Bunting, David Cassell, Manuel Ledesma, Frank Mikula, Gary Souza, Rich Stewart, Tom Tomasko, James D. Torres  
USWA Local 5649  
Newark, California

### From a farmer

The December 23 *Militant* article on “The squeeze on farmers,” is the kind of an in-depth study of the agricultural picture that I have been looking for. As a farmer, I take my blue and red cap off to Lynn Henderson for a job well done.

I especially like the article’s concluding remarks on a program to solve the farm crisis. This program embodies suggested working relationships between those who do the work in the urban industries and those of us who do the work in the countryside; in the raw material end of the agricultural industry itself.

In that proposed platform Henderson suggests what has to be done, both in the day-to-day struggle for existence and on toward the goal of building a more rational society—one that will unite us all in the struggle to fulfill the hopes of the many working people—“that a better world’s in birth.”

I have been out in these wide open spaces (but underpaid areas) for nearly all my seventy-one years, trying to make my soil feed the family and myself under capitalism. Take it from me, it cannot be done.

Apparently, I’ve been trying to do the impossible all along, because now I learn the reason for my failure, according to *Militant* columnist Harry Ring. He reports that Robert Faberberg, a United States irrigation official has said: “It is not possible to legislate social equity without destroying the capitalistic system.” Accordingly then, all of us, both urban and rural working people, have our work cut out for us, now don’t we?

John Enestvedt  
Sacred Heart, Minnesota

### ‘Hush-hush legislation’

S.1437, commonly known as the “police state bill,” is already in the Senate and can be called up any day after the Senate sits. Remember the Sen. Joe McCarthy days?

Senator Kennedy (in conference) claims his amendments have made S.1437 “acceptable.” Hush-hush legislation bodes ill for the workers whose rights are chiseled away by such bills as S.1437.

Anna Morgan  
Newton Highlands, Massachusetts

### Interested in SWP

Enclosed is money for a new introductory subscription to the *Militant*.

I’ve read the *Militant* on occasion for the past three years, though I’ve not had a subscription. I’m impressed by your honesty, frankness, and relativeness of your news, your historical perspective, and the devotion and sincerity of your ideals.

Though I have not been a member of

the Socialist Workers Party, I intend to look into the possibilities of membership. This is due in part to the *Militant* and in part to the reading I’ve done lately on Trotsky, Marx, and the revolution in Russia.

William Deslongchamps  
Wilmington, Massachusetts

### ‘Very informative’ paper

I would like to renew my subscription to the *Militant*. I find your paper very informative and educational. I also feel the *Militant* has helped me to mature politically. So keep up the good work.

F.S.  
Jeannette, Pennsylvania

### Racism in N.Y. prison

I am presently incarcerated and would like to bring to the attention of your readers the unjust treatment we are receiving here.

This institution is one of the most racist in the state of New York. Everywhere in this place you run into only white officers. Yet Black inmates here outnumber whites three to one.

Every time you walk down the hall you have five to ten officers in the hallways beating their sticks on the wall or on the desk, trying to plant fear in the hearts of Blacks and also to show their superiority over us.

There are many talented prisoners here but they become defeated because of the terror of this place. People being deprived of an education, getting beaten up by six or seven officers, seeing some of the officers tying a rope into a noose, saying “kill those niggers.”

A prisoner  
New York

### ‘Free speech’ in Arizona

The reply to the *Arizona Republic*’s vicious editorial attack on Hugo Blanco’s right to speak at Arizona State University was excellent. (See January 13 issue.) Readers of the *Militant* might be interested to know that the *Republic* has been opposed to free speech on the ASU campus for at least the past twenty years. Free speech exists on the ASU campus today only because it was fought for and won by students and faculty in 1965.

On several occasions, free speech had to be defended by students and faculty when the *Republic* started whipping up hysteria against “subversives” or “terrorists.” The *Republic* is also opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment, the right to choose an abortion, school desegregation by busing, and the union shop. It supports the deportation of undocumented workers and is opposed to all efforts of farm workers to raise their standard of living through collective bargaining.

The *Republic* often hides its opposition to democratic rights behind false accusations of terrorism. In a recent editorial it accused me of being a terrorist, too. However, its record against real terrorists isn’t very good. Recently, one of its reporters, Don Bolles, was murdered to stop his investigation of organized crime in Arizona. When a national team of investigative journalists began to release its account of the murder, implicating friends of the *Republic* in big business and politics, the *Republic* did not print the stories.

Morris Starsky  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio



# National Picket Line

Frank Lovell



## Food union piecards

As a former food worker, I was interested in what Frank Lovell wrote recently on business unionism (see "National Picket Line" in the November 25 *Militant*) describing how Seattle Local 8 declined to the point where today it represents only 11 percent of the workers in the industry there. The Hotel and Restaurant Employees & Bartenders International Union formerly boasted of having "over 700,000 members" and being the "fifth largest union in the AFL-CIO." Recent estimates place its membership at 170,000.

Last year this international ordered all the locals in each area to merge and form "big" locals. One stipulation was to keep all the piecards on the payroll in the new big locals.

The rank and file in San Francisco came to the union meeting to protest this order, which specifically prohibited a vote by the membership. Joe Belardi, who was president of Cooks Local 44, declared the meeting out of order and then named himself president of the new big local.

Belardi is also president of the San Francisco Central Labor Council and chairperson of the California Cooks Apprenticeship Council, an outfit that gets twenty-five cents a month for each member and runs a "training program with industry" to train new cooks. One problem in that program is that the "trainees" don't want to work for four years as regular cooks at trainee pay.

Another example of business unionism is in the East Bay. About twenty years ago the union signed up a new fast food chain called Doggie Diners. In 1972, a new starting "cook and counterman" (they didn't hire women) at Doggie's got over twenty-six dollars a day plus overtime above eight hours. That wasn't bad if you discount the fact that all they had to eat were those red dye #2 hot dogs and "pastrami" that tasted like a Goodyear reject.

As new fast food houses opened, maximizing food extenders and the minimum wage, the union didn't organize them. The management of Doggie got upset and complained about its "competitive position."

The union officials were quite accommodating and signed a new contract with Doggie. Doggie phased out its older, higher-paid workers and replaced them with "trainees." For each trainee, the union collected a fifty-dollar initiation fee and twelve dollars monthly dues. Not only did the hot dogs get worse, so did the wages and working conditions.

Belardi and his East Bay counterparts are leading supporters of the Democratic Party, lousy pastrami, and the minimum wage. In the past, food workers would take pride in their food and fight for better wages. We have to do that again or suffer from starvation and food poisoning.

Paul Montauk  
New York, New York

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 you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## New moods in the ranks

University professors, labor mediators, and even some union officials have discovered that union members are "growing defiant," according to a recent article in the Philadelphia *Bulletin*.

Prof. Seymour Wolfbein, dean of Temple University School of Business Administration, says union members are better educated. "The union leader can't be as authoritarian as in the past," he says. "The member wants to take a hard look, comment and not take automatically what is offered to him." This interests those who study business administration. It complicates labor-management relations, as they say.

Federal mediators are interested, too. Rex Marlow, deputy regional director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, says union members no longer take the scrapings from the bargaining table. He says they ask themselves, "Is this the best I can get?" Of course, when union members ask questions like this it upsets the labor mediation game.

Union officials have the most to fear. They are troubled. Edward Toohey, longtime president of the Philadelphia AFL-CIO Council and several steps removed from the rank and file, thinks, "They want to make sure everything is being done by their union that should be done for them." He says they are "much, much smarter."

Toohey hasn't learned yet that a lot of union members want to make some decisions for themselves and are fed up with having everything "done for them," but other officials have learned.

Louis Bottone, president of Teamsters Local 107 for six years, and Robert Walsh, business manager of Operating Engineers Local 542 for about 17 years, were both voted out of office last year. Ned LeDonne, president of Transport Workers Union Local 234, is another Philadelphia union official who got the ax.

LeDonne brought in a contract with the city transit authority that was no good, and the membership turned it down. After a forty-four-day strike, opposed by LeDonne, the strikers went back to work for about

what they had been offered. They got rid of LeDonne, hoping to insure that it wouldn't happen again.

Union members everywhere are getting the idea that *they decide*. "There's a real rank-and-file militancy on," says John Morris, business agent of Teamsters Local 115 in Philadelphia. "If labor leaders do not serve them properly on grievances or other matters," he says, "they'll soon feel the members' resentment."

Why is this?

One reason, "experts" say, is the new composition of the work force. Labor Department data show that workers are younger. Women constitute a larger percentage of the total work force, nearly half. The percentage of Blacks and other minorities has also increased.

Some union officials seem to think age level has most to do with it. Many of these workers were educated during the 1960s, they say, when the mood on campus was one of challenge to established policies. These attitudes have carried over into the work force.

There is another more decisive reason for rank-and-file resentment in unions. It is the new antiunion offensive by the employers and the inability of union officials to understand this or do anything about it except to try and placate the employers.

The Bricklayers Union on Long Island, New York, is an example. Union officials accepted a 14.5 percent pay cut. They said it would stimulate work and combat nonunion contractors. They didn't ask the bricklayers.

Bricklayers from six of seven Long Island locals, about 200 strong, met recently to challenge the action of their union officials. They want to take the officials to court, charging false representation. More important, they also plan some demonstrations at job sites. They expect to force the contractors to pay union wages.

Those bricklayers started the new year with a good resolution, and they are marching in step with the times. More power to them.

## Capitalism in Crisis

Andy Rose



## Tale of two states

The following guest column was written by Lynn Henderson.

"Look at Ohio's new tax incentive programs for industry!"

"Profit is not a dirty word in Ohio!"

So trumpets the headline of a full-page ad in the January 3 *Wall Street Journal*. The ad, signed by Ohio Gov. James Rhodes, explains that the state's new tax law grants "new and expanding industries a sizeable tax credit."

The following day New York State ran a double-page ad in the *New York Times* over the signature of John Dyson, commissioner of the Department of Commerce.

"Sweet news for businessmen who are sour on New York," read the huge headline. "The fact is," boasts the ad, "no other state in America has more tax incentives than we do. We're giving companies Job Incentive tax credits. Pollution Control tax credits. And Capital Investment tax credits."

Residents of Ohio and New York may be surprised to see their state governments falling over each other to provide mammoth tax cuts for corporations. The tune they've been hearing from Democratic and Republican politicians in their states has been quite different.

They've been told repeatedly that New York and Ohio are in the midst of a desperate financial crisis.

Last October Toledo temporarily closed its public school system because there were insufficient tax revenues to finish out the school year.

Cleveland, beginning in mid-November, refused to pay the salaries of teachers and other school personnel due to lack of funds.

In New York City social services have been cut to the bone. Sixty-three thousand municipal jobs have been eliminated.

There have been plenty of sacrifices—but not for everyone.

The claims in these ads are not empty promises.

Much of the money "saved" from social services has been used to provide substantial tax gifts to major corporations and superrich individuals.

Last April New York City Mayor Abraham Beame announced that the 1977-78 city budget would grant businesses almost \$100 million in tax cuts.

In May Beame announced the elimination of the stock transfer tax over the next four years. That action alone cost New York \$250 million a year in lost revenue. It also increased profits by a like amount for security brokers and their wealthy clients.

What about Ohio?

In the midst of the school employee pay crisis in Cleveland the city council voted additional tax abatements of \$4.5 million for big businesses, while insisting it had no funds to meet the school payroll.

In New York, Dyson promises industry more goodies. The ad points out that "the overwhelming consensus in state government" is for further tax reductions.

Dyson knows whereof he speaks. The same day the ad was published, New York Gov. Hugh Carey opened the 201st session of the legislature by calling for a \$750 million slash in taxes.

Two hundred and fifty million of the proposed tax cuts are *directly* slated for businesses. The remaining \$500 million is to be used to reduce personal income taxes—but for which persons?

Dyson explains that a major part of the personal income tax cut will be aimed at those in the \$20,000 to \$40,000 income bracket—the people he says make the decision on whether businesses stay in New York State.

Profit is certainly not a dirty word for these Democratic and Republican politicians and the ruling rich they serve. On the contrary, it is the sacred touchstone of their every action. And anything conflicting with it—public education, social services, a living wage, human dignity—becomes in their eyes an obscenity.



**On-the-job vasectomy**—The National Peach Council urged the government not to ban DBCP, the pesticide that causes sterility. Instead, the peach people suggested, working with the chemical should be assigned to men who don't want children but don't favor other means of birth control. It could also be assigned to people who want to die but don't favor suicide, since the chemical causes cancer.

**1984**—By that fateful year, McDonald's will have grown from 5,000 outlets to 8,000. Meanwhile, E. H. Schmitt, the chain's big mac, announced a 3 percent price boost to offset the new \$2.65 minimum wage, which, he says, will hit some of the

stores quite hard. Also, he said, 1977 profits topped \$1.25 million, up 25 percent from 1976.

**Less talk, more action?**—Rev. Anthony Kosnick, a priest who apparently feels the church is a bit behind the times in its view of sexuality, suggests: "Sometimes I think it would be better if the church said nothing more about sex for at least ten years and let the whole issue settle down."

**For your trophy room**—A Charlottesville, Virginia, jeweler is offering a twelve-inch skate board in sterling silver with diamond insets on the wheel hubs. \$350.

© 1977 by NEA, Inc.

John Berry



'Forget the "birds and the bees." Let's discuss how you stand on abortion and gay rights!'

**Postal news**—In 1868 the Post Office cost taxpayers \$19 million in subsidies. In 1976 the cost was \$1.7 billion, with delivery time approximately the same. Meanwhile, the P.O. is considering trimming costs by reducing the size of the thirteen-cent stamp by one-third. Service, we assume, will be reduced accordingly.

**Practically foolproof**—The federal Consumer Product Safety Commission nixed a proposal to set mandatory requirements for controlling the direction of aerosol sprays. The commission said that only 1,300 to 1,555 people are injured annually by misdirected sprays, and only 2 percent of these are hospitalized.

## Women in Revolt



### 'Identifying barriers'

How was President Carter's first year in office? For women, not too good.

Most women agree on that. Especially if they remember Carter's campaign promises to help us make sure the Equal Rights Amendment was passed. Or remember the Hyde amendment or Dade County.

But, as I wrote in last week's column about *Ms.* magazine's Carter scorecard, a record of the last year can't just tally Carter's points. What about our side, how the women's movement responded? We women owe ourselves a balance sheet too, so that we can capitalize on what we did right and avoid last year's mistakes.

Of course, the highlight of last year was the National Women's Conference in Houston. We accomplished a lot there in presenting women's demands as legitimate concerns before a national audience, in uniting around issues (even the "hot button" ones), and in involving new women, especially sisters of the oppressed national minorities and trade unions.

It is a sign of strength that women at a conference sponsored by the government went on record against the antiwoman policies of that same government.

The conference was supposed to "identify the barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of national life."

Actually, the women's movement has been explaining its demands for anyone who would listen since the Seneca Falls meeting of 1848.

At Houston we again identified barriers. But not quite all of them.

The conference was organized to avoid identifying the biggest barriers now confronting women: the White House, Congress and courts, the Democrats and Republicans who shrug off, or bargain away, or straight-on attack women's rights.

For instance, the conference voted in favor of government funding for abortion and for an end to discrimination against lesbians. But no one mentioned the Hyde amendment or the Briggs antigay initiative in California—the specific attacks happening now.

The conference organizers and floor leaders were pro-Democratic Party women such as Bella Abzug, Carol Bellamy, Barbara Jordan, Eleanor Smeal, and Gloria Steinem, who enforced a code of silence about Carter's role. That silence was only cracked slightly when women forced through an amended welfare resolution.

Rosalyn Carter appeared and boasted how much her husband had helped women by appointing some to his administration. Perhaps no one wanted to sound "rude" by asking her if she and Judy Carter and Miss Lillian are the only contributions that the president of the country and head of the Democratic

Party can make to the ERA drive.

No one got a chance to ask about the president's "life is unfair" dismissal of poor women who need federal money for abortion.

Attention was focused on just one ERA opponent, Phyllis Schlafly. Ignored were those Democratic legislators in Nevada and Virginia who had previously supported the ERA but then switched to vote against it.

Without frankly identifying these barriers it was difficult to talk about what women should do next. That discussion only happened informally. Neither conference commissioners nor prominent women's groups such as the National Organization for Women initiated or led that discussion.

This failure to identify the real barriers to women's equality—the double-dealing Democrats and Republicans, who give lip service to our rights while attacking us—hurt in Houston and continues to weaken the women's movement in general.

Rather than identifying the barriers, too many women identify with those barriers. They believe that the two political parties that are controlled by the sexist, racist, anti-working-class rich can somehow be convinced to champion women's rights.

It's a weakness the women's movement must correct. After all, identifying the barriers, or to put it more bluntly, knowing your enemies is step one toward defeating them.

## Capitalism Fouls Things Up



### The grain elevator explosions

Last month a series of explosions ripped grain elevators along the Gulf Coast. Three blasts killed more than fifty people in one week.

Government officials and grain companies were quick to blame the blasts on unusually high humidity, suggesting that the explosions were freak accidents. The truth is that grain elevators are "powder kegs," in the words of one expert.

Grain elevators are giant storage and shipment facilities. The ones that blew up in December loaded grain onto ships. One elevator that exploded held 3.8 million bushels. The atmosphere in the elevators is often thick with grain dust, which is highly volatile. A single spark, or even a hot light bulb can set it off.

The federal government is responsible for regulating the safety of grain elevators. But the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has never issued guidelines for elevator safety. Two of the blasts—the one in New Orleans and the one

in Galveston, Texas—occurred in an OSHA region whose administrator had been removed two months ago after the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union complained of lax safety enforcement.

One of the elevators—the \$26 million Farmers Export Company terminal in Galveston—had never been inspected at all.

After the explosions, OSHA announced it would speed up its plans to issue safety regulations for grain elevators. Studies have been going on for two years. A "preliminary alert" went out January 6.

"The central purpose of this action is to provide . . . comprehensive, up-to-date information on the safety hazards that can cause explosions," asserted Dr. Eula Bingham, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health.

But there is no big mystery about the causes of grain explosions. The problem is that the grain dealers prefer higher profits to safe working conditions. Government "regulatory" agencies just wink

at the violations.

A worker injured in the Farmers Export blast said there had been complaints from workers about dust levels, which he called "exceptionally bad." OSHA apparently did nothing.

OSHA's inaction is all too similar to government indifference to the safety of coal miners. Bureau of Mines inspections are notoriously corrupt. In many cases, mine operators find out in advance about the "surprise" inspections, and violations are quickly—and temporarily—cleaned up.

On March 8, 1976, a federal inspector cited the Scotia Coal Company for three safety violations. On March 9, a blast in the mine killed fifteen miners. On March 11, eleven more people were killed in a second explosion.

That's the real face of government enforcement of safety regulations. Neither OSHA, nor the Bureau of Mines, nor any other agency of this government can be relied on to protect workers on the job.



# How can the Palestinians win their rights?



Militant/Nick Medvecky

Beirut, Lebanon, August 1969: mobilization in support of Palestinian liberation movement

## By David Frankel

When Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat flew to Jerusalem on November 19, 1977, he handed the Israeli state a political victory that was hailed in imperialist capitals throughout the world. While crowds of ecstatic Israelis waved Egyptian flags in his honor, Sadat tried to pretend that his negotiations would advance the rights of the Palestinian people.

Applauding Sadat's initiative, the editors of the *New York Times* summed up its importance by declaring that "Israel's nationhood and right to exist could not be more dramatically acknowledged."

Having done this, Sadat joined President Carter and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in the search for a diplomatic formula that would give lip service to Palestinian rights while denying them in practice. At the same time, there has been a systematic campaign to isolate the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

## 'Bye-bye PLO'?

Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski gave the bluntest statement of the Carter administration's attitude when he told the magazine *Paris-Match* that since the PLO had not agreed to give up its struggle against the Israeli state, it was "bye-bye PLO."

It will take more than threats to destroy the PLO, but there is no doubt that the Palestinian liberation movement is in for a harsh test. Although that movement has united in the face of Sadat's betrayal and Washington's diplomatic offensive, the blow dealt the Palestinians by Sadat follows the setback at the hands of Syria and right-wing Christians during the Lebanese civil war. That defeat severely weakened the PLO.

This latter point has been denied by Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir), the military commander of Al Fateh, the main Palestinian guerrilla organization in the PLO. In an interview given last spring and published in the January 1978 issue of *Palestine!*, the Fateh leader said:

"Some say, in the American and western press, that the PLO was very weak after the battles in Lebanon. I can say to you that after those battles we are stronger in our forces, and more than that, in our experience. We began without heavy cannons or rockets. Now we are using them, like the TOW [a U.S. antitank rocket] and other rockets that were taken from those fighting us."

But this argument focuses on the military state of the PLO's forces, while ignoring the far more important question of the demoralizing political impact of the defeat in Lebanon. The significance of this factor was indicated by the turnout at a PLO rally in Beirut January 1.

*New York Times* correspondent Marvin Howe, estimating the crowd at 10,000, called it "the largest P.L.O. rally anyone could recall." But Howe was wrong. When Israeli commandos murdered three Palestinian leaders in Beirut in April 1973, their funeral turned into a demonstration of as many as 300,000 people. The contrast is sobering.

In this situation, PLO leader Yasser Arafat has returned to the more militant language of earlier days, threatening greater reliance on armed actions.

"We are not warmongers," he told the demonstrators in Beirut. "We are demanding our rights. And we know, as [former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel] Nasser said, that that which is taken through force can be retaken only through force."

Whether or not these statements will be put into practice remains to be seen. But for all those who

support the Palestinian liberation movement and who are concerned about the future of that movement in light of the latest developments, what is needed is not just another fervent appeal for struggle.

Something more is required. In order to move forward, one must learn the lessons of the past.

What were the past policies of the PLO? What were its strengths and weaknesses? What should be done now to avoid the failures of the past and point toward success?

These questions, the burning questions facing all Palestinian revolutionaries, were left unanswered by Arafat. Yet it is essential to seek the answers in order to move forward.

To understand what has happened, it is helpful to briefly review the history of the PLO.

## 'Our theory is very simple'

The PLO was originally set up by Arab governments to control the Palestinian struggle and use it for propaganda purposes. After the humiliating defeat of the Arab regimes in the June 1967 Mideast war, the PLO began to assert the independent interests of the Palestinian people much more forcefully than the Arab regimes had originally intended. It developed into a mass movement.

Arafat presented the PLO's theory of how the Palestinians could win their rights at that time in an interview that appeared in the December 3, 1968, issue of the *New York Times*.

"Our ideological theory is very simple," he said. "Our country has been occupied. The majority of our people have been kicked out by Zionism and imperialism from their homes."

"We waited and waited and waited for the justice of the United Nations, for the justice of the world. . . . But nothing of this was realized. None of our hopes. . . ."

"We have believed that the only way to return to our homes and land is the armed struggle. We believe in this theory without any complications and with complete clarity, and this is our aim and our hope."

After the defeat of the Arab regimes in the 1967 war, the example of independent organization and struggle set by the PLO was an inspiration to the masses. Its influence was so strong that even King Hussein of Jordan—who in 1970 launched a civil war to crush the PLO—was forced at first to give lip service to the Palestinian cause.

The PLO was seen by the masses as a left-wing alternative to reliance on the Arab regimes. Its activity helped to counteract the effect of the defeat in 1967; instead of demoralization, there was an upsurge among the masses.

The PLO leadership in this period spoke out firmly for the self-determination of the Palestinian people. When they presented their call for a democratic-secular Palestine, they explicitly excluded any acceptance of the Israeli state.

But following the defeat of the PLO in bloody fighting in Jordan in 1970 and 1971, there was a move to the right by the PLO leadership.

## The Rogers Plan

Prior to the civil war in Jordan, William Rogers, Nixon's secretary of state, had toured Arab countries. He dangled the bait that perhaps Israeli withdrawal from the territories seized in 1967 and even a Palestinian entity of some sort in the West Bank and Gaza could be arranged in return for Arab recognition of the Zionist state.

The Rogers Plan, as it came to be known, was welcomed by the Arab regimes. With the defeat in Jordan, much of the PLO leadership also began toying with the possibility of such a deal.

In the meantime, however, the Israeli regime continued its assimilation of the occupied territories. With no progress being made on the diplomatic front, Sadat and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad launched the October 1973 war in hopes of breaking the deadlock and forcing new moves toward a settlement along the lines promised by Rogers.

At the same time that it opened new opportunities for the Arab ruling classes, the October 1973 war also inspired the masses once again with the proof that it was possible to fight the Israeli state and win gains. The mass protests in the West Bank and the radicalization of the Palestinian population inside Israel's pre-1967 borders were spurred by the October war.

But instead of relying on the masses, as it did after the 1967 war, the PLO leadership was drawn in behind the Arab regimes in the search for a negotiated settlement. It was this willingness to participate in the search for a deal that was behind the PLO's being named by the Arab summit conference in Rabat, Morocco, in 1974 as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." The

*Continued on next page*

# ...how can Palestinians win?



Ruins of Ramtha, Jordan, after town was shelled and bombed by Jordanian army in September 1970.

## Continued from preceding page

Arab regimes had refused to do anything of the kind in 1969, when the PLO was at least as influential among the Palestinian masses as it is today.

## Hopes for a deal dashed

Any deal involving recognition of Israel would be a severe blow to the Palestinian struggle. As long as the Israeli state exists, excluding most Palestinians from their homeland and subjecting others to police repression and second-class citizenship, the oppression of the Palestinians will continue. In essence, the proposal to recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli state means legitimizing the oppression of the Palestinians and accepting that oppression.

Arafat, who could easily have made his own position on this question clear at any time, chose not to do so. Instead, the PLO leadership refused to rule out a deal with Israel.

Like Sadat and the other Arab rulers, the PLO leadership based its strategy on the hope that Washington would pressure the Israeli regime to make substantive concessions. When Carter recently made a declaration in opposition to a Palestinian state that it was impossible to ignore or misinterpret, official PLO representative Mahmoud Labadi finally declared, "The United States has lost its role as a neutral arbiter in the Middle East. . . ."

Of course, Washington never played a neutral role, and it never will. But Labadi's comment is indicative of what at least a section of the PLO leadership had been hoping.

Disagreement on whether to take an uncompromising position in regard to a deal with Israel had led to a division in the Palestinian movement between the PLO majority and the so-called Rejection Front, which opposed any negotiations.

Now that Carter has ruled out the kind of deal many PLO leaders had hoped for, the split between the rejectionists and the Arafat leadership has been healed, at least for the time being. This was indicated by a joint statement adopted by all the major Palestinian resistance groups in Tripoli, Libya, December 5.

The statement declared in part: "We reaffirm our right to realize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for return and self-determination, including the right to establish a Palestinian state on any liberated piece of land without reconciliation, negotiation, or recognition [of Israel]."

Speaking at the united PLO rally in Beirut January 1, Arafat declared, "No to surrender. Yes to fighting."

But the questions remains: How is the fight for Palestinian rights to be carried out? What road can lead to victory?

## 'Armed struggle' inadequate

As has already been explained, in the past the PLO leadership, including the rejectionists, have tended to pose two alternatives for the Palestinian

struggle: negotiations to seek a deal, or armed struggle.

The fundamental demands of the Palestinians can never be won through negotiations. As Israeli officials frequently point out, they have no intention of negotiating their state out of existence.

Although the call for armed struggle is generally seen as a rejection of this dead-end reliance on negotiations, it is not an adequate alternative. By themselves, without any secure territorial base or state apparatus, the Palestinians can never hope to match even the military power of Syria or Egypt, let alone Israel.

In practice, the "armed struggle" carried out against Israel by the guerrilla organizations has consisted primarily of hijackings, bombings, and commando raids by small groups of fighters. Such actions effectively exclude participation by the masses and will never bring down the Zionist state.

Moreover, to the extent that the armed struggle strategy has been put into a political context by the PLO leadership, it has frequently been presented as an adjunct to negotiations—as a form of pressure on the Arab regimes and imperialism, not as an independent strategy for how the Palestinians can win their rights.

A realistic strategy for Palestinian liberation must start from the understanding that the power of the Palestinian movement has never been based primarily on military strength. Its power has been based on its political stance—on its determination to struggle against the oppression of the Palestinian people by whatever means possible. That willingness to struggle, compared with the betrayals of the Arab regimes, gained broad support among the Arab peoples as a whole.

The Arab masses in their millions—that is the real force capable of destroying the Zionist state and building a new social order in the Middle East.

Looked at from this angle, the most important question facing any Palestinian leadership is the need for a political program that can help to mobilize the Arab masses and unify their struggles. A strategy of armed struggle cannot win in the absence of such a mass mobilization, but the PLO leadership has never offered a political program based on the necessity of drawing the masses into political activity.

Instead, the PLO leadership—and the guerrilla groups in the Rejection Front to an even greater extent—have viewed the mass movement as secondary to building a military apparatus. This attitude was evident in the quotation from Abu Jihad cited at the beginning of this article.

Despite this weakness, the PLO did win massive support in the Arab world. And the very success of the PLO in this posed the necessity of a revolutionary socialist political program even more sharply.

No matter how sharp their anti-Zionist rhetoric, the Arab regimes have always feared the mobilization of their own people more than the existence of the Israeli state. They have shown a resoluteness in carrying out repression at home that they have never demonstrated in the struggle against Zionist aggression.

Since governments such as those in Lebanon and Jordan had no intention of confronting the Israeli state, they automatically came into conflict with any mass movement demanding that they stand up to Zionist aggression. Furthermore, the Lebanese and Jordanian masses who supported the Palestinians and their demands expected similar support in their own struggles.

The PLO leadership attempted to deal with this

problem by dodging it. It declared a policy of nonintervention in the "internal affairs" of the Arab countries, as if by this ruse it could evade the consequences of the class struggle and stave off a confrontation with the Arab regimes.

## Defeat in Jordan

In Jordan in particular, where 60 percent of the population is Palestinian, there was never any basis for the idea that the struggle for Palestinian rights could somehow be separated from the overall politics of the country. When the PLO implemented its head-in-the-sand policy there, it led to the "Black September" disaster of 1970.

What kind of program was needed in Jordan?

To begin with, it was necessary for the PLO to champion the democratic rights of the Jordanian people. This was a matter of elementary self-preservation, as well as a necessity if links of solidarity between the guerrilla organizations and the masses outside the refugee camps were to be strengthened.

The refugee camps could not be expected to survive as islands of freedom for the guerrilla groups if in the rest of the country censorship, repression of political and trade-union organizations, and denial of the right of the masses to decide political questions for themselves was the rule.

Another issue that had to be addressed was the plight of the peasants. A land program that would guarantee every peasant family adequate land of its own; government-subsidized loans to free the small peasants from the grip of usurers; government-funded irrigation projects that could better the lot of the peasants while cutting down rural unemployment—demands such as these could have helped further the isolation of the monarchy.

Similarly, it was necessary for the Palestinian movement to address the problems facing the urban masses. Problems of housing, unemployment, food prices, wages—all the issues faced in daily life by both Palestinian refugees and Jordanian workers had to be discussed and solutions offered.

But these problems, which are common to all of the Arab countries, cannot be solved except by a workers and farmers government. Although the PLO had mass support and considerable military resources in Jordan, its leadership had no perspective for leading a fight for a socialist government of the workers and farmers—the only type of government that will ever give wholehearted support to the struggle of the Palestinian people.

Because it had no program for what to do in Jordan, the PLO leadership was unprepared to effectively defend itself. It could only mark time until King Hussein made his move.

Despite years of conflict between Hussein's Be-douin army and the Palestinian liberation groups, the PLO leadership consistently opposed any program for arming the masses *politically* against Hussein's regime. They insisted that a showdown could be avoided.

The only ones fooled by this were the Jordanian and Palestinian masses. In the meantime, Hussein gathered his forces, picked his time, and struck.

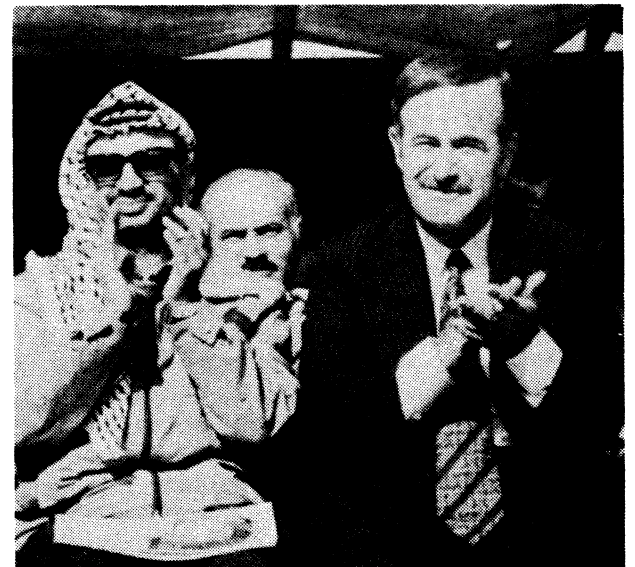
## Civil war in Lebanon

Notwithstanding the debacle in Jordan, the PLO leaders followed exactly the same policy in Lebanon.

Although the civil war in Lebanon began with the machine-gunning of a busload of Palestinians returning from a rally in April 1975, tension had been building up for years. There were large-scale clashes



Arafat with Sadat (left) and with Assad. PLO leadership has proved incapable of carrying out a systematic political fight against pressure of Arab regimes.







Palestinians murdered by Lebanese rightists at Tal al-Zaatar refugee camp

between the Palestinian guerrillas and the Lebanese army in 1969 and again in 1973, with numerous smaller confrontations in between.

For the Lebanese masses, the failure of the regime to protect them against Israeli terror raids, the lack of social welfare programs, the stunted development of the economy and the unequal distribution of wealth, and the discriminatory political setup, were all part of a daily life propelling them into struggle.

When some 300,000 people came out into the streets of Beirut in the April 1973 demonstration mentioned above, they were protesting against their own government as much as against the Zionist raids. Thus, willy-nilly, the PLO leadership was faced with the reality of the class struggle in Lebanon.

Nevertheless, the PLO leadership consistently rejected the idea of trying to develop any program for what to do in Lebanon, claiming this was the job of the Lebanese alone.

Such a stance finally became untenable during the civil war—at which point the PLO articulated a specifically procapitalist program. In the February 8, 1976, issue of the PLO newspaper *Falastin Al-Thawra*, 'Abd Kiwan argued that "the conflict is between a capitalist economic system and a decaying political framework inherited from forms of production that predate capitalism" (quoted in *Swasia*, March 26, 1976).

As a theoretical argument, this is not convincing, since Lebanon's political system was imposed by French imperialism—hardly a precapitalist phenomenon! But what was significant was the political conclusion drawn from this analysis. Kiwan claimed:

"The terrible battle that took place on the soil of Lebanon [this was written during a period of ceasefire] is the fertile mother that will give birth to a new offspring—a new Lebanon established on the basis of a bourgeois democracy and the apparatus of a modern state that will aid and facilitate the growth and flowering of the Lebanese economy."

According to this reasoning, all of Lebanon's pressing social problems could be solved within the confines of capitalism merely by carrying out a reform of the country's governmental apparatus.

Of course, the real attraction of such theories is not in their solutions for the problems of the Arab masses, but as a means of ensuring the Arab regimes that the PLO will behave "responsibly" and not support or encourage any anticapitalist revolutionary activity.

### Response to Syrian pressure

In Lebanon, it was the Syrian regime that demanded the PLO play a "responsible" role. The PLO leaders tried to comply. When the civil war began, they attempted to remain aloof from the conflict, finally committing their forces only after rightist troops had attacked several major refugee camps.

Even then, PLO leaders refused to push for an all-out victory, despite the clear possibility of such a victory. Under Syrian pressure, the PLO leaders helped force through several cease-fires and compromises that gave the Syrian regime a chance to organize its own military intervention on behalf of the rightists.

Of course, once Assad's troops began fighting in earnest on the side of the rightist forces, the PLO leaders denounced him. But it was too late by then. Only a consistent policy of exposing the Syrian role from the beginning could have disarmed Assad politically and laid the basis for mobilizing the potentially widespread opposition to his moves inside Syria.

Once the PLO leadership finally did begin to denounce Assad, it turned to none other than Sadat, dropping its earlier criticism of the Egyptian leader for his Sinai disengagement pact with Israel.

When the massive upsurge of the Egyptian working class against increases in food prices took place in January 1977, Arafat and the rest of the PLO leadership were still on friendly terms with Sadat.

Not a word of solidarity with the Egyptian workers passed their lips.

Had the PLO tried to identify itself with the protest of the Egyptian masses instead of orienting to the Egyptian government, it doubtless would not have stopped Sadat's treason. But the Palestinian movement would have furthered the process of forging solidarity with the Egyptian working class and made Sadat's subsequent trip to Israel and other diplomatic maneuvers against the PLO more difficult.

### PLO tops draw wrong lesson

As the events in Jordan and Lebanon prove, a victory for the Palestinian national liberation struggle depends on the progress of the socialist revolution throughout the Middle East. Only a leadership that sees the link between the Palestinian liberation struggle and the class struggle as a whole will be able to lead the masses to victory.

Leaders who are not prepared to lead the masses against the Arab ruling classes, or who have an inadequate program for this task, can only bring further defeats.

This is doubly true in the context of the imperialist diplomatic offensive against the Palestinian movement. The attempt to isolate the Palestinian movement politically is designed to set the stage for new military attacks by both Israel and the Arab regimes.

But the PLO leadership has drawn a different conclusion from the events in Lebanon. Instead of attempting to chart a political course independent of the Arab regimes, one that could help mobilize the Arab masses in their millions, the PLO leaders have reaffirmed their opposition to any involvement in the class struggle on the side of the Lebanese or Syrian workers and poor peasants.

Fateh leader Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), second only to Arafat himself, explained the view of the leadership of the most important force in the PLO in an interview in August 1977. "In the past we disagreed with Syria about many things," the Fateh leader admitted. "We had our views about

Syrian intervention [in Lebanon]. We had our attitude. But the factors attendant on the Palestine problem at this historic stage, and in the area as a whole, not to mention our history, have enabled us to overcome these differences. . . .

"In any case, however much we may have disagreed in the past, from now on we shall devote ourselves to our cause, without being engrossed in the details of the Lebanese situation. . . ." (Quoted in the Autumn 1977 issue of *Palestine Studies*.)

Was the civil war in Lebanon really a mere "detail" the Palestinian people could have ignored? Have the "differences" of the PLO with Assad really been "overcome"?

Khalaf doesn't bother to elaborate on such questions. He simply reaffirms the view that the class struggle outside Palestine is not central to the Palestinian liberation movement, despite the fact that its biggest defeats have been suffered in this arena.

To ensure there was no mistake about what he was saying, Khalaf listed three "sacred" principles, the first of which was:

"Henceforward the Palestinian resistance cannot be a party to any war, involving side issues, whether it is Lebanese or Arab. We shall make every effort to ensure that we devote ourselves to our cause and to strengthening links with men of good will of all parties, and we shall not be a party to any local or Arab conflict."

Similar statements were also made before the bloodbath in Jordan.

### Need for revolutionary party

Of course, just as the Palestinian liberation movement cannot defeat the Zionist state by itself, it also cannot make the socialist revolution in the Arab countries by itself. What is needed is the construction of a mass revolutionary socialist party in each country that includes both the vanguard of the Palestinian people and the vanguard of the workers and peasants as a whole.

Such parties would participate actively in all the day-to-day struggles of the Palestinian people and the Arab masses. They would put forward proposals at each stage to advance these struggles and would aspire to win leadership of them.

It is the success of this strategy of building mass revolutionary parties that can lead to victory for the Palestinian national liberation struggle and the socialist revolution throughout the Arab world.

Today, there are no parties of this type in existence. But in many countries, including in the Middle East, there are small groups of revolutionists striving to build mass revolutionary parties that will be able to avoid the mistakes of the past.

These revolutionists are organized in the ranks of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement. That is where Palestinian militants who have been convinced of the bankruptcy of the current Palestinian leadership belong.



Protests by Egyptian workers shook Cairo and other major cities in January 1977. PLO leaders failed to side with masses against Sadat's regime.

## Books on the Mideast conflict

**Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?**, by Maxime Rodinson; 128 pp., \$1.75.

**Israel and the Arab Revolution: Fundamental Principles of Revolutionary Marxism**, by Gus Horowitz; 64 pp., \$1.00.

**Self-Determination in the Mideast: A Debate From the Pages of the 'Militant' and 'Daily World,'** by David Frankel and Tom Foley; 30 pp., \$.60.

**Roots of the Mideast War: Selections from the 'International Socialist Review';** 46 pp., \$.75.

**War in the Middle East: The Socialist View**, by David Frankel, Dick Roberts, and Tony Thomas; 31 pp., \$.60.

**The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation**, by Abram Leon; 170 pp., \$2.95.

**How Can the Jews Survive? A Socialist Answer to Zionism**, by George Novack; 22 pp., \$.25.

**Socialists and the Fight Against Anti-Semitism: An Answer to the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League**, by Peter Seidman; 31 pp., \$.60.

Order from PATHFINDER PRESS, 410 WEST STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10014.

## By Frank Lovell

Health and retirement benefits for miners is a major issue in the coal strike that began December 6.

Once considered a "fringe benefit" in most industries, health-care plans are now critical for this nation's workers. This is increasingly true because a greater share of what would otherwise be paid in wages has gradually gone into these plans and because of the rising cost of hospitalization.

The right of everyone to free public health service is almost universally recognized, but in this country only designated categories—certain government officials, members of the armed forces, and so on—are able to exercise this right.

Most unions have tried to extend the right of health care to their members, with the mine union in the forefront. But under these union-negotiated health plans—unlike a free national public health service available to all—the welfare of the workers in a particular industry is tied to the welfare of that industry.

And the industry is free to use the threat to cut those benefits as a weapon in its fight against job rights and wages. Nowhere is it used with such vengeance as in the present coal strike.

In June of last year, the coal operators "discovered" that one of the funds in the United Mine Workers health program was "precarious"—its expenditures far exceeding income. The funds' trustees—one representing the union, one the coal industry, and one "neutral"—then slashed health coverage for 821,000 beneficiaries.

### Protest strike

In protest, miners walked off the job in a wildcat strike that grew to nearly 80,000, or half the union's working members.

The operators charged that the strike further jeopardized the health and pension funds, that the main cause of the funds' shaky condition to begin with was these unauthorized work stoppages, and that unless the work force were "stabilized" under a new contract there would be no more health plans—and no more union for that matter.

In this way the coal industry made the health and retirement benefits a central issue from the beginning in the current contract negotiations. It is the issue coal operators hope will be decisive in forcing the 180,000 miners back to the mines with a settlement to the operators' liking.

The funds are maintained by payments from coal companies based on the amount of coal mined and the number of hours worked at each mine—\$.82 per ton of production and \$1.54 per labor-hour.

The negotiators who set these rates of payment in 1974 failed to accurately estimate the cost of the plans. Whatever financial problems resulted from this had nothing to do with the strikes. These have been provoked by the operators flaunting safety rules in the mines, scuttling the grievance procedure, and discharging union committee members.

The fact that coal production is steadily increasing as the market expands is evidence enough that mine strikes have not caused underfunding of the health and pension plans. The basic cause is complex, resulting from low royalty payments by the operators, mismanagement of the funds, and rising health costs.

### Wages, benefits decline

In current contract negotiations the union has submitted data showing that wages and benefits (including health care) have constantly declined in relation to coal sales since 1969.

Union negotiators have vowed to improve the funding of the health and pension benefits and establish a plan "that is not dependent on the ups and downs of coal production."

The operators, however, have something else in mind. "Industry officials freely admit that they're counting on the financial troubles of the UMWA Health & Retirement Funds to undercut UMWA militancy," reports *Coal Patrol*, a Washington, D.C., publication.

According to *Coal Patrol's* editor Thomas Bethell, industry negotiators have refused even to allow its bargaining subcommittee on benefits to meet with the union's benefits subcommittee to begin working on a new plan to restore medical care to miners.

Instead, the coal operators have proposed a plan whereby miners who join unauthorized work stoppages would have their pay docked when they return to work. The deduction would be contributed to the health fund.

This is to back up the industry's central demand that it have the contractual right to fire and otherwise discipline miners who join wildcat strikes.

"We're going to get stability one way or another," says an industry source quoted by *Coal Patrol*. "The union has demonstrated its inability to enforce contracts. With this language, they won't even have to try. They can just sit back and collect dues if they want."

### History of health plan

The miners' health and pension fund was established in 1946 in a contract negotiated by John L. Lewis, then UMWA president, and U.S. Interior Secretary Julius Krug. The settlement followed a fifty-nine-day strike during which the federal government took nominal control of the mines.

At that time the "welfare and retirement fund," as it was originally called, was financed by a royalty payment of five cents for every ton of coal mined. The fund was a concession by the government to keep up the appearance of wage controls, which the Truman administration was trying to hold against the rising tide of strikes.

Another reason for creating the welfare fund was the deplorable lack of health facilities in the coal-fields. A U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine report found that "three-quarters of the hospitals are inadequate." The average distance from mine to hospital was 17 miles, ranging from 1 mile to 160.

John L. Lewis, the 1949 biography by Saul Alinsky, presents a then-typical view of the UMWA fund: "It far transcends not only any other union program, but even Great Britain's 'Cradle to Grave' Social Security," Alinsky wrote.

"Miners' wives get free medical and hospital care with free choice of physician, including specialists and unlimited periods of hospitalization. If a miner in disabled for any reason he receives cash benefits as well as prescribed medical care. If he retires at the age of sixty he receives a monthly pension for life of one hundred dollars. When he dies his widow or surviving dependents receive a cash payment of one thousand dollars.

"There is no time limit on these aids and men injured thirty-five years ago as well as widows of men caught in mine disasters as long as thirty years ago are now receiving real help."

That was the dream.

### 'Miners in coal business'

There was a fundamental problem that was recognized from the beginning. "The Fund has partially put the miners into the coal business," Alinsky wrote, "and now a strike against the operators, is also against themselves."

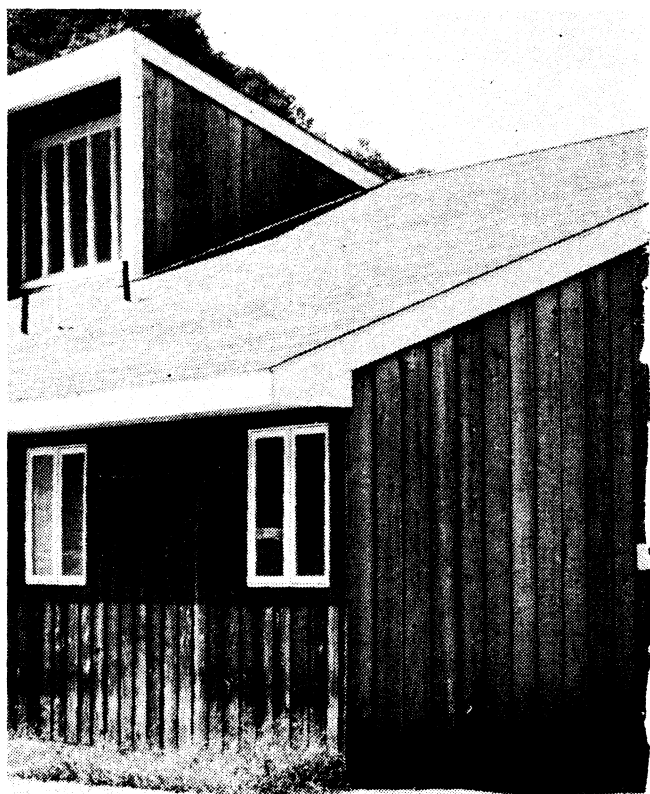
"This has been the dilemma of 1949 for Lewis," said his biographer, "and presents a problem that must be solved."

The problem was solved—in favor of the operators at the expense of the miners.

In 1956, the UMWA fund completed an ambitious

# Health key is coals

Medical care ought to be mineowners—and other empl health benefits as a weapon working people turn back the quate health care for all?



Clinic in Cabin Creek, West Virginia, was initiated by U survival because of crisis in UMWA benefit funds.

health-care project. Ten new hospitals were built in the mining regions of Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia costing \$30 million. It was the closest approach to free public health service yet seen in this country.

But because the future of the project depended on the future development of the coal industry, it ran into trouble almost immediately. To trim expenses the fund's trustees tightened the eligibility requirements for pensions, cut off cash aid for disabled miners and income for widows.

Coal production declined from the 500-million-ton high in 1956 to 412 million tons in 1959, and the miners' health fund showed a \$12 million deficit for that year. In 1960 the deficit was \$21 million.

The 1961 annual report showed the fund with a cash balance of only \$99 million, the lowest in seven years. Miners' hospital and medical benefits were cut off after one year of unemployment, and pensions were reduced to seventy-five dollars monthly.

Eight of the new UMWA hospitals were sold in 1962 to an agency of the Presbyterian church; the other two were closed. The financial loss was estimated at \$16 million.

It turned out that during this time welfare fund monies were manipulated to enrich the union-owned National Bank of Washington, which in turn was making heavy loans to mine owners to use in their drive to mechanize the mines.

### Signs of recovery

The coal industry showed signs of recovery by 1963. Coal production was up, and even though the price of coal was below the 1948 level, mechanization insured handsome profits. A miner was producing fifteen tons a day compared to six tons back in 1948.

Today the price of steam coal is about twenty-six dollars a ton and metallurgical coal for steel making as high as forty-six dollars—almost ten times what it was in 1963. Wages have also gone up—from over three dollars an hour then to about eight

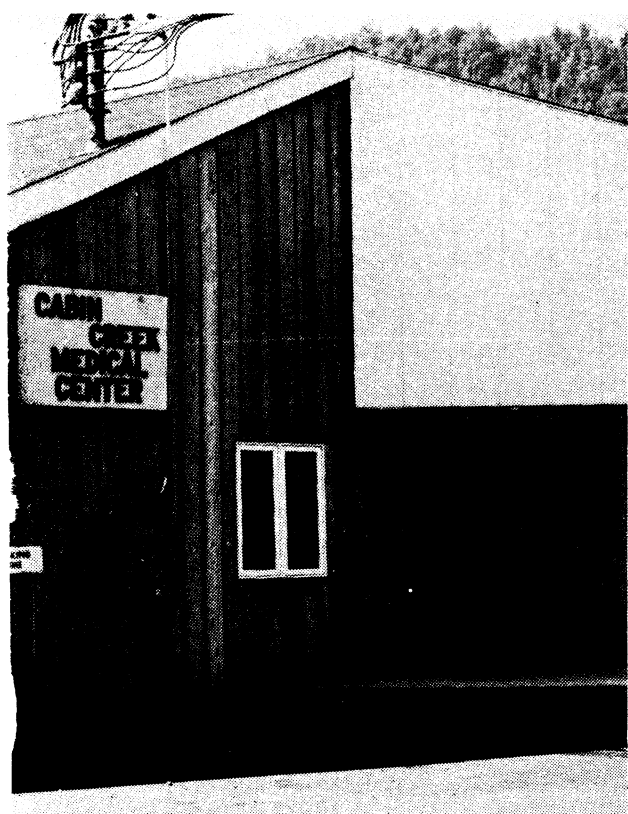


That was the dream



# Health care: The issue in the strike

a basic human right. But employers—use the threat to end against the unions. How can we attacks and win free, ade-



Militant/Nancy Cole

and Mine Workers. It and others like it are struggling for

dollars now. But the increase in wages is small compared to the astronomical jump in coal prices and in mine productivity.

Payments to the health and pension funds have gone from forty cents in 1952 to eighty-two cents in 1977. This small increase is hardly commensurate with the ability of the coal operators to pay and the needs of the funds to offset rising health costs.

What has happened to the miners' health and pension plan is an advance case of the sickness that afflicts all similar funds established through union negotiations. One of the most striking examples is the huge pension funds of the municipal unions in New York City.

These funds were established to pay the pensions of retired school teachers and other public workers. They have now been converted into shaky city bonds to help pay off the city's bank loans.

In this case the banks demand their money in advance regardless of what happens to the pension funds. City workers are warned not to strike or ask for higher wages because they risk losing their pensions if they do.

When employer-hospitals fell millions of dollars in arrears in payments to the health fund of District 1199 of the Hospital Employees union in New York City, an arbitrator ordered cuts in benefits for the union membership.

Most of the early confidence in such industry-based health plans is vanishing in the light of current failures.

In the post-World War II years such "socially conscious" union officials as Auto union President Walter Reuther argued that union-negotiated health-care plans would protect the organized industrial workers and that the major corporations would eventually come to realize that a national health plan for everyone would be cheaper and more beneficial.

Labor leaders abandoned—but only for the time being, they said, because of the antiunion climate during the Eisenhower administration—the political struggle for the national health program that

had been promised by Eisenhower and his predecessors.

In the past two decades, from 1957 to 1977, pension plans that rely on company profits numbered close to 200,000. According to the Labor Department, plans that also provide health care benefits are over 7,000.

Most give only partially paid health care. None provide full care to all employees. They serve another purpose.

"The plans impose new roles on union and management," says one management adviser. "They can create a cooperative climate in which negotiations are reasonable." In other words, the idea is to eliminate strikes by threatening to withdraw pension and health benefits.

## Pension plan failures

Many pension plans were so fraudulent that Congress enacted legislation in 1974 to protect workers against pension plan failures and established the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation.

It is estimated that this government agency, which derives its income from a levy on all multiemployer pension plans, may be forced to pay out as much as \$100 billion to reclaim outstanding obligations. Of course, it has no prescribed way of raising such vast sums.

The false promise that coal miners can trade off their right to strike in return for job security, health care, and old-age benefits seems to be well understood by members of the UMWA.

In fact, no trade-off is offered. The operators are demanding surrender. If the miners give up their right to strike, they will lose their ability to force the operators to pay benefits of any kind, implement mine safety, or in any way comply with either federal law or union agreement.

The idea that health care is a *right* is firmly implanted among coal miners, largely because of the programs initiated by the UMWA.

The fight for black lung benefits was won through community actions led by members of the United Mine Workers.

General health care in Appalachia has been largely dependent upon UMWA health funds, both through direct subsidy and through payments from service to UMWA members. These clinics service the entire community, not only beneficiaries of the UMWA health plan.

The Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington says that only federal aid can keep seventy such clinics and sixty-one coalfield hospitals in six states from cutting back health services.

Some clinics are expected to lose 80 percent of their revenue if the coal operators are able to scuttle the UMWA health funds.

## Federal aid

Pressure is on the Carter administration to give special emergency help to Appalachian facilities in addition to the regular aid provided for rural health clinics nationally.

This is a demand that could well be taken up by the UMWA in every district, giving official endorsement and direction to the political fight that miners,

in alliance with others in their communities, are making to retain the health facilities.

The victims of the closing clinics know that the coal operators are directly responsible, but there is no clear proof of this available to them. The Miners union could throw open the books of the UMWA health and retirement trusts for all to see where the money went.

The union could also pry open the books of the coal companies to show where the money is. It could then raise the question of why more hasn't been paid out for the needs of miners and others in these communities that have been robbed over the years of billions to enrich the coal companies.

The union movement is beginning to swing behind a resurgent trend for national health insurance legislation. There is no positive response to this in either the Democratic or Republican parties, and this lethargy of the capitalist politicians has provoked growing impatience among some top officials of the unions.

## National health insurance

United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser has taken up the cudgels for a national health insurance program.

The health coverage of auto workers is far from the worst. But Fraser foresees the problems that rising health costs are bringing. At the UAW Skilled Trade Conference in New Orleans on December 13, he demanded of Congress and Carter a national health-insurance program *now*.

Every president since Franklin Roosevelt—Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter—has each declared that in his administration there would be national health security. There is none.

Carter aides say a bill will be drafted labeled "national health insurance" sometime in 1979, but it will contain no comprehensive health-care provisions as promised.

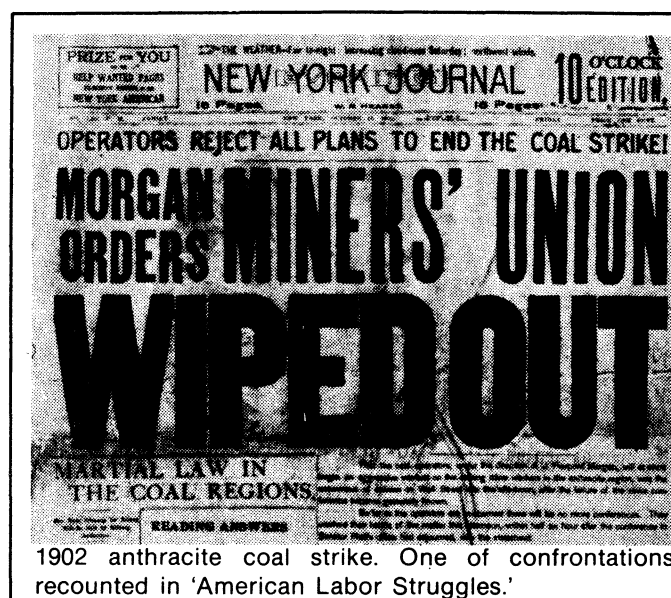
"We're going to look for new allies, and we're going to continue to fight until we get quality health care for every man, woman, and child in America," Fraser says.

He will get no help from Carter. No help from Congress either. How, then, will a comprehensive health-care program be enacted?

It is clear that any further advance—whether in health care, public housing, labor law reform, Social Security benefits, civil rights, or any other area of badly needed social legislation—will be made only through strikes, massive protest demonstrations, and other forms of independent political action against the employers and their political agencies.

"I think we've had enough," is the way former UMWA Secretary-treasurer Harry Patrick puts it. "We've tried and tried and tried to work within one of the two major parties, and it is simply just not going to work."

Patrick believes that the effort labor poured into the election of Carter in 1976 would be better used for an independent labor party to elect labor candidates to office. Then maybe another administration wouldn't pass without all American workers having the basic right to health care.



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# Lessons from history

## Imports drop, layoffs go on

# Carter steel plan working fine—for bosses

By Andy Rose

The Carter administration's plan to "save the steel industry" is working just as intended.

Imports are down.

Prices are up.

And steel company profits this year "could be a windfall," according to Merrill Lynch, the big Wall Street stockbrokers.

Jobs? Well, that's a different story. Despite considerable buildup from union officials and Democratic politicians, Carter's steel plan never actually promised to save jobs—and it isn't.

On January 3, the same day that the federal Treasury Department unveiled its first list of "trigger" prices to limit steel imports, U.S. Steel made it clear it will close its remaining mills in Youngstown, Ohio. The shutdown will throw another 5,000 steelworkers out of work in Youngstown, a city already hard hit by steel plant closings.

Since last September U.S. Steel has cut its Youngstown production capacity in half and fired 300 workers. In its January 3 announcement, the giant steel corporation said it will make no

major investments to modernize its Youngstown facilities.

"You can't put a lot of money into an old factory which is based in a bad geographical location," said a U.S. Steel executive.

The corporation made a point of saying it had no plans "at this moment" to shut the plant. That's the same line Youngstown Sheet & Tube used right up until the day it announced the closing of its Campbell Works.

Edgar Speer, chairman of U.S. Steel, confirmed that the plant would be closed "at some point down the line."

The press made a big deal of the "sense of poignancy" for Speer, who got his first job with U.S. Steel in 1938 at the Ohio Works in Youngstown. But Speer still has a job—one that paid him a tidy \$425,000 in salary and bonuses in 1976, not to mention stock options and dividends.

The real poignancy is that thousands of steelworkers will get the axe after their union officials assured them that fighting imports was the way to save their jobs.

Steel imports fell significantly in the final months of 1977. But the drive of

U.S. corporations to increase productivity and profits—the real reason for layoffs and plant closings—continues unabated.

As the *New York Times* discreetly phrased it, "The reference price system is not likely . . . to stem the phasing out of outdated plants by the domestic industry."

Under the system of "reference" or "trigger" prices announced last December by Washington, steel imports will be effectively banned below a certain minimum price. On January 3 that price was revealed to be an average of \$330 a ton for most imported steel.

The Treasury Department says this still leaves imports twenty dollars a ton, or 5.7 percent, cheaper than the domestic price for the same products. It is commonly accepted that steel buyers will take domestic steel over imported steel unless the imports are at least 10 percent cheaper.

Considering that it costs Japanese producers less than \$270 to make a ton of steel (according to the federal Council on Wage and Price Stability), the \$330 minimum price set by Washing-

ton is a lavish gift indeed to the American steel trust.

This price floor protects the highly monopolized U.S. industry from foreign competition and gives it a free hand to raise prices. And that is exactly what the U.S. industry is doing. Even before the exact "trigger" price was revealed, the U.S. corporations announced a new round of steel price increases averaging 5.5 percent, to take effect February 1.

The only winners are the U.S. steel profiteers. Working people foot the bill through higher prices.

This was confirmed by a Federal Trade Commission report leaked to the press in early January. It estimates that the steel import restrictions will cost consumers more than \$1 billion a year.

It is hardly a coincidence that \$1 billion a year is the same amount (give or take \$100 million) by which the Carter administration says it aims to increase steel company profits.

The money goes, in effect, straight from workers' pockets to company profits.

Saving jobs? Forget it. That was just window-dressing.

## Steel notes...

**BRASS STRIKE NEARS FOURTH MONTH:** No settlement is in sight for the 2,500 brass workers who have been on strike since last October 1 against Anaconda Brass. Most of the strikers are members of the United Steelworkers of America. The strike affects six plants scattered across the country from Connecticut to California.

Anaconda Brass is a division of Atlantic Richfield (Arco), one of the biggest U.S. oil companies. Arco had profits in 1976 of more than \$575 million. Not long after acquiring Anaconda, Arco decided the brass workers were being paid too much. It demanded "parity" with the rest of the brass industry, to be achieved by cutting wages and eliminating cost-of-living adjustments.

Bill Breihan, a Milwaukee foundry worker and correspondent for the *Militant*, reports that "steelworkers at Arco's Kenosha, Wisconsin, plant responded to this generous company offer by voting 99 percent in favor of immediate strike action. These 780 members of USWA Local 9322 were joined by a smaller Machinists local at the plant, which voted unanimously to strike."

Breihan says that Local 9322 voted heavily for the Sadlowski ticket in last February's international union election. Bob Wirch, a local member who was active in the Steelworkers Fight Back movement, told Breihan he considers the strike a "lockout," since the company has yet to make a real contract offer. "It's an obvious attempt to break the union," Wirch

says. "They've shown absolutely no willingness to bargain with us."

Breihan adds that the strike is 100 percent solid at the Kenosha plant, with no production taking place.

**. . . AND IN ANSONIA:** Another 450 brass strikers are in Ansonia, Connecticut, members of USWA Local 6445. John Del Vecchio, vice-president of Local 7528 in nearby Bridgeport, told the *Militant* that Anaconda has made extensive efforts to demoralize the strikers with ads in newspapers and on TV. Foremen and clerical employees are keeping the plant in operation, but not a single union member is at work, and no scabs have yet been brought in. A cutoff of insurance benefits was another company weapon.

A court injunction has severely limited picketing at the Ansonia plant, Del Vecchio reports, but Teamsters are still refusing to cross the line. The Ansonia strikers know they need broad labor support to hold out in their battle against this multi-billion-dollar oil giant. They have been traveling around the state appealing for aid and soliciting badly needed funds. They collected \$250 at the plant gates from members of Del Vecchio's local; the local contributed another \$100 from its treasury.

**'EXAMPLE OF UNITY':** Del Vecchio also reports that members of his local, who contributed \$100 to help out the Mesabi Iron Range strikers, are "pleased to hear of their partial victory."

"It is a shame and disgrace," he says, "that some district directors and 'leaders' did not support these determined and militant strikers. I feel their example of unity is one we all should follow." —Andy Rose

## Phila. railroad workers protest layoffs

By Jon Hillson

PHILADELPHIA—There was no joy on Christmas day for 146 track workers laid off here by Amtrak just before the holiday.

The layoffs, called "furloughs" by the railroad employers, broke Amtrak's pledge to provide five years of year-round work.

Most of the laid-off workers were hired during the past six months and therefore weren't on the job long enough to collect railroad unemployment benefits. Railroad workers are not eligible for state unemployment.

Many of the workers are young and Black. Until recent years, track repair was one of the few railroad jobs open to Blacks. The railroads maintained job segregation over the years, and the railroad craft unions were their willing allies.

Under the pressure of affirmative-action guidelines, Amtrak hired women for track work for the first time since World War II. Two-thirds of these women were also laid off.

This attack on the railroad workers brought a response from Lodge 3012 of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of



Militant/Howard Petrick

Way Employees, which represents most of the laid-off workers.

On December 21 forty-five workers picketed Amtrak offices here. The picket line was organized by the lodge's shop stewards. Their emergency initiative was backed by the lodge at its regular monthly meeting.

Amtrak and BMW officials sought to prevent the picket line. Union officials told employed workers they would be fired if they showed up and claimed the picket would "disrupt" the union leadership's secret negotiations with Amtrak. The railroad scheduled emergency overtime to pressure workers to remain on the job after regular hours.

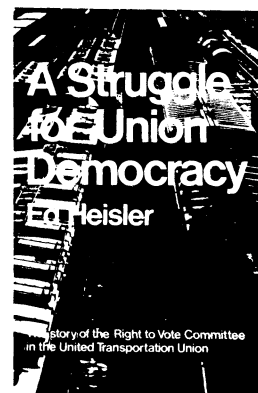
Despite these obstacles, the picket line was a spirited demonstration of rail worker solidarity. Hundreds of commuters got leaflets explaining the pickets' cause.

A major goal of the picket line was to educate the public about the increased hazards of rail travel due to the layoffs of track repair workers.

"We say," the shop stewards' leaflet declared, "less track workers means more derailments. Last week hundreds of us were called out to work overtime

on another major derailment. More taxpayers' money will be paid out for derailment repairs which could be

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**A Struggle for Union Democracy: The story of the Right to Vote Committee in the United Transportation Union,** by Ed Heisler. 46 pp. \$75.

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014.





Militant/Susan Ellis

# Héctor Marroquín: MY STORY

Héctor Marroquín is a political refugee seeking asylum in the United States. As a student leader in Monterrey, Mexico, he was falsely accused of murder in 1974. He fled to the United States. Despite the constant threat of deportation, he became active in a Teamsters organizing drive and in the socialist movement. He is currently fighting a U.S. government attempt to send him back to Mexico where he faces certain imprisonment, torture, and possible death.

## By Héctor Marroquín

Any day I will be receiving notice of when I will go on trial for my life before a U.S. immigration judge.

The formal issue at this hearing will not be whether I should live or die, but whether I will be deported back to Mexico. Technically, my crime is that I have no U.S. visa or residence permit.

But in my case, deportation would be just as good as a death sentence. For the Mexican government has accused me of being a terrorist and an assassin, and political activists accused of such crimes in Mexico don't often get a chance to prove their innocence in court.

It has been four years since the Mexican police publicly branded me a murderer, but until recently I had been forced to remain silent. Immediately after the false accusation was made, I went into hiding.

As the dragnet for me intensified, I escaped to the United States. I lived here under an assumed name until I was jailed last September in Eagle Pass, Texas, by *la migra*, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, for the "crime" of entering the United States without official permission.

Despite the Mexican government's charges, I am not, and I never was, a guerrilla or terrorist. This charge is a crude fabrication to justify political repression against me, just as the Mexican government has tortured, murdered, or "disappeared" hundreds of other activists on similar pretexts.

Although I would like to return to Mexico, I will not do so at the price of handing myself over to a government that disregards the most elemental human rights, and that is why I am fighting for political asylum in the United States.

I have no reason to hide my political views, activities, or affiliations. For many years I have been a socialist, and one-and-a-half years ago I joined the Socialist Workers Party. Since my views and activities—not any involvement with guerrillaism—are behind the Mexican government's charges against me, I would like to trace them here.

## Government brutality

I've known about the brutality of the Mexican police all my life. I had an uncle who lived in Matamoros, where I was born and grew up, and who was a police officer and a murderer. One time he beat a seven-year-old boy, and the child died from internal hemorrhaging. The authorities didn't do anything to him except give him a job on the police force of a different city—and that only because the boy had been the son of a reporter, and the local press was very upset about the case. I think I was eight when this happened.

When I was twelve my father died in a car accident. That left a family of ten sons and daughters and our mother. We had to scrape by on a pension of 600 pesos a month—the equivalent of fourteen pennies per day for each person. My two

older brothers and I got jobs, but we were still very poor.

Although I was working, I continued in school. I had just begun my last year of preparatory school, the Mexican equivalent of high school, when, in October 1968, the news arrived that the government had carried out a horrible massacre against a peaceful demonstration of thousands of people in Tlatelolco Plaza in Mexico City. Hundreds had been gunned down in cold blood.

The student movement sent out traveling brigades all over the country to tell the people what had really happened.

So, starting from this massacre, and from the situation in which I had lived since the age of twelve, I began to see the social contradictions. I began feeling there had to be a better social system.

## University autonomy

In 1969, a resurgence of student protests began at the University of Nuevo León in Monterrey, the largest city in northern Mexico. I had begun studies for an economics degree at the university that fall and became part of the central core of activists in my department.

The student movement demanded autonomy of the university from the state. We wanted faculty, students, and university workers, not the government, to make the decisions. We put forward these demands in mass demonstrations, which eventually involved most of the 20,000 students at the university.

There were many ups and downs in the struggle. At one point the government made some superficial concessions and then ordered the police to attack student protests. But the movement continued, although on a smaller scale, and we had a demonstration on June 10, 1971, in Mexico City. This demonstration was brutally attacked by a paramilitary group called Los Halcones [the falcons], which murdered more than 100 students.

At first, the government claimed it knew nothing of the Halcones. Later it came out the Halcones had been trained and armed by government officials, and some officials were fired in response to public protests. But, as in 1968, those responsible for the murder of students were not prosecuted.

## The murder of Jesús Rivera

Following the massacre the student protests ended and I temporarily withdrew from political activity. The movement was in a downturn. But on January 17, 1972, the police brutally murdered compañero Jesús Rivera, who was my roommate and close friend. By coincidence, I was near the scene of the murder and saw what happened.

Compañero Rivera had gone to visit a couple who were also political activists. A few days earlier there had been a guerrilla action and police claimed they knew who did it. They surrounded that building and

told the people in the couple's apartment to come out.

Jesús was the first to come out. The police shot him many times, although his hands were up in the air and he offered no resistance.

I saw the police drag him down the stairs to the street. They dragged him by his legs, as if he were a dog, and left him to die on the street. He was still alive, because his body was moving, and instead of getting him medical assistance they kicked him as he lay there in his death agony.

The woman who had been in the apartment was also carried out by police. She had been wounded in the stomach and was bleeding profusely, but they didn't give her medical attention either.

Instead, they questioned her, demanding to know "the truth" about guerrilla actions and telling her they would leave her there to die if she didn't answer.

One of the cops hit her on the head with a rifle butt, and still she insisted she didn't know. After she passed out, they finally took her to a hospital. The students put a guard by her room to guarantee her safety.

## Activist tortured

Her husband wasn't injured in the attack, but he was arrested, and "confessed" to being a guerrilla. When police showed him to the press, his face was swollen, teeth were missing, and there were burns on his lips, and who knows where else. He'd been tortured into signing a "confession."

As for Jesús Rivera and the woman, there can be no doubt they weren't guerrillas. The woman was never convicted of guerrilla activities. I knew Jesús very well, and he did not agree with guerrillaism. Politically, he was like me—of the left, but with no defined strategy or ideology.

Jesús had been a prominent student leader, and 5,000 students took part in a memorial march for him the next day. This memorial was attacked by police, who clubbed and tear gassed us.

## Political impact

The June 10 massacre and the murder of Jesús Rivera left a deep mark on my political thinking. Whatever hopes I had of the good will of Mexico's rulers died in front of that apartment building with Jesús.

I wanted to fight the system, but I wanted to fight in the most effective way. I saw that guerrillaism had done nothing except give the police excuses to murder our compañeros and to carry out ferocious witch-hunts.

In January 1973, cops murdered a high school student at a demonstration. In response, the students organized a protest the following day in a park, and there were 3-4,000 of us.

As usual, the police came to attack, but this time things were different. We were very angry that they

*Continued on next page*

# ...Marroquin: my story



Three of the hundreds of victims of October 2, 1968, army attack on student demonstration in Tlatelolco Plaza, Mexico City.

## Continued from preceding page

should continually beat us, tear gas us, murder us for the "crime" of exercising the rights supposedly guaranteed in the Mexican constitution.

So we built barricades in the streets leading to the park to defend ourselves from police charges. We also used sticks, rocks, whatever we could find to defend ourselves. It was several hours before police succeeded in dispersing the protest.

This event confirmed my opposition to guerrillism in another way. I saw, on a small scale, that masses of people could and would defend themselves from government violence, and that isolated guerrilla bands played no role in the process.

## Comité Estudiantil Revolucionario

Following this protest, some of those involved formed discussion groups that evolved into the Comité Estudiantil Revolucionario (CER—Revolutionary Student Committee).

We discussed the economy and politics, and came to some conclusions—that what was needed in Mexico was a workers and peasants government; that the present government represented the capitalists and could not solve our problems; that students, workers, and peasants had to organize independently from the government.

This represented a conscious break with reformist politics, and the idea that the capitalist system in Mexico only needed to be reformed instead of abolished. This break took place among a layer of activists not only in Monterrey, but all over Mexico. The CER was one of many groups looking for an alternative.

We did not join an established political party, because we knew of none that suited us. The only left political party I knew of was the Communist Party, but it was discredited among us because of its reformist politics. In practice, we had seen the CP as the most conservative wing of the student movement, telling us to abandon the struggle as soon as the government offered a few cosmetic concessions.

However, in breaking with reformism the CER leadership went off in an ultraleft direction. Also, the CER leadership became increasingly bureau-

cratic, adopting positions the members weren't allowed to vote on. So I developed many political differences with the group.

But I remained a member, for several reasons. For one thing, we were involved in a campaign to defend students who had been suspended or expelled for their political beliefs. (The administration responded with more reprisals. I was suspended for a semester.)

I also stayed in the CER because of my desire for political activity and discussion, and because I saw no alternative organization. I hoped that through discussion the mistakes could be corrected.

However, the positions of the CER leaders grew more and more bizarre. One was that struggles for democratic rights were reformist and hopeless. Another was that all trade unions were simply tools of the capitalists to control the workers movement.

## Debate over guerrillaism

In June or July of 1973, guerrillaist ideas started circulating in the CER. Some students had gone to Chile and met Argentine and Uruguayan guerrillas who had won them politically.

I argued against these ideas, saying what was needed was to build a strong organization that could lead the struggles of workers, peasants, and students in a revolutionary direction.

By this point, I had read books by Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky, so I was armed with Marxist arguments against ultraleft adventures.

I argued that by adopting the guerrillaist course they would end up isolated from the masses. And worse, military actions by small groups miseducate the masses, because it tells them they need not organize themselves to fight capitalist oppression and exploitation, but that a small group would do it for them.

The CER leaders denounced me as a "petty bourgeois opportunist," and since they were determined to impose the guerrilla line on the CER, I withdrew from it. Within a few months what had become of the CER joined the Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre (LC 23—September 23 Communist League), an avowedly guerrilla organization

On January 17, 1974, I was in my apartment

when I heard over the radio that the librarian of my department had been assassinated. It disturbed me because there would be another witch-hunt centered on my department. I was also concerned because if the guerrillas had degenerated to terrorism, it would make it easier for the government to justify its repression.

Two days later I saw my picture, and those of three other compañeros, on the front pages of the newspapers. The papers said we were dangerous criminals, members of the CER, who carried out the assassination of the librarian. Later, a fifth person was also accused of the crime.

I hid with a friend and had discussions with a lawyer. I was certain I could prove my innocence in court if given a chance. But the lawyer told me there was no way I would receive a fair trial.

He emphasized that the Monterrey police were especially notorious for torture and murder of prisoners, even persons accused of crimes that had nothing to do with politics. He said under no conditions should I turn myself in—that I should go as far away as possible and hide.

Before leaving Monterrey I took some precautions—dyed my hair, touched up my moustache with mascara, dressed in clothing different from those popular with students. Then I traveled to Baja California, Mexico, and hid there.

While hiding, I found out through the news media that police had killed several people from my university department. One was a teacher whose body had been found in the streets of another city bearing all the telltale marks of torture.

I was becoming quite terrified when posters and national magazines with my picture in them started circulating. They said I was a member of the LC 23, terrorist, bank robber, murderer, armed and extremely dangerous.

After seeing that material, I knew I was safe nowhere in Mexico and crossed into the United States at Eagle Pass, Texas, on April 9, 1974. I went to Houston.

## Fear of 'la migra'

I spent the first months in the United States almost paralyzed by fear of *la migra*. I sought work and was offered a job since the boss could tell I had no papers and had to accept anything. "Anything" was a restaurant where I was paid less than two dollars an hour.

At first, I wouldn't even go out. I went from my house to my job and back.

Gradually I adjusted and changed jobs to another restaurant where I hoped to earn more. But the boss there asked me for papers, and when I told him I'd lost them, he said until I brought papers he could only pay me \$1.90 an hour.

I continued reading the Mexican papers and saw that, if anything, the repression had grown more fierce. It was a strange feeling sitting in my home in Houston reading about a shoot-out where, the police claimed, they had wounded me in the shoulder. The cops even came up with a *nom de guerre* for me—"El Pecas"—"Freckles." That was a nickname I'd had since childhood because of my freckles.

On August 10, 1974, I was going to Galveston beach with my wife and another couple when we were in a terrible car wreck. The woman of the other couple died, and I suffered a broken leg and pelvis.

## Hospital wouldn't admit me

I was taken to a hospital emergency room, but the hospital wouldn't admit me, wouldn't treat me, wouldn't even give me a pill for the pain. Not only had I no insurance, I didn't even have identification. How could they make sure I would pay? After eight hours, a friend convinced the hospital that he'd pay if I skipped out. But because I didn't have papers the hospital placed me in the prisoners' ward.

I was in the hospital for a month. During that time the Mexican cops say I carried out another guerrilla exploit—a shoot-out at a large bakery.

When I got out of the hospital, my wife and I moved to Chicago to stay with relatives. I went to see a doctor about my leg because it wasn't healing. He examined it and said what had been done to it was a crime—it should have been operated on from the first. Ironically, that doctor was also an "alien"—from India.

I would have liked to do something about the racist treatment I was given at the first hospital—filed suit, complained, something. But I couldn't afford to call attention to myself for fear of deportation.

In Chicago, my wife and I had a son, and in the spring of 1975 we returned to Houston. By summer I'd regained full use of my leg and had obtained documents under an assumed name, with which I passed as a U.S. citizen.

During my long convalescence I learned of the



fates of three of the people accused of killing the librarian. Two had been killed during alleged shoot-outs. The third had been arrested, and disappeared.

### I join the SWP

Late in 1975 I first heard of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance through Pedro Vásquez's campaign for mayor of Houston. So I visited their office and bought some books, but I didn't return for several months for fear of *la migra*.

Some months later, I was very anxious to get into politics again. So I visited the headquarters and had many discussions with socialist activists.

I know that many people who join the SWP or YSA are first attracted by their position on some issue or their work in some arena of the class struggle. But that wasn't true in my case. What attracted me to the socialist movement was the program of Trotskyism as a whole, because it brought together many positions I already held, although I hadn't fully thought them through.

I was also impressed because the SWP and the YSA are not just in the United States, but are part of a world movement, the Fourth International, with which they have a common political outlook and maintain fraternal collaboration.

As I grew more interested in the SWP and the YSA, they invited me to attend meetings of the SWP branch in my area. And I saw the party not only had fine ideas, but was a serious organization that could put them into practice. So I joined.

### Didn't ask for papers

There was something else in the whole process of my joining the movement that impressed me, that told me what kind of movement this was: nobody ever asked me for papers. Everywhere else I'd been, everyone wanted to see my papers. But all the comrades of the SWP and YSA were interested in was whether I agreed with the program and was willing to work with the other members to put it in practice.

After joining the party, I carried out much the same kind of activity as do other members—selling the *Militant*, organizing meetings, taking part in protest movements and demonstrations.

For a while I was active in a defense campaign for Mario Cantú, a San Antonio Chicano who was being tried for helping undocumented immigrants. Later a similar case, that of the Manzo Four, immigration counselors from Tucson, Arizona, came up. I was active in that defense effort. I also took part in general antideportation work.

A year ago I was elected a member of the executive committee of my SWP branch, and was *Militant* sales director for several months. Then I was in charge of our bookstore.

I also became involved in a Teamster organizing drive at the Coca-Cola bottling plant where I worked as a painter's helper. Of the 500 workers, about a third were women—mostly Blacks, Chicanas and *mexicanas*—and they were mostly on the production line and got paid the least. Almost all the other workers were male Blacks, Chicanos, or *mexicanos*, but the top jobs were held by white males.

It was the women who gave the real impetus to the drive, but it won the support of most of the workers. I considered formally joining the organizing committee, but decided against it since I knew the bosses would check into the background of people involved to see if there was anything they could use against the union.

### Teamsters win vote

Nevertheless, I helped circulate cards asking for the election, talked to other workers, and distributed literature. Right before the election Coca Cola gave us a wage increase, hoping we would think a union wasn't necessary. But the way we saw it was that just the threat of unionization had forced a concession, so the union won by a big majority.

During my years of hiding and living in constant fear of deportation I never stopped hoping that somehow I would be able to return to Mexico to clear myself of the charges.

I had been in touch with a lawyer in Mexico and arranged to meet with him in Mexico the weekend of September 9, 1977. He was unable to keep the appointment, so I returned to the United States because I had to work on Monday.

But when I was reentering the United States the official of *la migra* who checked me out at the border was one of those who has well-sharpened fangs from many years of persecuting Mexican workers. He didn't accept the papers I carried under my assumed identity and began interrogating me. At that time, I explained that I was a political

*Continued on next page*

# New committee set up for Marroquín defense

By Arnold Weissberg

Supporters of Mexican political refugee Héctor Marroquín have launched a new defense committee to organize the fight to win him political asylum.

The Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee will have its national office in New York. Activists around the country are in the process of establishing chapters.

Many of these activists have been involved with the case from its beginning and have worked with the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA). USLA took up Marroquín's defense immediately after he was arrested for "attempting to illegally enter the country" in September. USLA's efforts slowed the government drive to ship Marroquín back to Mexico after only a perfunctory hearing.

The new defense committee will work out of the same suite of offices as USLA. USLA has given its full backing to the committee, and support of Marroquín will remain one of its major activities.

New supporters of Marroquín's right to political asylum include actor Howard da Silva, himself a victim of the 1950s McCarthyite witch-hunt; Anne Shepard Turner, one of the Wilmington Ten; and John Henry Faulk, a prominent radio personality of the 1950s whose career was ruined by professional red-baiters.

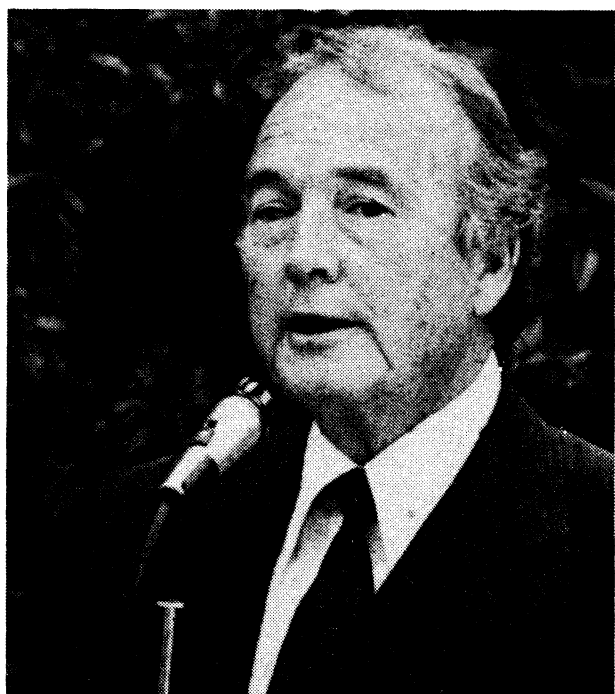
One of the first chapters of the new committee was set up in Houston, where Marroquín lived at the time of his arrest. Marroquín's supporters there have been able to win substantial support for his right to political asylum.

Treasurer of the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee in Houston will be Gertrude Barnstone, well-known feminist and head of Women's Equity Action League. Isaiah Lovings, past president of a Houston NAACP chapter, has also agreed to be a committee officer.

A meeting calling for "Asylum for Marroquín" took place in Houston January 20. In addition to demanding asylum, the meeting protested the restrictions on Marroquín's right to travel, the outrageously high \$10,000 bond the Immigration and Naturalization Service demanded before releasing him from jail, and the INS's refusal to grant him a work permit.

Speakers included Judge José Angel Gutiérrez, a founder of the Texas Raza Unida Party; Father Jack McGinnis, a leader in the fight against police terror in Houston; Father Edward Salazar, district director of PADRES, a Catholic social action group; and Dr. Hilda Alcalá, a physician who treated victims of torture in Mexico.

New York City supporters of Marroquín are planning to kick off the campaign to win him political asylum with a "blitz" week January 23 through January 29. Activists will spend the week seeking new endorsers for the case and raising money to pay legal expenses.



Militant/Harry Ring



Militant/Omari Musa

John Henry Faulk, top, victim of 1950s McCarthyite witch-hunt, and Anne Shepard Turner, one of Wilmington Ten, have both endorsed Héctor Marroquín's request for political asylum.

A reception for Marroquín in New York January 8 drew more than 100 people and raised \$100.

About twenty people joined a noon picket line at the San Diego federal building January 16. The action, demanding political asylum for Marroquín, was sponsored by USLA.

## You can help

Funds are urgently needed to pay legal expenses and publicize the case of Héctor Marroquín. His defense committee wants to bring witnesses and evidence from Mexico to prove Marroquín's assertion that his life would be in danger if he were forced to return there. Initial projections place the cost at \$20,000.

Contributions can be sent to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee at 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003.

Messages protesting restrictions on Marroquín's right to travel, the \$10,000 which the government forced him to pay to get out of jail, and the government's refusal to grant him a work permit can be sent to Immigration and

Naturalization Service Director Leonel Castillo, Washington, D.C. 20536, with a copy to the defense committee.

Petitions supporting Marroquín's right to political asylum are available from the defense committee at the above address. Also available are brochures outlining the facts in Marroquín's case and lists of previous endorsers.

The defense committee also asks all supporters of Marroquín to seek endorsement of his case from trade unions, community groups, campus organizations, and other groups. Copies of such endorsements should be sent to the defense committee.

For more information call (212) 254-6062.

## save his life



# ...Marroquin: my story



January 19, 1974, issue of Monterrey daily 'El Norte' falsely accused Marroquin of being a leader of alleged terrorist group.

**Continued from preceding page**

refugee and had been living in the United States for more than three years.

## 'La migra' jails me

Immediately they threw me in jail, and two days later I was sentenced to three months in prison for the crime of fleeing political persecution in Mexico.

All along I had requested the right to make a phone call, but it wasn't until the sixth day that they let me make a call, and then I got a hold of my friends in Houston to inform them of my situation. With the help of the SWP and Texas Raza Unida Party members, two lawyers agreed to take my case, Alpha Hernández and Margaret Winter. Both were women, one a Chicana active in the movement against deportations, the other a revolutionary socialist. I knew I was in good hands.

It wasn't until I talked to the lawyers that I learned I should have been told at the border I could file a petition for political asylum and given the application form. During the years I spent here I had never considered such a move for the simple reason I didn't know it could be done.

I also obtained the aid of the U.S. Committee for

Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA), which began to publicize my case and mobilize support for my right to political asylum. I know that in cases involving political activists, the government often doesn't respond to the legal arguments until substantial public pressure is brought to bear. So I was grateful for their support.

Thanks to all who have supported my right to asylum, we have already won some victories, especially forcing the government to drop its plan to subject me to a summary "exclusion" hearing and hand me over to the Mexican police without as much as an appeal.

## My prison experiences

Nevertheless, I spent a little more than three months in prison. If the experience was supposed to "rehabilitate" me, I must confess it was an utter failure. The only thing I'm guilty of is lack of faith in the capitalist system—and my prison experiences only strengthened my resolve to fight this system.

I had some very happy moments in prison, for example, when the National Chicano/Latino Conference against deportations took place. Almost all the prisoners were undocumented workers, and we

jumped with joy to see the news reports of the solidarity of our brothers and sisters in this struggle.

There were other incidents—for example one time I was asleep and Peruvian Trotskyist Hugo Blanco was on television, speaking about political repression in Latin America. He also talked about my case.

When I woke up, the compañeros looked at me strangely, and I asked them what was going on. They told me there had been a man on television, a Peruvian, who spoke pure truth and defended the workers.

They told me his name was Hugo Blanco and that he said I was a fighter for democratic rights and social justice in Mexico, and that the government there wanted to torture and kill me. And they were angry because I'd never explained to them the circumstances of my case. I told them I hadn't done so because I didn't know how they would take it.

And they replied that they knew the kind of government Mexico had, a government that defends only the interests of the rich and causes the misery of the workers.

So we had a very good discussion about the need for a workers and peasants government in Mexico, about deportations, about socialism, and we were all in agreement.

## The crime of needing work

I also had very sad moments. Many nights I saw how they would bring a line of thirty or more men marching down to jail, their heads bowed, mud on their shoes, and tears in their eyes, asking: But what have I done to deserve this?

And in the cell, everyone told the same story: I'm only coming here to work because my family is hungry and in Mexico they won't give me a job.

After I left jail I had a news conference where a reporter asked me what books I had written and what parties I had led, as if to say only those who are much older and quite famous have a right to political asylum.

And I told him that if he searched the lists of activists murdered by the Mexican government, the lists of political prisoners, the lists of those who have been tortured or simply disappeared, he would see that many were teen-agers and that most of the rest were in their twenties.

And I told him my only credential was that I, like many others, had fought for a world where there would be no wars, exploitation, or unemployment. A world where there would be no racism, sexual discrimination, or borders to pit working people against one another. And that if the Mexican government considers these credentials good enough to murder and torture people, the U.S. government should consider them good enough to grant someone facing this kind of persecution political asylum.

# East Bay transit strikers reject contract

By Jeff Mackler

OAKLAND, Calif.—In a stormy meeting on January 15, striking transit workers voted down a proposed settlement of their fifty-seven-day-old strike.

Nineteen hundred bus drivers and clerical and maintenance workers—members of the Amalgamated Transit Union in Alameda and Contra Costa counties—have been out on strike since November, stopping public transportation throughout the East Bay area.

Local union leaders recommended and predicted ratification of the proposed contract. Maintenance workers were even ordered back to work before the contract vote to get the buses ready.

But when ATU ranks heard the contract's terms—amounting to further cutbacks in their standard of living—they forced a discussion and then rejected the proposal by a vote of 697 to 397.

In this strike, the workers are being forced to pay for an employer-contrived "projected deficit" of \$4.5 million in transit funds.

But in fact, the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit), a public agency, ended its June 30, 1977, fiscal year with an increase in capital of \$1 million over the previous year.

AC Transit's financial picture looked so rosy that the board of directors

voted a reduction in local property taxes last August. These taxes are the district's primary source of income.

But, as negotiations on a new contract with Local 192 of the Amalgamated Transit Union proceeded, the huge "projected deficit" suddenly appeared. It has been used ever since as a smokescreen to cover management's union-busting plans.

Tax revenues, as well as state and federal subsidies, continue to flow into AC Transit's tills at the rate of approximately \$650,000 per week despite the strike. So AC spokespersons are fostering the notion that perhaps it's better for the AC workers to pay for the "deficit"—through lost wages during the strike—than to have the public pay for it through increased taxes or a fare hike.

To further heighten public pressure on the union, AC officials also hint that the eventual strike settlement will make these tax and fare increases inevitable.

AC's real target is Local 192 and the contract gains it has made over the past several years. When negotiations began last April, management presented what union officials called a "telephone-book-size list of take-away items."

Management's chief aim was to force the union on strike and to break the local with a frenzied media campaign

geared at mobilizing public resentment against the image of greedy public employees ripping off public tax dollars. AC Transit has spent huge sums for ads in local newspapers, where falsified employee salary and fringe benefit schedules are presented as fact.

Local 192's chief aim has been to maintain past contract gains, particularly the cost-of-living formula won after a sixty-six-day strike four years ago. Management, on the other hand, is furious at the prospect of paying cost-of-living adjustments in the coming contract.

R. M. Shamoon, AC's chief negotiator, complained, "It's the richest type of cost-of-living going. If inflation goes up 6 percent, they get 6 percent. If it goes up 8 percent, they get it. If we have double-digit inflation, they get it. What if it goes up beyond that?"

Management has made no attempt to hire scab drivers during the strike, preferring to rely on public and financial pressure on union members to make bargaining-table concessions.

Unfortunately, Local 192 officials have relied heavily on local politicians in the Democratic Party, the same politicians whose job it is to represent corporate interests against working people.

Local Democratic Assemblyman Tom Bates, for example, a so-called friend of labor, recently introduced

legislation to cut off public funds from AC during strikes—to prevent unions from holding out because of the knowledge such funds are accumulating and can eventually be used as part of a settlement.

Some Local 192 officials, including Secretary-treasurer I.P. Cordeiro, have made public statements hinting at the need for a tax increase to fund AC Transit. Such statements only cost the union much-needed public support and fall into the company's trap.

An alternative to this strategy would be for Local 192 to join with the many public-employee unions that face the same attacks to discuss a united labor strategy to fight these cutbacks.

The unions could expose the employer propaganda by explaining the rigged tax structure that puts the heaviest burden on those least able to pay, while corporations enjoy huge tax subsidies. They could propose that such vital social services as transportation be financed by taxing corporate profits and by fighting to reallocate federal funds from the Pentagon war budget.

A major step would be for the labor movement to enter the political arena in its own name with its own independent candidates—and with a program to represent the interests of working people as opposed to the budget-cutters, tax-swindlers, and union-busters.

## Food for export—not the starving **Why famine stalks the Sahel**



Famine in the Sahel. Even during the drought of the early 1970s, the area produced enough food to feed its population. But the food was exported.

[The following article appeared in the January 1978 issue of *Dollars & Sense*,\* a monthly publication edited and produced by a group of members of the Union for Radical Political Economics.]

\* \* \*

The United Nations estimates that 450 million people worldwide were seriously malnourished in 1976. The World Bank puts it closer to one billion.

This massive hunger has perhaps been most vividly illustrated by the drought and famine in the Sahel region of Africa. There, on the southern edge of the Sahara desert, about 100,000 people, mostly elderly and children, starved to death in the early 1970's. Now, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization says that famine threatens again, and that food aid programs will have to resume.

Why can't these countries produce enough food for their needs? The amazing fact is that they do. Frances M. Lappe and Joseph Collins, researching their valuable book, *Food First* (Houghton, Mifflin, 1977), found that every Sahel country except mineral-rich Mauritania actually was producing enough food to carry its population through the drought.

\*Subscriptions cost \$5 a year in the United States, \$6 in Canada and Mexico, \$8 elsewhere, and may be ordered from Dollars & Sense, 324 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143.

That food, however, is not for those who grow it. The Sahel is a net exporter of barley, beans, peanuts, fresh vegetables, and beef, despite protein malnutrition among its children that is about the worst in the world, even in normal years.

The problem of malnutrition in the Sahel is rooted in the class structure of the region. There are differences in class structure among the seven Sahel countries (parts of Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta, Chad, Nigeria, and Niger), but the broad outlines are depressingly similar: legacies of French colonial rule.

Before colonialism, or where colonialism had not reached, desert farmers left land fallow for up to twenty years between plantings. They used a variety of crops to maintain soil quality. Nomads drove their mixed herds over vast areas of arid grazing land. In what is now Mali, there were granaries for storing good harvests against bad years.

Then came the French. They conquered the area gradually, against native opposition, beginning with Senegal in the 1860's and reaching Lake Chad in 1900. The French introduced export crops to the area, particularly cotton, to compete with British textiles, peanuts for the oil, and beef, a meat that Europeans preferred to camel.

The cheapest way to grow these exports was generally to make the peasants do it, using a method that the British pioneered in India—imposing

taxes on land, buildings, and even people that had to be paid in the colonial power's currency. French trading companies, the sole buyers in their areas, could depress the prices paid. The lower the prices paid, the more the peasants had to grow to pay the taxes.

The pressure of the taxes forced peasants to abandon land-conserving farming techniques—to sell the future to pay for the present. Intensive cotton cultivation, for example, depletes the Sahelian soil, leaving it too poor for food production when cotton moves on. The much-publicized advance of the desert results. It is not a natural calamity, but one created by colonialism.

### Exports during drought

Although the colonial era has ended for the Sahel, the class structure evolved under colonialism continues. Local elites of landowners, tax collectors, food traders, and government functionaries live off the exported surplus and continue to encourage it. The taxes also continue. In 1970, in the midst of the drought, Mali's tax forced small farmers to come up with 106 pounds of cotton each. In Senegal, peanut exports alone pay one-third of the government budget, and one-half of that budget is for salaries.

The system channels the Sahel's production through local elites and then out to the world export markets, regardless of the desperate need of the Sahel people. During the drought, as relief food came in, peanuts, cotton, vegetables, meat and fish went out, sometimes on the same boats and planes. In Mali, cottonseed, peanut and rice exports actually reached new highs.

As herdsmen sold off cattle they could not feed or water, cattle exports rose 41% from 1968 to 1971, and local elites grew richer. Traders and moneylenders prospered in the bad years as peasants borrowed and then sold their harvests cheap, all to avoid losing their land. Towns now feature "chateaux de la secheresse," or mansions of the drought—homes of the local elite that for the first time rival in splendor the homes of the wealthy Europeans there.

### Agribusiness profits

There are glimmers of peasant organization in the Sahel. A National Liberation Front operates in Chad, and there have been sporadic peasant revolts in Senegal. In response to these, the Senegal government, which calls itself "socialist," has hired agricultural experts from capitalist countries to help introduce labor saving technology, so that peasant resistance cannot affect exports. An example is Bud Antle, Inc., a California-based vegetable grower and marketer.

Back in 1972, around the time Bud Antle was suing to have Cesar Chavez jailed for the United Farm Workers' lettuce boycott, it formed a joint enterprise with the Senegalese government, called Bud Senegal. Bud Senegal grows vegetables using a virtually labor-free drip irrigation system whose plastic tubes individually water each plant continuously.

The Senegalese government paid for

the system. The World Bank provided a loan, one of only three the bank made to private business in 1974. It's supposed to be a show-case development project.

All production is for Europe. It's flown there by jet. Senegalese don't have the money to buy what Bud makes, and few peasants were helped by getting jobs. Many were hurt when Bud, in laying out its plantation, uprooted the baobab trees that villages had been treating as common property. The trees had provided rope, building materials, fuel, and wind erosion protection. In 1974, as Senegalese starved, European governments reacted to a vegetable "glut" at home by buying up and destroying \$53 million worth of produce. In July 1977, the Senegalese government took over Bud Senegal. But beyond providing new high-level jobs for the country's elite, Bud Senegal's policies have not changed. Bud Antle still controls the export end of the business. And domestically, Bud Senegal is taking over the sale of small farmers' crops; half of all produce sold in the capital city is sold at Bud stands.

Meanwhile, the American parent firm has moved into Gambia, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, and Mali and intends to expand into the rest of West Africa as well. It has announced plans to merge with the giant Cooke and Castle company (owner of the Dole pineapple business) to create a truly world-wide empire. West German, Italian, and Belgian agribusinesses are also showing interest in West Africa.

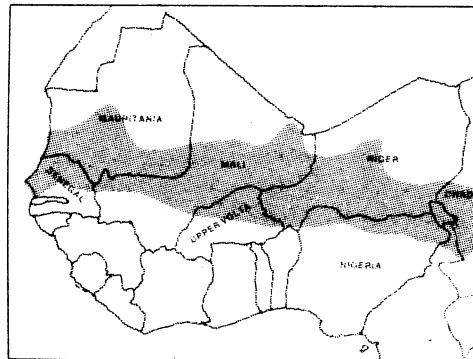
### Potential bread-basket

The interest of companies like Bud gives a glimpse of the potential for food production in the Sahel. Lappe and Collins estimate that the region could increase its agricultural production sixfold to become a "bread-basket of Africa," thanks to extensive underground lakes and an excellent sunny growing season.

Technology and weather do have some influence on the Sahel's food problems. It is an area of periodic drought, and the drought of the early 1970's was the most severe since 1910. The farmers do lack methods to conserve water, and do engage in overgrazing and over-cultivation that make matters worse.

But it is essentially the class structure of the Sahel countries, together with eager multinationals like Bud Antle, that breed short-sighted farming practices for windfall profits. Under these conditions, even such valuable inventions as drip irrigation can benefit the people very little. The most advanced agricultural technique can co-exist with the most miserable poverty.

Sources: *Food First*; Susan George, *How the Other Half Dies*; Kobe Shoji, "Drip Irrigation," *Scientific American*, November 1977; National Academy of Sciences, *World Food and Nutrition Study*, 1977; *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 10/77.



Dollars & Sense  
Shaded area is part of Africa known as the Sahel, on fringe of Sahara desert.



## Human rights activists blast Carter's record—call for solidarity with struggles in East & West

[The following appeal and introductory letter appeared in the letters column of the January 26 issue of the *New York Review of Books*.]

To the Editors:

I have attached a statement I hope you can print in the *NYR*. It is a message to the Human Rights Conference in Paris, December 17 and 18. It comes from a number of prominent left activists in human rights struggles who have worked in the United States.

The Paris conference was called by left and libertarian organizations and individuals, including the International Committee Against Repression, the International Federation For Human Rights, the National Education Federation (F.E.N.—the teachers' union), and the C.F.D.T. (the second largest labor federation in France).

The organizers are seeking participation from similar forces throughout Europe for an independent body that will review compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords by the thirty-five signatory governments.

This Paris conference was intended to parallel the official meetings in Belgrade where the thirty-five signatory governments' representatives are supposed to discuss progress in the implementation of the Helsinki Accords.

I hope you will be able to help us publicize this expression of solidarity with human rights struggles in the east and in the west.

Marilyn Vogt  
Brooklyn, New York

The Belgrade meetings are supposed to assess progress in the implementation of the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki Accords. As first-hand witnesses of and participants in the struggles for human and democratic rights in the United States, we can tell you that Washington and its allied governments have made no meaningful progress. Therefore, we salute your challenge to the United States government's claim, as well as the claims of the other governments at Belgrade, that they defend human rights.

### 'Do not be fooled'

We hope you will convey our message to all those struggling for human and democratic rights in Europe—in the east as well as in the west: "Do not be fooled by Carter's statements on human rights."

*The Wilmington Ten are not fooled*, ten civil rights activists who were framed up and jailed. The three people who testified against them have now admitted they did so under police pressure and that their testimony was lies. Yet the government attorney of North Carolina, after meeting with Carter's Attorney General Bell, refuses to reopen the case. Nine of the Wilmington Ten are now serving a combined total of 282 years in prison simply because they were active in the movement against the national oppression of Black people in the United States.

*The Four Puerto Rican Nationalists are not fooled*. They are today the longest-held political prisoners in the Western hemisphere. The Carter government refuses to amnesty them.

Paul Skyhorse and Richard Mohawk, presently fighting a government frame-up murder charge, and Leonard



Protest demands freedom for Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners—the longest-held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere.

Peltier, recently sentenced to a life term of imprisonment as a result of another US government frame-up charge, are but three of the hundreds of American Indian activists who have been systematically persecuted by the Washington government in recent years—or killed under mysterious circumstances. *They are not fooled by Carter's statements of concern over violations of human rights.*

*Neither are the thousands of anti-war activists, Black freedom fighters, feminists, socialists, and others who fight for social change and who know that President Jimmy Carter and the US government continue to cover up illegal CIA and FBI surveillance and harassment of their activities and murderous attacks on their organizations and leaders.*

The government's own documents have proven its systematic efforts to disrupt, destroy, and introduce violence into movements for civil rights and social change in the US. These documents became known as a result of the Watergate and subsequent revelations. Yet the Carter administration resists attempts by groups like the Political Rights Defense Fund and the National Committee to Reopen the Rosenberg Case for a full disclosure of the US government's illegal acts.

### Foreign-born victimized

Thousands of foreign-born workers, driven to seek jobs in the United States illegally because US corporations perpetuate poverty in these workers' home countries, live in subhuman conditions in the United States, subject to deportation by the US government if they dare to stand up for their human and democratic rights. *These foreign-born workers hear hypocrisy in Carter's human rights statements.*

*There are 40 million poor Black, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian-American people. They are not fooled either.* They are without employment opportunities, decent housing, or proper medical care, and have no way of emerging from poverty. They are suffering still more as the government continues to attack their hard-won rights to affirmative action in employment, education, and housing. Carter asks them to "tighten their belts" for the sake of higher corporate profits.

*Women, struggling to defend their reproductive freedom (to defend their right to abortion, which is presently under attack, and to defend themselves from government-forced sterilization*

*programs at home and abroad), to win ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, and to win funding for expansion of child-care facilities are not fooled.*

*And millions of workers, peasants, and intellectuals around the world know the truth about the priority of human rights in United States foreign policy because they live under brutally repressive regimes the United States government props up in Iran, Chile, Brazil, South Korea, Argentina, South Africa, the Philippines, Indonesia, and elsewhere.*

### Soviet record condemned

We have called your attention to the US government's hypocrisy in claiming to uphold human rights. We also denounce the violations of the principles of socialist democracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

We condemn:

The imprisonment of Helsinki Watch Group members and of the thousands of others who are now confined in labor camps, prisons, and psychiatric hospitals in the USSR because they oppose that government's repression and raise their voice in defense of democratic rights.

The arrest and imprisonment of those who fight against national oppression in the USSR, like Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Jewish rights activist Anatoly Shcharansky.

The firing and imprisonment of Polish workers for protesting bureaucratically-imposed price increases in June 1976 and demanding democratic rights.

The persecution and even murder of those in Poland, like the student Stanislaw Pyjas, who defended the victimized Polish workers.

The arrest, harassment, and expulsion of the signers of the Czechoslovak human rights manifesto Charter 77 and of its sympathizers in Rumania, Yugoslavia, and other East European countries.

The expulsion of Wolf Biermann from East Germany because of his outspoken support for socialism and democracy.

The real allies of those fighting for democracy in the east and in the west are those—progressive forces in the ranks of organized labor, the socialist movement, among women, and among oppressed nationalities—who challenge violations of human rights around the world.

Your initiative is proof of our growing numbers.

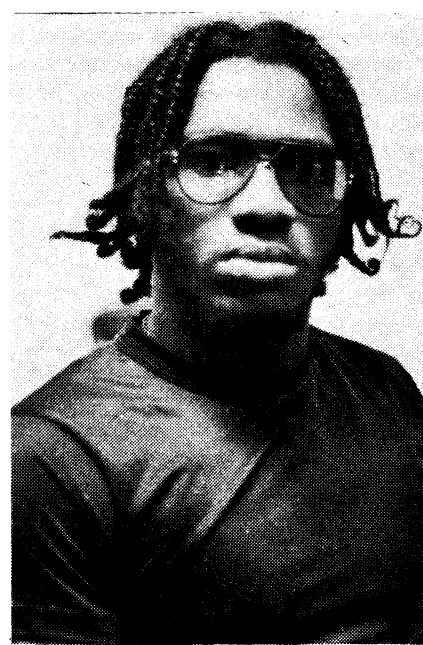
We wish you success and extend our solidarity.

## Signers of statement

Emile de Antonio, film director; Dore Ashton,\* art critic; Reza Baraheni, poet and former Iranian political prisoner; Norma Becker, chairperson of War Resisters League;\*\* Eric Bentley,\* author and playwright; Philip Berrigan, antiwar activist; Alvah Bessie, writer and one of the Hollywood Ten; Noam Chomsky, linguist, professor at MIT; Martin Duberman,\* historian and playwright; Richard Falk, professor of International Law at Princeton University; Luis Fuentes, professor at University of Massachusetts; Allen Ginsberg,\* poet; Armando Gutierrez, Texas La Raza Unida Party; Jim Haughton, leader of Fight Back in Harlem; Julius Jacobson, editor, *New Politics* magazine; Paul Jarrico, Hollywood screenwriter blacklisted in 1950s; Patrick Lacey, staff member of *WIN Magazine*; David McReynolds, Socialist Party—USA; Albert Maltz,\* writer and one of the Hollywood Ten; Paul Mayer, theologian, New York Theological Seminary; Joan Mellen, film critic; Gaudencio Thiago de Mello, Brazilian composer; Kate Millett, feminist author; George Novack, Marxist scholar; Grace Paley, author, War Resisters League; Juan Jose Peña,\* New Mexico La Raza Unida Party; Willie Mae Reid, Socialist Workers Party; Ralph Schoenman, organizer of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal; Afeni

\* Signed with reservations as to style.

\*\* Organizations listed for identification purposes only.



Militant/Joel Aber

GARY TYLER: Knows firsthand about human rights in the United States.

Shakur, National Task Force for COINTELPRO Litigation; Lumumba Shakur, one of the Black Panther 21 defendants; David Thorstad, gay activist, writer; Gary Tyler/Eusi Kuumba, Black youth framed up for murder, now imprisoned in Louisiana; George Wald, biologist, Nobel Prize Winner. Howard Zinn, professor of history, Boston University.

# Costa Rican Stalinists attack victims of regime

By Fred Murphy  
From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

All eight of the activists arrested November 23 when police attacked a demonstration in Limón, Costa Rica, have been released on bail.

The November 23 demonstration involved about 500 persons—mostly women and children—from the Limoncito community. Their demands were for clean drinking water, electric power, and sewage lines—basic necessities that have been the focus of a twelve-year-long struggle in Limoncito.

Four candidates for office in the 1978 Costa Rican elections are among those facing charges. Two of them—Sherman León and José Angulo—are leaders of the Limoncito community and candidates for Limón city council [regidor] of the Partido Auténtico Limonense (PAL—Limon Authentic Party).

Also arrested were Carlos Coronado Vargas, presidential candidate of the Organización Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST),<sup>1</sup> and Alejandra Calderón Fournier, OST chairperson and candidate for national assembly. Since being released on bail December 1, Coronado has faced continual harassment by the police in Limón and San José and has been rearrested several times on trumped-up charges.

While the struggle of the Limoncito community and the defense of the eight activists has gained much support from mass organizations, trade unions, and student groups, some organizations in the Costa Rican workers movement have displayed a scandalously sectarian attitude.

In particular, the leadership of the CGT, a trade-union federation controlled by the Stalinist PVP,<sup>2</sup> has declared publicly that they will not support the Limoncito struggle.

The PVP heads an electoral coalition called Pueblo Unido (United People), which includes the Socialist Party and a centrist group called the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (Revolutionary People's Movement). The Pueblo Unido parties have not only failed to speak out against the government's repression in Limoncito and the harassment of the OST; Pueblo Unido supporters have even been involved in physical assaults on activists campaigning for the PAL and the OST.

The seriousness of these attacks led Alejandra Calderón, the founder and main leader of the OST, to issue an open letter to the Pueblo Unido and to the PVP in particular, calling for an end to physical violence inside the workers movement.

The open letter was published on the front page of *Excelsior*, a major Costa Rican daily, on December 9. In it, Calderón said:

On December 7, in Siquirres [a town in Limón Province] several members of our organization were savagely attacked by a Pueblo Unido squad while distributing campaign material.

Marvin Wright Lindo (candidate for deputy from the Partido Auténtico Limonense) was hit with a rock and is now in a Limón hospital, in danger of losing his hearing in the right ear.

A few weeks earlier, Marvin Wright Lindo was threatened with a revolver by a member of the Partido Vanguardia Popular

in the middle of a Limón street while a large number of people watched. . . .

There have been many anonymous telephone calls—from persons identifying themselves only as "indignant" members of Pueblo Unido—threatening our candidates with attacks.

The OST, Calderón said, "respects the right of all parties to express their opinion and debate politically" and "rejects violence as a method of political struggle among workers parties." She called on the PVP and Pueblo Unido to do the same.

The OST's open letter was answered the day after it was published in *Excelsior*. The paper provided space to Manuel Mora Valverde, chairman of the Pueblo Unido executive committee and a longtime leader of the PVP. Referring often to Calderón with the diminutive—and in this case quite offensive—nickname "Alejandrita," Mora crudely echoed the violence-baiting that the government has directed against the OST and the PAL:

Alejandrita says . . . that her party wants peace in Costa Rica, but that Vanguardia Popular is carrying out a campaign in which blood could be spilled. . . . Who does not know of the violent career of Marvin Wright . . . ? Who is unaware that his violent tendencies brought him to the penitentiary . . . ? Do Alejandrita's advisers have the idea of helping the present election campaign to end in a civil war or something similar, and have they thus begun to prepare the climate?

Mora claimed that Marvin Wright had disrupted a Pueblo Unido campaign meeting in Limoncito, and had been carrying out an attack on PU activists in front of the PVP's Siquirres headquarters when he was hit by a rock. Mora concluded: "We are not afraid of a fight, and we will never let ourselves be intimidated by anyone. Alejandrita—and the country—can be sure that we haven't the slightest intention of breaking the law. But anyone who wants to attack us or keep us from exercising our rights will have our immediate response."

The debate in the pages of *Excelsior* continued as Calderón responded on December 11.

Calderón refuted Mora's lies about Marvin Wright and the OST and then said:

All the workers parties of Costa Rica have at one time or another been victims of the PVP's physical attacks, even those that today are in the Pueblo Unido coalition. If they are honest they will have to admit who the aggressors are.

Your letter, Sr. Mora, has one positive central aspect: You have committed yourselves publicly not to attack us. Our party accepts this pledge before all the Costa Rican people and assures you that if new incidents occur we will not be the ones to have taken the initiative in resorting to physical violence.

Calderón's charges against the PVP were lent further weight in a letter *Excelsior* published December 12. Rodolfo Cerdas Cruz, general secretary of the Frente Popular (FP—Popular Front), a radical nationalist group with Maoist leanings, described a series of physical attacks on FP members, trade unionists, and other activists by the PVP. He also praised Alejandra Calderón's "undeniable courage and determination."

While the Limoncito community leaders and the OST candidates are now out of jail, they could face prison sentences of up to eight years on "riot" charges. International solidarity is important to their defense.

## World news notes

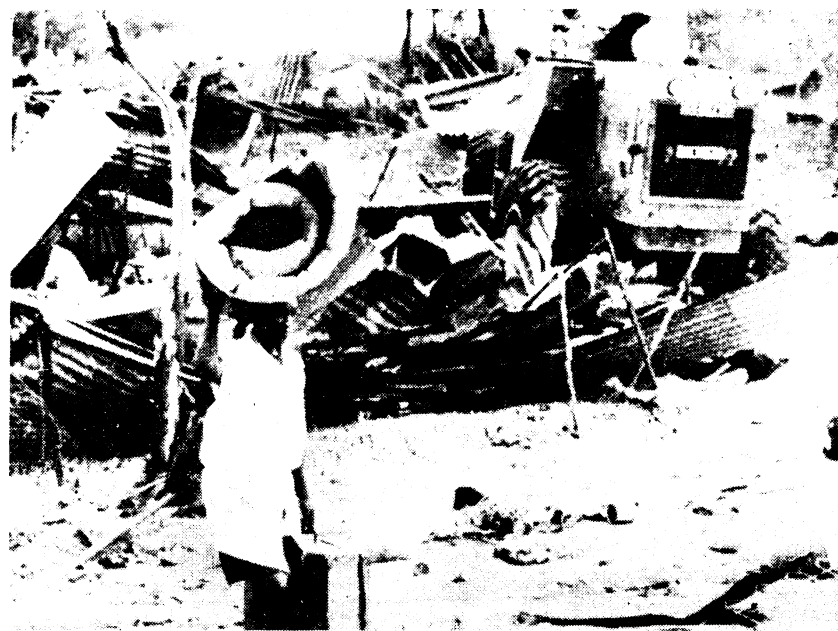
### Apartheid regime bulldozing Blacks' homes

A bulldozer protected by armed policemen began razing the first of some 2,000 homes in the Unibell "squatters" camp outside Cape Town, South Africa, on January 16.

Most of the 15,000 residents of Unibell are Black women and children who moved there without government permission to be near their husbands and fathers. The men are brought in "legally" to work in the city.

The regime's terrorism is aimed at driving the women and children, most of whom are members of the Xhosa tribe, to the Transkei. As one official put it, "If we see that people are leaving of their own accord, then obviously we will slow down the demolition of huts."

The Transkei is a supposedly independent "homeland" for the Xhosas set up by the South African government. It is not officially recognized by any other nation in the world.



### Charges mount against Mounties

More and more evidence has been made public that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police illegally spied on and harassed radical, labor, and Québécois nationalist organizations.

One former senior Mountie official told a government commission, for example, that "we were used to living with certain illegalities. They were so commonplace that they were no longer thought of as illegal."

Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau has defended these crimes. According to the *New York Times*, "Trudeau has taken the position that any laws jeopardizing national security should be changed, and that the Mounties should be excused for past transgressions in the cause of security."

One of the recently revealed "transgressions" Trudeau would like to forgive and forget took place in 1972. The Mounties burned down a barn because they thought the building would be used for a meeting between what they called "Québec terrorists" and members of the Black Panther Party from the United States.

### Nicaraguan protests

Between 1 and 5 people were killed, at least 20 injured, and more than 130 arrested January 12, when Nicaraguan National Guardsmen attacked demonstrators protesting the murder of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal.

Chamorro, owner and editor of *La Prensa*, was an outspoken critic of Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle. The protests that were attacked took place after 30,000 people turned out for Chamorro's funeral in Managua.

The day before, angry crowds burned down five factories, two banks (including a branch of Citibank of New York), and a blood plasma firm, Plasmaferesis.

According to the Associated Press, Plasmaferesis is "partially owned by the Somoza family and was accused by Chamorro's newspaper of making a profit in Western Europe and the United States on blood it bought from poor Nicaraguans."

A *New York Times* dispatch by Alan Riding reported that while Managua was quiet on January 13, "many factories were closed and union leaders were urging workers to walk off their jobs."

### ILWU hits Costa Rican rights violations

The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union has demanded that Costa Rican President Daniel Oduber Quirós halt the persecution of Marvin Wright Lindo and other Costa Rican political activists (see story on this page).

"The ILWU, a union which has always charted its own course politically," wrote President James Herman December 30, "is deeply committed to workers and their rights, and to the proposition that certain rights and civil liberties supersede any and all political questions."

"We regard the treatment of Marvin Wright and his supporters as unwarranted and unprincipled, and urge that your government abandon its efforts to hound and persecute them for their political beliefs."



JAMES HERMAN

Dispatcher

1. Socialist Workers Organization, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.

2. Partido Vanguardia Popular (Popular Vanguard Party), the Costa Rican Communist Party.



## Why the Communist Party backs Philippine dictatorship

By Peter Seidman

During the five-year grip of martial law under Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, at least 50,000 people have been arrested for political offenses.

In 1976 separate missions by Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed that torture was used freely and with extreme cruelty, often over long periods.

So when the Philippine dictator staged a plebiscite in October 1976—asking voters to answer “yes” or “no” to the question: “Do you want martial law to be lifted?”—it may have come as a surprise to some people that the Communist Party of the Philippines (PKP) urged people to vote “no.”

How could the PKP, which itself had been banned until 1974 under martial law, urge support to the repressive policies of its former jailers?

The American Communist Party, in its newspaper the *Daily World*, loyally defends this betrayal of the Philippine people by its sister party.

### Hard to stomach

This has been a little hard to stomach for several *Daily World* readers. One wrote in to the “Ask an Expert” column in the September 10, 1977, *Daily World*: “Is it true that communist parties around the world seem to be supporting Marcos of the Philippines when up until recently progressives have regarded him as a brutal dictator?”

William Pomeroy, the CP’s leading writer on the Philippines, answered yes. But his response did not go unchallenged either.

On December 16, the *Daily World* published an article by Daniel Schirmer protesting “misrepresentations” in Pomeroy’s response. Pomeroy replied to Schirmer the next day.

A public debate such as this in the *Daily World* is quite unusual. Perhaps it indicates that CP leaders feel the need to harden up some of their own members who may be uncomfortable with the party’s outrageous position. (Whether Schirmer is a CP member is not mentioned by the *Daily World*.)

### Positive policies?

Pomeroy defends the CP’s position by claiming, “it is not a question of supporting President Marcos as an individual; it is a question of supporting positive policies and changes, no matter who or what forces introduces them.”

What are these “positive policies and changes”?

“At the core” of the Marcos regime’s policies, Pomeroy says, “is its national development program. Indeed martial law was largely designed to promote it.”

Not only that, Pomeroy says, but Marcos is also sharpening “contradictions . . . between Philippine national

bourgeois interests and foreign interests.”

The prettifying of the Marcos dictatorship is a self-serving lie.

For the masses of the Philippine people, there has been no genuine economic development under martial law.

As *New York Times* correspondent Fox Butterfield explained in a January 8 dispatch from Manila, “President Marcos’s supporters often cite the economic growth of 5 to 6 percent a year since 1972 as evidence of his accomplishments. But the real wages of workers in Manila have declined almost 25 percent in the past five years, according to Government figures, and the gap between the rich and the poor, already one of the largest in Asia, has reportedly broadened. The top 20 percent of the country’s income earners took in 53 percent of the total national income last year, while the bottom 40 percent got only 14.7 percent.”

What about the CP’s claim that under Marcos there has been a sharpening of “contradictions . . . between Philippine national bourgeois interests and foreign interests?”

Pomeroy points to figures showing that direct U.S. investment in the Philippines has declined since before martial law began.

But he fails to mention that during this same period, support from multilateral imperialist lending institutions—dominated by U.S. financial interests—has zoomed.

According to the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, for example, between 1973 and 1976 the World Bank increased its loans to the Philippines by 1,100 percent. The coalition says the Philippines have become “the third-largest recipient of multilateral funding in the world.”

### U.S. military bases

Moreover, the Philippine government has not seriously challenged the presence of giant U.S. military installations on its soil. Even Pomeroy admits that “present Philippine base demands do not fully satisfy progressives. . . .”

These bases are a key launching pad for imperialist military strikes throughout the world. They played a key role during Washington’s war on the Vietnamese people.

*New York Times* correspondent Bernard Weinraub reported last August 14, for example, that Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines “has the facilities to move 3,500 tons of cargo a day; its maps list every airfield in Asia and the subcontinent and the Mideast capable of landing jets, and within 24 hours its engineers can set up an air strip as far away as West Africa.”

These facts hardly paint a picture of economic development and growing independence from imperialism!

What the facts show is that in the Philippines, as in all the colonial coun-



Philippine government tank on patrol in city of Jolo

Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

tries caught in the grip of imperialist exploitation, the national bourgeoisie is completely unable to develop the economy.

### Cuban example

As the example of Cuba makes clear, any real economic development for the masses in colonial countries can only take place after imperialist domination has been ended. This requires the revolutionary mobilization of the masses of workers and peasants in a struggle to oust not only the imperialists, but also their local capitalist servants.

But the Stalinists oppose this revolutionary strategy for the colonial countries. They apologize for bourgeois demagogues such as Marcos and cover up for the capitalists’ inability to meet the needs of the masses. The Stalinists even urge the masses to trade their democratic rights for this false promise of economic development.

The struggle for political freedom and economic development go hand in hand. The Stalinists’ counterposition of “economic progress” to democratic rights is simply a way to explain away the lack of democracy in the Soviet Union as well.

In reality, however, Marcos’s resort to martial law is proof that he cannot meet the demands of the Philippine people for a better life. Unable to do this, he cracks down on all genuine struggles for social progress and is armed to the teeth by Washington to do so (\$37 million in arms grants and credits during the 1977 fiscal year)!

Certainly Pomeroy’s arguments do not justify the reactionary pro-Marcos position of the Communist Party.

### Stalinist diplomacy

As Schirmer notes, however, the CP’s position does not flow from any attempt to apply Marxist theory to solving the problems of countries in the colonial world. Rather, it flows from the CP’s desire to serve the diplomatic needs of the Kremlin.

“Pomeroy claims,” Schirmer writes, “that the Marcos dictatorship shows independence from U.S. dominance because it has established relations with the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. He claims these diplomatic innovations give the Marcos dictatorship a progressive character.”

Pomeroy attaches great weight to the importance of these diplomatic moves. He goes so far as to defend martial law because he says that it enabled Marcos “to finalize relations with virtually all socialist countries,” a move he claims was “heavily resisted by U.S. imperialism.”

Here is a theoretical innovation! For the CP, martial law becomes “progressive” when it advances the diplomatic interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Pomeroy’s articles should serve as an important warning for all those fighting for human rights in the Philippines and everywhere else: The Communist Party will sell out your struggle any time such betrayals suit the diplomatic needs of their Stalinist mentors in the Kremlin!

## CP: support to Gandhi’s emergency was ‘incorrect’

In 1975, when Indian Premier Indira Gandhi imposed a twenty-month state of emergency on that country, she got the same kind of political support for her dictatorial rule from the Indian Communist Party that Marcos gets today from the Philippine Stalinists.

The Indian CP defended Gandhi’s crackdown on the grounds that it was a necessary and even progressive measure to protect India from “destabilization” at the hands of a “reactionary coalition,” and to help foster India’s “economic development.”

Now, nine months after the elections in which Indian voters overwhelmingly rejected Gandhi and the

rationales of her Stalinist apologists, the CPI has finally decided “it was incorrect to support the ‘state of emergency.’” (According to a short item in the January 7 *Daily World*.)

The CP’s declaration came not only after Moscow began denouncing Gandhi, but also the same week that even Gandhi’s own Congress Party found her so discredited that it expelled her and her hardline supporters from membership.

It is no doubt comforting to the hundreds of thousands of Indians who—under Gandhi’s emergency rule—were imprisoned, involuntarily sterilized, and whose trade-union and other rights were stripped away, to learn that the CP is sorry.

—P.S.

## 'Autumn of the Patriarch'

The Autumn of the Patriarch by Gabriel García Márquez. Published by Avon Books. Paperback \$2.25.

"Over the weekend the vultures got into the presidential palace by pecking through the screens on the balcony windows and the flapping of their wings stirred up the stagnant time inside, and at dawn on Monday the

### Books

city awoke out of its lethargy of centuries with the warm, soft breeze of a great man dead and rotting grandeur. Only then did we dare go in. . . ."

The dictator had died.

So begins Gabriel García Márquez's *The Autumn of the Patriarch*. Márquez is well known in Latin America. In the United States, however, he is unfamiliar to most. His works of fiction have only recently begun to appear in English in paperback.

Latin America has produced many great writers, but few contemporary writers are able to capture so completely the Latin American experience. Márquez was born in Colombia in 1928 and lived for many years in Mexico and Spain, where he now lives and where *El Otoño del Patriarca* was first published.

The world of the "patriarch" is a world of myths still alive, of nightmares that have flesh and blood, a dream world of an incredible present and a centuries-old past all too agonizing in its reality.

We all live in such a world, in such an age. Shielded under the wings of the great American "democracy" are the brutal despots, the death squads, the corruption and misery.

The patriarch of the book's title is as recognizable as he is unreal. He is a

blood relative to a dozen dictators still living or only recently dead, in a country that could be any one of dozens around the globe, especially in Latin America.

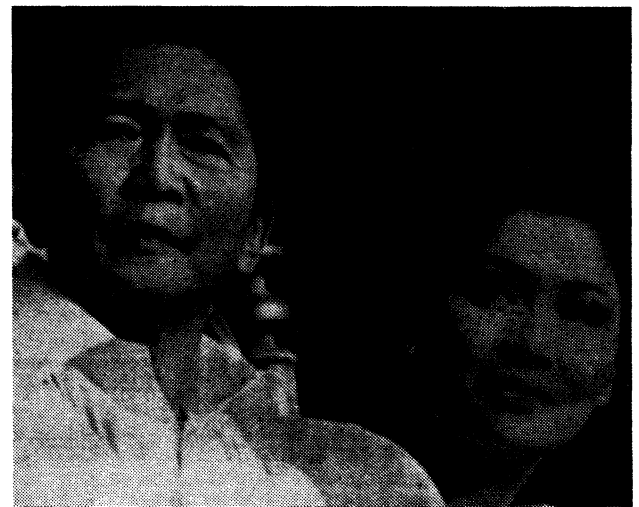
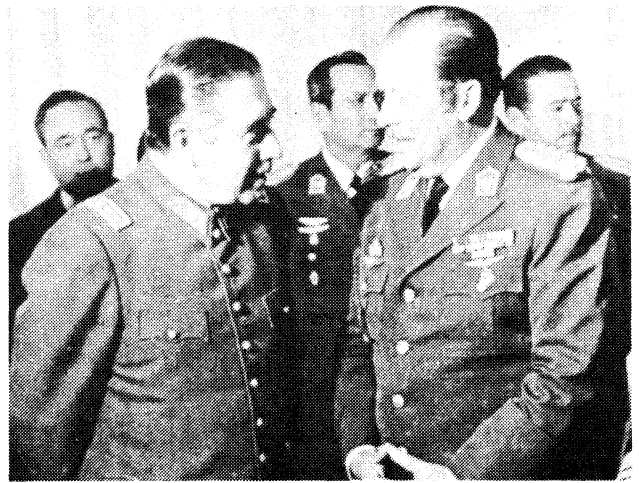
Somoza of Nicaragua; "Papa Doc" Duvalier of Haiti; Franco of Spain; Stroessner of Paraguay; the shah of Iran; Marcos of the Philippines; these are the modern-day barbarians, the "patriarchs" of our time.

*The Autumn of the Patriarch* is Márquez's unblinking look at this world as he and millions of others have experienced it.

He writes in a form and style very much in harmony with this patriarch's world of the fantastic and grotesque. Present runs into past, the narrator blurs into the tyrant who in turn becomes himself seen through others' eyes. He sees himself as he imagines others see him. He imagines how much his cabinet, the foreign ambassadors, the soldiers, the people hate and fear him. His youth, the springtime of his long regime, seems just a dream, but imagination and dreams become reality. The characters, nameless in the aging general's ancient memory, all merge together in space and time to mock and torment him.

His officers even rig the national lottery so that the president wins each time, while the children who draw the numbers are imprisoned to keep them from telling what everyone but the general knows. With the prisons soon full of children who must be disposed of, and the Red Cross and even the pope protesting sternly, he orders his three most trusted men to slaughter all the children and let him be at peace.

They are then, of course, shot for committing this crime which could—as he announces to his people—never happen and which never took place. It was a plot of the opposition. It was only a rumor spread by his enemies.



The 'Patriarch' is as recognizable as he is unreal. He is a blood relative to (clockwise from top left) the shah of Iran; Pinochet of Chile and Stroessner of Paraguay; Marcos of the Philippines; and Somoza of Nicaragua.

In this world it is only death that has substance, and it is with the tyrant's death that one not only opens, but also closes this book.

Márquez writes more than fiction. He is a journalist as well. He was the first to break the story of the U.S. government's threat to bomb Guyana's main airport in retaliation for that country's willingness to cooperate with Cuba's airlift of troops to Angola. This was during South Africa's invasion of Angola a year and a half ago. Márquez's news stories continue to appear in the Cuban press.

Márquez's other works of fiction available in English are: *No One Writes to the Colonel and Other Stories*; *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*; and his epic, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (all in paperback).

Any of his stories can stand alone, yet they complement and build on one another. All these stories are set in the same town: Macondo, and are drawn from Márquez's own childhood. The anonymity of place and power (used so effectively in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*) is an important stylistic element in these earlier works. In this most recent work he further develops his form and style of narration.

*The Autumn of the Patriarch* is difficult to read at times, simply because there is barely a moment's pause from beginning to end. Once he has drawn the reader into the story, Márquez does not let go. In spite of this, it is a book not easily put down. It rings too true. It is the history of a continent oppressed. It is tomorrow's newspaper.

—Floyd Fowler

## A Reader's Notes

The fall 1977 issue of *Liberation* announces that it is temporarily suspending publication. Some members of its staff express the hope that it can be revived as a monthly magazine through Resist, a Cambridge, Massachusetts-based group that describes itself as "a socialist fund-raising organization that funnels money to organizing projects."

*Liberation* was started in 1956, during the cold war, as a radical pacifist magazine whose main figures were A.J. Muste and Dave Dellinger. Well edited and presenting a variety of viewpoints, it was influential in the civil rights and antiwar movements of the sixties. Later, when the New Left went up a blind alley, the magazine turned increasingly to counterculturalism and anarchism.

The longest article in *Liberation's* final issue is about spiritualism although it has a lively title: "Victoria Woodhull Meets Karl Marx." The author, Marian Leighton, says:

"... psychic knowledge and training can aid individuals in a cleansing of personality that can promote a healthier relationship between the individual and his or her projects for social change. It is neither necessary nor desirable that one's personal needs and frustrations be answered by the 'revolution' or the movement. Yet, it is important that there be an awareness on the Left of ways of developing the mind and an awareness of personal-

ity that are of equal radical significance as its analyses of economic, political, and social structures. The esoteric tradition, if approached properly, provides such systems. . . ."

\* \* \*

A new magazine, slated to start in February, will be *Marxist Perspectives*, "a quarterly of historical scholarship and cultural criticism, a journal of ideas," edited by Warren Susman (Rutgers University) and Eugene Genovese (University of Rochester). Some sixty other people from the campuses are listed as contributing editors and organizational secretaries.

The editors say that the magazine will be addressed "to the intellectual community at large—within academia and beyond. As a Marxist journal, its special focus will be on historical studies. We will also publish articles covering such subjects as literature, film, art, popular culture, linguistics, political economy, and psychoanalytic theory. . . ."

"Our journal will be open, free of factional polemics, and designed to promote the development of studies from points of view that posit the centrality of class forces in historical process. By 'class forces' we understand the full range of cultural, psychological, political, and economic elements in class formation." Its pages will also be open to non-Marxists.

Such a magazine would have had no chance of surviving as recently as ten years ago. Since then there has been an explosion of interest in and adherence to Marxism among teachers on campuses all over the country. From the response to *Marxist Perspectives* we will probably be able to learn some things about the state of the radical intellectuals in this country today.

Academic Marxism and revolutionary Marxism are not quite the same thing, and many of the initiators of *Marxist Perspectives* believe or hope that they will not be contradictory. Let us wait and see what the results will show. Particularly worth remembering are the magazine's promises to be "open" (to all points of view claiming to be Marxist) and to discuss politics "free of factional polemics."

Contents of the first issue will include "Religion and Early Socialism" by Eric Hobsbawm; "The Indian Question Revisited" by Mary Young; "The Flight from Feeling" by Christopher Lasch; "A Marxist Interpretation of American Law" by Mark Tushnet; "Altman's Films" by Leonard Quart; "Italian Communism's Historic Compromise" by Umberto Cerroni; "That Bi-Centenary" by Gore Vidal, and others.

The lowest subscription rate is fifteen dollars. The address: 420 West End Avenue, New York, New York 10024.

—George Breitman



## Interview with Sylvia Law

# Guidelines needed to curb forced sterilization

By Diane Wang

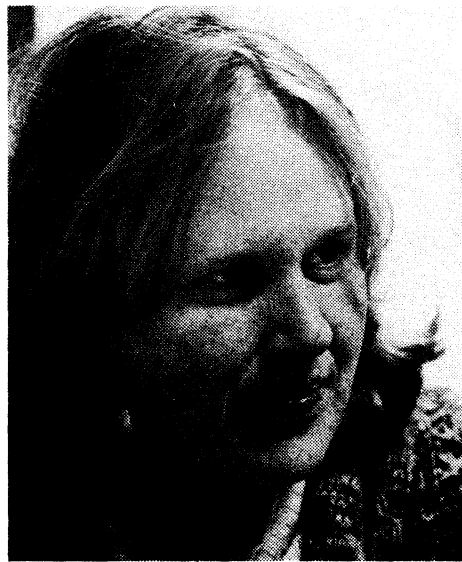
Should women support the guidelines for government funding of sterilization that are being proposed by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare? HEW proposed the new guidelines after lawsuits and protests demanded an end to forced sterilization practices, which particularly victimize Black, Chicana, Puerto Rican, and American Indian women.

Among the new safeguards against forced sterilization is a requirement for a thirty-day waiting period between the time a woman consents to sterilization and the operation.

Some supporters of women's rights have opposed the waiting period, saying it restricts a woman's right to choose sterilization.

The *Militant* interviewed Sylvia Law, an associate professor at the New York University Law School. Law argued against the antiabortion Hyde amendment in federal court and is a member of the National Organization for Women. She is also the author of *Rights of the Poor* (published by Avon).

"There are certainly women who think it is an interference with a woman's right to choose to have to wait for thirty days, that it's condescending



SYLVIA LAW: 'Poor women are encouraged to be sterilized.'

to women to say they need time to think it over," Law acknowledged. "But I think they're wrong.

"There is a right to have an abortion. The right to be sterilized is also an important right, but the right to be sterilized now as opposed to thirty days from now doesn't strike me as fundamental," she explained.

The most important aspect of the waiting period is that it is a step toward curbing the worst abuses of forced sterilization. "We don't have any history in this country of forced abortion," Law said, "whereas there is a history of sterilization abuse."

Law wrote an article in the Winter 1977 issue of the *NYU Law Journal* documenting some of that history. It pointed out, for example, that a 1973 study of New York hospitals found the proportion of Spanish-speaking women sterilized nearly three times that of Black women and almost six times that of white women.

Law's article illustrated the racist attitude of some doctors by quoting Dr. Curtis Wood, who wrote in a medical journal that, "People pollute, and too many people crowded too close together may cause many of our social and economic problems. As physicians we have obligations to the society of which we are a part. The welfare mess, as it has been called, cries out for solutions; one of these is fertility control."

Who will benefit from the new guidelines?

"The women who will benefit are those who are coerced and the proba-

bly larger number of women who make the decision without having time to consider it during a stressful time," Law said.

"I think it is not uncommon, especially for poor women, to be encouraged to be sterilized at the time they are seeking abortion or the time they go in for delivery. Women may often be feeling that they just want to be rid of the whole problem and can't deal with it again, and then later regret that decision."

That is the purpose of the thirty-day waiting period, Law explained. "The basic idea of the guidelines here is to make sure that women have all the information that they need." She pointed out that the facts about sterilization are often kept from the patient.

Lawsuits have shown, for example, that doctors tell women that sterilization is reversible or that it will reverse itself naturally. "There's a lot of misinformation about alternative forms of contraception, misinformation about the effects of hysterectomy," Law said.

"The idea is to make sure that the woman understands all the facts and then has a period of time to think about it, talk it over, and make a decision she can live with."

## ...Women vs. 'Bakke'

Continued from back page

these degrees were in the traditionally female fields of home economics, library science, foreign language, non-M.D. health care, and education.

In 1975 some law schools were still admitting less than 20 percent women students. Women were only 25 percent of the 1976-77 entering classes in medical schools.

### Some doors opened

Affirmative-action programs have opened some doors for women. In 1973 a court ordered American Telephone and Telegraph to hire enough women to fill 38 to 40 percent of its inside craft jobs and 19 percent of its outside jobs.

In Kentucky, coal companies are under orders to hire one woman for every two men until a 20 percent quota is reached. The construction industry is supposed to raise the number of women construction workers to 6.9 percent within three years.

In education, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare has 3,000 cases of affirmative-action complaints to consider.

### 'Bakke' case spearheads attack

All these openings could be closed to women if the *Bakke* ruling is upheld. Allan Bakke's suit is specifically against the special-admissions program of a California medical school. But his success would be used as a precedent for attacking affirmative action in both education and jobs.

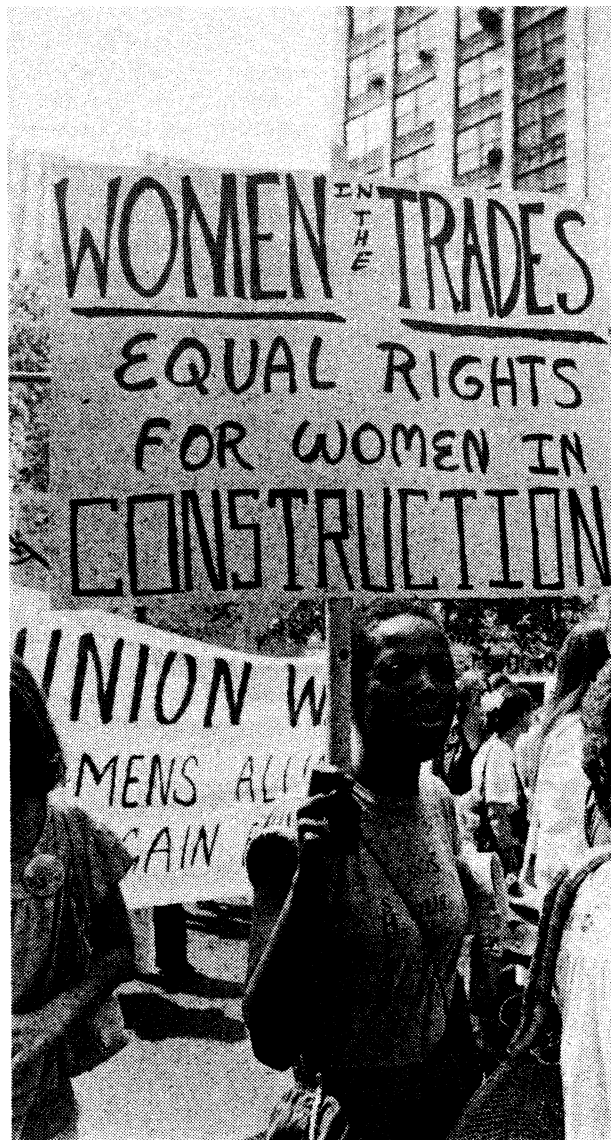
The ruling class has been quick to use the *Bakke* case to promote the slander that affirmative action is "reverse discrimination." The slander is a handy wedge for dividing working people, male against female and white against Black. It is also a convenient cover for the bosses' failure to provide education, jobs, and decent living standards for all.

Therefore they are encouraging other similar suits. At Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point plant, for example, four steelworkers are trying to void the 1974 consent decree that provided plant-wide seniority to help upgrade the status of Black and women steelworkers.

A similar lawsuit has won in lower courts against the affirmative-action job training program at Kaiser Aluminum, near New Orleans. That program was designed to increase the percentage of Black workers to that of the surrounding community.

### Needed: a national effort

Saving affirmative action from these challenges requires a nationwide campaign by women, Blacks and other oppressed national minorities, and orga-



'Bakke' case could close the doors

nized labor. Women's groups, such as the National Organization for Women, and trade unions must be involved in the effort.

Building a strong, united anti-*Bakke* movement will not only defend affirmative action as a particular gain. It will also strengthen the women's movement. New women will be attracted to the organizations defending their needs. In particular, defense of affirmative action can draw to the movement women of oppressed national minorities, who face double discrimination.

A united campaign to defeat the *Bakke* case will also help forge the alliances with Black organizations and trade unions, alliances that are necessary to defeat a common enemy.

Organizing women in the fight to reverse the *Bakke* ruling would give the women's movement a much-needed victory. Following the defeats women have suffered with the anti-abortion Hyde amendment and failure to ratify the ERA, a victory for affirmative action would spur women's self-confidence and militancy.

That is why women must help make the April 8 and April 15 protests called by the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision large and successful.

### 'LERN'ing to fight back

In Virginia, trade unionists and women have set an example for the kind of campaign that can defeat the *Bakke* case. Labor for Equal Rights Now (LERN), a coalition of trade unionists initiated by three locals of the Meat Cutters union, is sponsoring a week of activity for the ERA that culminates in a January 22 march and rally at the state capitol.

LERN organized active participation by trade unions. Unions put out hundreds of thousands of leaflets for the ERA rally, sponsored pro-ERA speakers in union locals, and prepared to send contingents to the march.

That is the kind of public, militant activity that will win the ERA and is needed to reverse the *Bakke* decision.

LERN shows, moreover, how women's issues can be made union issues. It gives an idea of what could happen if women enlisted active support from the 20-million-member-strong union movement in this country.

LERN has shown that the trade unions can be won to campaign for the needs of women. By siding with women and with Blacks and other oppressed national minorities, the unions will be able to defeat the divide-and-rule tactics used against them and defend working people's living standard.

Fortunately, some trade unions have taken a stand against the *Bakke* case. Among the unions that have filed friend-of-the-court briefs against *Bakke* are the United Auto Workers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; United Mine Workers; National Education Association; the United Farm Workers; and International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers.

In the fight for affirmative action, and specifically in the campaign to overturn the *Bakke* ruling, the needs of women, oppressed national minorities, and labor all come together.

And as these major, powerful social forces join together in action for their common interests, victory can be won.

## NOW opens investigation of Phila. chapter

By Sharyn King  
and Willie Mae Reid

PHILADELPHIA—The National Organization for Women (NOW) has established two fact-finding commissions—one at the national level and one at the Pennsylvania state level—to investigate the October 8 resignations of eight officers from the Philadelphia chapter.

In December Nada Chandler, the former chapter president, and other officers who had resigned went to the media to explain their reasons. They charged that the participation of Socialist Workers Party members in NOW had forced them to walk out. According to newspaper accounts, "they were fed up with the increasing involvement of SWP members" in the chapter and with "lengthy debates about mass action as a political tool."

Those who walked out also announced they were asking NOW to charter a new chapter here to be called "Philadelphia East" NOW. The implication was that such a new chapter would exclude women who also belong to the SWP.

The media sensationalized the resignations and helped spread the false charges of an "SWP takeover." The major dailies here, United Press International, and WPVI-TV all carried stories.

It is in this context that the NOW fact-finding commissions—scheduled to begin work immediately—are charged with investigating the reasons for the resignations, deciding on the new chapter charter request, and recommending "guidelines" for resolving further disputes.

### Democracy in NOW

The central issue here is democracy in NOW. Should socialists be excluded from NOW or any of its chapters? Do socialists and other NOW members have the right to freely raise their ideas within the organization?

These are the questions the fact-finding commissions must address. And their answers will help shape the future of NOW—whether it will be an all-inclusive feminist organization or a much narrower group unable to tolerate debate and discussion over its perspectives.

No findings have yet been reported by the commissions to the membership. But at a January 14-15 Pennsylvania state board meeting, the president of the "Philadelphia East" chapter attended with voting rights.

The media here has tried to obscure the issues involved in the dispute and use it to portray NOW as weak and divided. The most vicious article to appear was a column by Elizabeth Duff in the December 18 *Inquirer*. Duff



1977 NOW convention. Democratic discussion is necessary to build NOW and to answer current attacks against women's rights.

claimed that the whole problem was the participation of socialists in NOW.

Relating the Philadelphia dispute to her own distorted account of past events in the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, she wrote:

"The 'Trots' [Trotskyists of the SWP] were intent upon taking over as many independent organizations as they could and weld[ing] them into one Socialist movement for revolution.

"Feminists, on the other hand, couldn't have cared less about Socialist revolution. . . . The more conventional wanted immediate changes in the status of women. To them equal pay for equal work would not await a Socialist revolution.

"But the heart of the conflict, was this: feminists felt that an independent women's movement was vital. The 'Trots' did not." Duff ends the article by implying that socialism and feminism are counterposed and that feminist goals can only be achieved without socialists.

### Chapter's response

While prominently featuring Duff's scandalous attack, the media ignored the press release from the interim steering committee of the Philadelphia chapter. In that release, Karen Knudsen, acting chairperson of the chapter, urged the officers who had left "to drop their quarrel and rejoin us. . . .

"NOW has always brought together women and men from many walks of life, varying opinions, and a wide range of ages. We are not troubled by differences in political orientation. We are united in feminism."

The release also pointed out that Clare Fraenzl, a member of the SWP and the only officer who did not resign, had chaired NOW meetings "with unfailing skill and fairness."

On January 9 the *Inquirer* finally agreed to print a letter from Fraenzl answering Duff's charges.

"SWP members have participated in building the women's movement since its inception," Fraenzl explained in her letter, "advocating a strategy of independent protest action by the masses of women to win our rights. SWP members advocate a movement by, for and of women.

"The women of the SWP are feminists, . . . activists in the fight for abortion rights, passage of the ERA, defense of affirmative action programs and support for gay rights.

"Many feminists, in their experiences in fighting for the rights of women . . . become convinced of the need for fundamental change in all social relations," Fraenzl wrote. They join the SWP, she said, "to build both the women's movement and the socialist movement."

Fraenzl's letter pointed to the real

source of disagreement in the Philadelphia chapter—"differing viewpoints between feminists over what strategy can best achieve the liberation of women."

"A significant number of women in NOW across the country," Fraenzl said, "reject a strategy of reliance on the Democratic Party and the government, of campaigning for and lobbying our so-called 'friends' in government as the way forward for the women's movement.

"Many NOW leaders favor closer and closer cooperation with the politicians, stress lobbying and letter writing, and tell women not to 'rock the boat.'

"The socialist feminists of the SWP, and numerous other women," Fraenzl continued, "favor a policy of organizing a powerful, visible, massive movement of women and our allies. . . .

"Duff's article ends by implicitly calling for the removal of socialists from NOW. This attitude, whether by self-proclaimed friends of feminism or NOW leaders, represents an ominous threat to democracy in the women's movement and the imposition of a gag

rule on the kind of discussion that is the life of our movement."

### 'Can't afford' no debate

Irene Osborne, a respected leader of the women's movement here and the recently elected secretary of the Philadelphia chapter, also answered Duff in a letter printed in the *Inquirer*. She objected to Duff's argument that there is no room for political debate in the women's movement.

"It is a little frightening to read Duff's insistence that 'Feminists cannot afford to fight among themselves,'" Osborne stated. "The truth is that we can't afford not to. Feminism is not a dogma but a living social movement. . . . Current attacks on women's rights, from within the government and without, make accurate analysis more rather than less important."

This sentence was edited out of Osborne's letter: "The danger is not from the left, but from the right."

How the NOW national leadership will respond to the witch-hunt in Philadelphia has attracted great interest among the membership.

One hundred Philadelphia NOW members, women and men, crowded into a December 19 meeting to elect new local officers. Also on hand were NOW National President Eleanor Smeal, National Secretary Sandy Roth, and several state officers. Members anticipated an important policy statement from the leadership.

But Smeal avoided taking a stand in defense of democratic rights of all NOW members, particularly socialists.

Instead, in an interview with the *Inquirer*, she cited the "general" problems of large chapters as partly responsible for the Philadelphia resignations.

"Large city chapters," Smeal said, "have extra strains—they're expected to be all things to all people all of the time. They're really too big to be run by volunteers."

At the NOW meeting she spoke in the same vein about the "growing pains" of NOW and the need for a full-

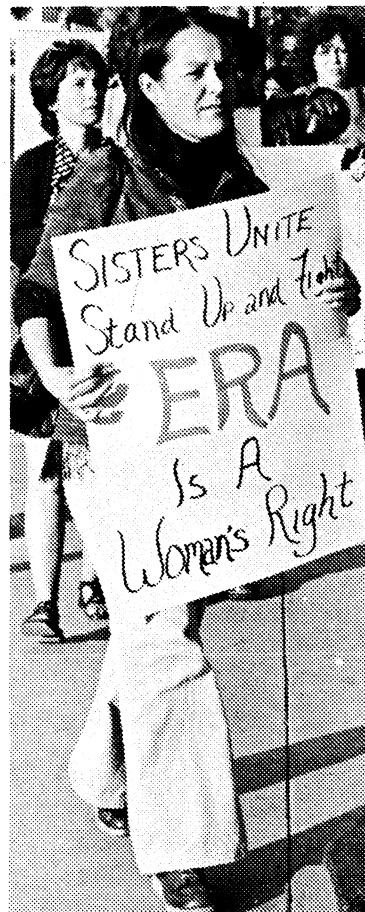
*Continued on page 30*

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Eleanor Smeal, NOW's president, addressed Philadelphia NOW meeting but took no stand on issue of nonexclusion.



# ...rail

Continued from page 18

avoided by keeping track workers on the job to maintain the tracks."

The leaflet also pointed out the discrimination facing Black, Latino, and women workers, who are "last hired, first fired."

I spoke with five Black women who had been laid off. They chose to remain anonymous for fear of company reprisals.

All had sought the work "because it was open to women for the first time and because it paid more."

Two of the women had given up several years of seniority at a local plant to get into what Amtrak promised would be year-round work for five years. The women had been members of the United Auto Workers.

Now, one said, "we can't get any unemployment. And the government won't count the fact that we worked before we were on the railroad."

Another woman, laid off from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, hired on the rails and was trained as a welder. She was "bumped" from her job by a white male who had no welding experience but several months seniority over her. "That's illegal, according to the union bylaws and the contract," she told me.

I asked her what the union did about it.

"Nothing," she replied. "Nothing at all."

These women believe the BMW state federation is a "company union." They explain that the union leadership doesn't fight for them.

The picket line called by the shop stewards, one woman said, is "what we need more of."

# ...NOW

Continued from page 29

time staff in large, urban chapters. Philadelphia's "problems" would be explored by the fact-finding committee, Smeal said. She made no mention of the media attacks on NOW and the SWP.

## Members seek clarity

Philadelphia NOW members again sought a discussion of their concerns at the first meeting of the new board, January 9. Questions were raised about how the fact-finding investigation would be handled, what input members would have, how the threat of excluding socialists would be treated, and whether a new charter would be granted to the former officers who had walked out.

Most NOW members attending the meeting opposed issuing an "exclusionist" charter to the "Philadelphia East" chapter. They agreed that such a move could lay the basis for driving out any NOW members—not just socialists—who disagree with the leadership on any question.

A motion was passed reaffirming the chapter policy of nonexclusion, regardless of political affiliation, and reaffirming the right of NOW members who also belong to the SWP to participate in the chapter.

Red-baiting as a substitute for discussing political differences is not new in NOW. At the national conference in Detroit last April a similar incident occurred.

Eighty NOW members submitted a resolution calling on NOW to adopt a perspective of independent political action to answer the attacks on women's rights. It was branded an "SWP" resolution, although many of its supporters were not socialists, and it never reached the floor. This red-baiting campaign culminated in the passage of an anti-SWP motion introduced by Nada Chandler on the last day of the conference.

Immediately following the convention, resolutions and motions were passed in many NOW chapters repu-

diating the red-baiting motion and reaffirming NOW's nonexclusionary policy. Nevertheless, the NOW National Board refused to reverse the anti-SWP motion.

Since then, red-baiting has been extended to other cities, including Philadelphia, particularly when discussion over NOW's perspectives and activities begins.

The witch-hunt atmosphere that started in Detroit and has been intensified in Philadelphia must be stopped. The fact-finding committee can help by recommending to the national board that any charter granted to any NOW chapter only be granted on the clearly stated basis of nonexclusion.

The investigating committee should also recommend that the NOW National Board, in light of the Philadelphia events, publicly state that all women are welcome to join NOW, regardless of their political affiliation.

## Correction

In the January 13 *Militant* the photograph on page 29 of a meeting held by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom was incorrectly identified. The meeting took place in Austin, Texas, not Houston.

# Calendar

## KANSAS CITY, MO.

**PERSPECTIVES FOR THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.** Speakers: Jeremiah Cameron, Kansas City NAACP; Jewell Gould, field representative for Mo. Federation of Teachers; Jim Levitt, SWP candidate for school board; others. Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. 4715A Troost. Donation: \$1. Ausp: SWP. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

## LOS ANGELES: SOUTHEAST

**THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM.** An educational by Harry Ring, of the *Militant* Southwest Bureau. Sun., Feb. 5, 1 p.m. & 3 p.m. 2554 Saturn Ave., Huntington Pk. Donation: \$1. Ausp: SWP. For more information call (213) 582-1975.

## MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

**TWO CLASSES ON MARXIST ECONOMICS.** Speaker: Dick Roberts, staff writer for the *Militant*. Sun., Jan. 22, 11 a.m. & 4 p.m. Activities Room, Mountain Lair, West Virginia University. Ausp: YSA. For more information call (304) 292-7406.

**PROFIT DRIVE IN COAL: BEHIND THE ATTACKS ON THE UNITED MINE WORKERS.** Speaker: Dick Roberts, staff writer for the *Militant*. Mon., Jan. 23, 7:30 p.m. Collegiate Room, Mountain Lair, West Virginia University. Ausp: YSA. For more information call (304) 292-7406.

**CARTER AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA: MYTH VERSUS REALITY.** Speaker: Hugo Blanco, Peruvian peasant leader. Fri., Jan. 27,

8 p.m. Collegiate Room, Mountain Lair, West Virginia University. Ausp: USLA. For more information call (304) 292-7406.

**NEW YORK: BROOKLYN INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS.** Speaker: Dianne Feeley, SWP candidate for Congress in 18th C.D. special election. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 222 Utica Ave. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 773-0250.

## NEW YORK: CHELSEA

**DEFEND HECTOR MARROQUIN.** Speaker: Margaret Winter, attorney for Marroquin. Performance: 'The Rise and Fall of Mumbo Jumbo,' a one-act social comedy with music presented by the Aztlan Players. Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. McBurney YMCA, 215 W. 23 St. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 989-2731.

**NEW YORK CITY: LOWER EAST SIDE ASIAN WOMEN AND THEIR STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY.** Speakers: Kathryn Pon, SWP; others. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 7 Clinton St. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum/Foro Militante. For more information call (212) 260-6400.

## NEW YORK: QUEENS

**IRAN: A COUNTRY WITHOUT JUSTICE.** Speaker: Kateh Vafa, CAIFI national staff. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 90-43 149th St., Jamaica. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 658-7718.

## NEW YORK: UPPER WEST SIDE

**NEW YORK'S HOUSING CRISIS.** A panel discussion. Speakers: Elsie López, East Harlem tenant organizer; Ron Wolin, tenant activist, SWP; others.

Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 786 Amsterdam Ave., Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 663-3000.

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**1978 SOCIALIST WORKERS CAMPAIGN RALLY.** Speaker: Fred Halstead, SWP candidate for governor of California, will speak in defense of working people's rights, for school desegregation, abortion funding, affirmative action, and the struggle against deportation of undocumented workers. Sat., Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m. St. Peters Church, 24th & Alabama Sts. San Francisco. For more information call (415) 824-1992.

## PHOENIX, ARIZ.

**FEMINISM—WHAT'S IN IT FOR MINORITY WOMEN?** A panel discussion. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 314 E. Taylor. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Bookstore Forum. For more information call (602) 255-0450.

## ST. PAUL, MN.

**DEFENDING ABORTION RIGHTS: WHAT STRATEGY WILL WIN?** Speakers: Sue Vass, St. Paul NOW, SWP; others. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. Macalester College Student Union Commuter Lounge. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 222-8929.

## SAN DIEGO

**ABORTION RIGHTS: A DEBATE.** Speakers: Joe Fischer, president, San Diego Pro-life League; Nancy Brown, coauthor, *Abortion Rights in Danger*, SWP. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 1053 15th St. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (714) 234-4630.

## TUCSON, ARIZ.

**FREE JESS LOPEZ—JAIL THE HANNIGANS!**

Speakers: Bert Corona, José Angel Gutiérrez, Tino Valles, others. Sat., Jan. 28, 4 p.m. El Rio Neighborhood Center, 1390 W. Speedway. Ausp: National Ad Hoc Coalition on the Hannigan Case and Human Rights Defense League.

# Forums on Mideast talks

## CINCINNATI

**WILL THE SADAT-BEGIN TALKS BRING PEACE TO THE MIDEAST?** Speakers: Jamal Nasser, Palestinian Arab; Barbara Medoff, SWP; others. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. 970 E. McMillan. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (513) 751-2636.

**NEW YORK: UPPER WEST SIDE THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY: THE MEANING OF SADAT'S TRIP.** Speaker: David Frankel, *Militant* staff writer. Fri., Jan. 20, 8 p.m. 786 Amsterdam Ave. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 663-3000.

**PHILADELPHIA: GERMANTOWN THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY: THE MEANING OF SADAT'S TRIP.** Speaker: Peter Seidman, staff writer for the *Militant*. Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. First Methodist Church, Germantown & High sts. Donation: \$1. Ausp: SWP. For more information call (215) 844-2874.

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## Affirmative action

### What's at stake for women



Militant/Susie Winsten

By Diane Wang

What if—

The simple statement of women's equality proposed for the U.S. constitution is defeated?

The right to decide whether to bear children is taken away from women?

All programs designed to upgrade women's status on the job or in schools are abolished?

Pregnant workers are denied medical benefits, and child-care centers are closed?

—Take all that (and women have taken it in the past few years) and what does it add up to? An attack on women's rights that was summarized very well in the old adage: "Keep them barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen."

Women are fighting back. Teach-ins, rallies, picket lines, and marches at the end of January across the country are defending women's right to abortion and pushing for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Women have another opportunity to fight back this spring: the defense of affirmative action against the *Bakke* lawsuit that is before the Supreme Court. Women can defend affirmative action at the April 8 regional protests and April 15 national demonstration in Washington, D.C., which have been called to help overturn the *Bakke* decision.

The *Bakke* case, like the anti-abortion Hyde amendment and the standstill in ERA ratification,

is part of a drive to put women back into "their place."

The current economic crisis imposed on working people causes this attack on women's rights. The ruling class hopes to wipe out some of the protections against the profitable superexploitation of women.

Further, the goal is to turn back the clock on women's expectations and consciousness. Few working families would agree if simply asked to cut back their living standard by one-half. But the same can be accomplished if large numbers of women can be convinced to withdraw from the labor market to devote themselves to "homemaking," as happened at the end of World War II.

The new self-confidence and economic independence of women makes it more difficult than ever before for the bosses to shift the burden of the economic crisis to individual families and, specifically, onto the backs of women.

The attacks against abortion rights, child care, medical benefits for pregnant workers, the ERA, and affirmative action—all are aimed at forcing women to shoulder the burden of the economic crisis. Women, along with the oppressed national minorities, have been the traditional scapegoats of the ruling class.

That is why it is crucial for women to respond and defend all their rights. This spring, with the *Bakke* challenge being heard in the Supreme Court,

defense of affirmative action must be a priority.

A look at the situation of working women makes it easy to see why affirmative action is so important.

Women now make up 42 percent of the labor force. Yet they take home only 25 percent of the total earned wages in this country, according to statistics recently compiled by the U.S. Labor Department.

In fact, the gap between women's and men's wages has widened. In 1955, women took home 64 percent of men's earnings. By 1974 the percentage was down to 57.

The difference in wages is due, in part, to the fact that women are cheated out of the wages owed them. The Labor Department reports that during the fiscal year that ended September 30, 19,141 workers (we can assume most of them women) were underpaid \$15.5 million dollars because of unequal pay for equal work.

The main reason for the wage gap, however, is that women are concentrated in low-paying jobs as secretaries, waitresses, cleaning workers, and light-industry workers. Only one out of twenty skilled craft workers is a woman.

Women face comparable problems when it comes to education. Although women earn 45 percent of bachelor's degrees, in 1974-75 more than half of

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## Detroit conference to protest 'Bakke' suit

By Tom Smith

DETROIT—More than forty individuals and representatives of organizations met here January 7 to plan an educational conference and rally on affirmative action and the *Bakke* decision for February 24 and 25.

Among those participating in the meeting, sponsored by the Michigan Coalition to Overturn the *Bakke* Decision (MCOBD) were: State Rep. Jackie Vaughn; Rev. Charles Adams of the Hartford Avenue Baptist Church; Rev. Carol Corey of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Dr. Elizabeth Hood of the Training Institute for Desegregated Education.

Representatives also attended from Mayor Coleman Young's office, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Detroit Student Coalition Against Racism, National Organization for Women, Detroit Equal Rights Congress, National Lawyers Guild, New American Movement, and Detroit Youth Association.

Participants in the meeting agreed that broad forces must join together "to protect and expand programs which make justice for minorities and women, a reality in the United States," as stated in the conference call issued by the MCOBD steering committee.

As part of this effort, conference organizers plan to involve trade unions, especially the United Auto Workers, in the February activities. The UAW has joined other unions and organizations in filing a legal brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn *Bakke*. UAW Local 51 here recently voted to endorse the conference.

The conference will begin with a rally Friday, February 24, featuring a broad array of nationally and locally prominent speakers. On Saturday, February 25, workshops are planned on affirmative-action programs in education and employment.

In addition, conference organizers are planning a plenary session to discuss and vote on future activities in

defense of affirmative action, such as a demonstration April 8 for downtown Detroit and the national march on Washington April 15 called by the National Committee to Overturn the *Bakke* Decision.

Alice Jennings, MCOBD co-coordinator and midwest coordinator of anti-*Bakke* activities for the Black American Law Students Association told the *Militant*: "MCOBD is looking at the conference with two major aims in mind: to educate people about the *Bakke* ruling and the myths surrounding it; and to organize them in a broad movement to overturn the *Bakke* decision."

"The media has portrayed the *Bakke* ruling as the case of an individual, Allan Bakke, who has been wronged and whose claim of 'reverse discrimination' has a lot of merit," Jennings said. Even some members of minority groups have become confused about the case.

"People don't realize yet how broad the implications of the *Bakke* case will

be for all minorities and for women too," she continued. "Law students and medical students aren't going to be the people affected the most. Young people looking for jobs are going to be the hardest hit."

If the pro-*Bakke* forces win, she said, "they're going to move on and eliminate all the affirmative-action jobs programs."

"We see that already in the *Weber v. Kaiser Aluminum* case, where affirmative action in industry is being challenged," she added. "This case was filed as a direct consequence of *Bakke's* victory in California."

Conference organizers here expect the February activities to draw a large response from Detroit's Black and Latino communities. An anti-*Bakke* demonstration here last October attracted more than 300 people on only three weeks notice.

Already as many organizations are involved in planning the February conference as endorsed the previous demonstration.