

Congress boosts U.S. war in Central America

BY STEVE WATTENMAKER

Democrats and Republicans in Congress voted May 10 to escalate the U.S. war against the people of El Salvador.

In a 17 to 0 vote, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee allocated \$20 million in additional aid to train Salvadoran soldiers in the United States. The measure, supported by conservative Republicans like Jesse Helms as well as Democratic liberals like Christopher Dodd, would bring to \$76.3 million the amount of military aid to El Salvador this year — four times the military aid for El Salvador appropriated in 1982.

Meanwhile, the Reagan administration — again with bipartisan congressional approval — pressed ahead to deepen its war against Nicaragua.

Nicaragua called an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council May 9 to demand that the United Nations take action to stop a new invasion of Nicaragua by thousands of U.S.-backed counter-revolutionaries.

"The Reagan administration is waging a war against Nicaragua, which is no less real because it has not been officially declared," Nicaragua's foreign minister Miguel D'Escoto told the Security Council.

He reported that 1,200 counter-revolutionaries crossed into Nicaragua's Nueva Segovia province April 30. The *contras*, as they are called in Nicaragua,



May 4 Managua news conference displays U.S.-supplied weapons captured from counterrevolutionaries who have opened "Southern Front" from Costa Rica.

are armed, trained, and directed by the CIA. The invaders' advance was covered by the Honduran army using mortar and artillery fire.

Contras have also stepped up attacks in the south near Nicaragua's border with Costa Rica.

The invasion has already caused the deaths of 500 Nicaraguans since the begin-

ning of this year, D'Escoto said. Given the size of Nicaragua's population, those casualty figures would be the equivalent of 38,000 deaths in the United States.

The Nicaraguan foreign minister called on the Security Council to pass a strong resolution demanding that the U.S. government withdraw the rightist army and

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Chicago: socialist candidate puts forward new road for Blacks, Latinos, unionists

BY MALIK MIAH

CHICAGO — On May 6, Ed Warren, the recent Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago, announced his candidacy for the First Congressional District seat vacated by Chicago Mayor Harold Washington. The election will take place on August 23.

Supporters of the socialist candidate will begin petitioning immediately to get 9,692 valid signatures to place his name on the ballot.

At the press conference announcing his candidacy, Warren also issued a statement protesting the undemocratic election laws that require his party to get such a large amount of signatures by May 23. His Democratic and Republican Party opponents need only 870 and 152 signatures respectively by June 6 to get on the ballot. If Warren runs as an independent, without the SWP designation, he'll have until June 6 to collect the signatures.

The First Congressional District is located on Chicago's South Side in the heart of the Black community. Nearly 600,000 people live there. Many are industrial workers from steel mills, auto factories, rail yards, and garment shops in and around the area.

"We run this campaign," Warren told the press, "for the same reason we ran our campaign for mayor. We are running to explain that the capitalist system is the source of the crisis in this country. It is a system that must spend billions for its war machine, including millions for its wars against the peoples of Central America. It is an economic system that in Chicago has one-quarter of a million unemployed; deteriorating, segregated schools with a \$200 million budget shortage; inadequate mass transportation, again with a \$200 million budget shortage; poor health services and housing."

"The Chicago election for mayor," War-



Ed Warren

ren continued, "demonstrated the potential power workers have when Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and the unions work together."

"My campaign," he added, "is pledged to tell the truth. And the truth is working people need a new government that represents us, not the corporate rich and their capitalist system."

"The Democratic and Republican parties stand for the maintenance of this system. That is why we need our own independent party to fight to change it."

"I favor the organization of an independent Black party as well as a labor party based on the unions — parties that could mobilize our power and fight for our rights, for jobs, and against racism and war, not only in elections but 365 days a year."

"I favor building a political alliance of the labor movement and the oppressed. A major question before workers today is how to do that."

"Blacks, Latinos, and unionists are pushing for a political solution to the problems we face. The logic of this push is toward breaking with the Democrats and Republicans, and running independent Black, Puerto Rican, Mexican-American and labor candidates."

Warren concluded that "Blacks and other working people have shown their potential political power here in Chicago. We need to use it here and nationally to break from the Democrats and Republicans and form a new party to fight for a government of workers and farmers. That is the message the socialist campaign will take to plant gates, to the streets, and door-to-door in the First Congressional District. It is the message we will take throughout Chicago and around the country."

So far, Warren is the only socialist and pro-working class candidate in the election. The other candidates are all Democrats, including a top trade union official. The Democratic Party primary is on July 26.

According to the city's daily Black newspaper, the *Defender*, potential candidates include: Lu Palmer, a journalist, head of the Chicago Black United Communities, and a leading staff person in Washington's mayoral campaign; State Representatives Larry Bullock and Carolyn Mosely Braun; Al Raby and Renault Robinson, officials of Washington's campaign staff; Aldermen Marian Humes, Clifford Kelley, and Eugene Sawyer; and Cook County Commissioner John Sronger.

In addition, Charles Hayes, an international vice president and regional director of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW), and a national leader of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, says he plans to run for the seat as a Democrat. This would be the first time in dec-

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Reagan's Mideast plan threatens more wars

"We have crossed an important threshold in the path to peace," President Reagan declared May 6, following Israeli approval of a deal on Lebanon worked out by Secretary of State George Shultz.

Similar statements about peace in the Middle East were issued several times by President Carter during the negotiations around the Camp David agreement be-

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tween Israel and Egypt. But the Camp David treaty set the stage for the two Israeli invasions of Lebanon in March 1978 and June 1982 — the latter aggression resulting in the bloodiest Arab-Israeli war since 1948. The latest U.S.-engineered deal will once again lay the basis for new wars in the region.

Although the Shultz deal is being presented as an agreement on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, it is actually an attempt to advance a broader political framework to guarantee imperialist interests in the Middle East. The framework that Shultz is proposing is in complete accord with Israeli aims, but is against the interests of the oppressed Arab peoples who are the vast majority of the population in the Middle East.

The Israeli rulers, it should be recalled, had three basic objectives in their invasion of Lebanon last June. They hoped to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); they hoped to establish a rightist government in Beirut that would follow imperialist dictates; and they hoped to consolidate their grip on southern Lebanon. These aims also required the ouster of the Syrian army from Lebanon.

Washington supported the Israeli war aims, which coincided with its interests. U.S. military aid to Israel continued during the war. U.S. vetoes defended Israel in the UN Security Council. U.S. Marines are helping to consolidate the new Lebanese government installed under the guns of Israeli tanks.

The immediate effect of the deal worked out by Shultz is to point a loaded gun at Syria and at the PLO forces remaining in Lebanon. As Shultz put it, "I think there is no way the Israelis could be expected to withdraw" without a simultaneous pullout by Syrian and PLO forces.

But far from the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, the Shultz proposal would formalize a permanent Israeli military and political grip on southern Lebanon.

As part of the accords, a special brigade of the Lebanese army will be set up in southern Lebanon to act as a political police force against the Palestinian population and the workers and peasants of the region. This brigade will have what one official described as "very, very close con-

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Israeli troops in Lebanon

—SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE—

BY ELLEN HAYWOOD

NEW YORK — The article entitled "Why anti-imports campaign won't mean more jobs for U.S. garment workers" in the April 29 *Militant* and May 2 *Perspectiva Mundial* made a big contribution to the discussion going on among garment workers about how to fight for jobs. It was written by Leslie Dork, a New York member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU).

Socialists in the ILGWU and other union members used these publications on the job, at picket lines, and at rallies organized by ILGWU officials on April 23 as part of the union's "Roll Back Imports—Save Our Jobs" campaign.

Five thousand ILGWU members, mostly Chinese, Latino, and Black, picketed seven major department stores in New York City. Through the sale of over 60 *Militants* and *PMs*, we found that most workers did not come to the picket line to blame foreign workers for unemployment.

"It was like two demonstrations," reported salesperson Lou

Howort. "The workers were chanting, 'We want jobs' and the union officials had to add on 'Roll back imports.'"

Official unemployment in the apparel industry was 16 percent in 1982. In January of this year, ILGWU halls were crowded with garment workers expecting the usual postholiday pickup in hiring, but very few jobs actually materialized.

"I'm not sure the imports campaign will do any good. But I'm just glad that the union is finally doing something for jobs," said one union member picketing at Macy's.

Socialist garment worker Mike Fitzsimmons showed the *Militant* to a group of Black ILGWU Local 102 members. "Hey, we're not kidding around out here," one said. "We're all laid off. We have to do something. Look at all of us out here. This is just what we need."

Fitzsimmons replied, "But shouldn't we be demonstrating against the war budget instead of against workers in other countries?"

"The union is going to have to go after that, too," answered the Local 102 member. "This is just the start."

Many we talked to agreed that a union campaign to demand "Money for jobs, not war" would be more effective. "We could use that \$60 million Reagan wants to send to El Salvador right here and put it to some good use," was a very common response.

Many papers were sold on the basis of the articles on Central America. Several Salvadoran women lined up, dollars in hand, to buy *Perspectiva Mundial*. They had immediately spotted the back page article on the assassination of Salvadoran revolutionary leader Commander Ana María.

Nearby, another Salvadoran member of ILGWU Local 23-25 and also an activist in the Salvadoran movement, talked to a *Militant-PM* salesperson about the importance of building solidarity with workers in American trade unions. "That's why we are here," she commented.

Olga Rodríguez, a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and

Textile Workers Union, reported that selling the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* helped her discuss the dangerous divisiveness of the "Roll back imports" campaign. One Black worker told her that he supported restricting imports because of the unjust wages workers were getting in other countries — like Taiwan, where he had been stationed in the army.

When Olga pointed out to him that restricting imports will lead to higher profits for the bosses at the expense of workers' wages here and abroad, he decided to buy the *Militant* and read the article on the anti-imports campaign.

A group of young Chinese also bought the *Militant*. They were covering the action for a local Chinese paper. They also opposed the anti-imports campaign and were very glad to see us discussing an alternative with workers at the picket line.

Ellen Haywood is a member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 23-25 and a sewing machine operator in Brooklyn.



Militant/Lou Howort
April 23 anti-imports picket in New York. Militant salespeople found many rank-and-file unionists did not come to blame foreign workers for unemployment.

Congress boosts U.S. war against Central America

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stop the border attacks from Honduras. At the same time D'Escoto repeated Nicaragua's willingness to open an "unconditional dialogue" with the Reagan administration.

The Sandinista government also demanded the permanent withdrawal of U.S. warships menacing Nicaragua's coasts and a halt to U.S. spy flights over its territory.

Meanwhile, committees in the Senate and the House voted to give Reagan the green light to intensify the war against the Sandinistas.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence voted May 6 to continue funding the \$19 million a year war through September 30, 1983. Reagan will then get an additional \$19 million if he provides the committee with a reworked set of justifications for the war.

After the committee's 13 to 2 vote, Democrat Daniel Moynihan proclaimed:

"We are no longer simply to be informed. We want to be part of the process."

Several days earlier, Democrats on the House Permanent Committee on Intelligence pushed through legislation they trumpeted as a complete cutoff of aid to the forces fighting the Sandinista government.

In fact, the bill allows the administration to continue funding the invaders for another three months. After that deadline the House measure substitutes an \$80 million overt program to take the place of the \$19 million "secret" effort.

The committee authorized military assistance "to be openly provided to govern-

ments of countries in Central America, to interdict the supply of military equipment from Nicaragua and Cuba to individuals, groups, organizations or movements seeking to overthrow governments of countries in Central America."

Preventing the alleged supply of arms from Cuba and Nicaragua has been Reagan's excuse for his war moves against Nicaragua all along.

While Congress buys time to escalate the counterrevolutionary invasion, Washington is maneuvering to strike the Nicaraguan revolution in other ways as well.

Targeting that country's economy, U.S. officials announced May 10 that the administration was slashing Nicaragua's sugar import quota from its present level of about \$16 million a year down to a single boatload.

U.S. threatens to bomb Cuban radio towers

The Reagan administration suggested bombing Cuban radio transmission towers in recent meetings with major U.S. broadcasters, according to the May 7 *New York Times*. Delicately termed "surgical removal" of transmitting antennas, the proposal was one of 40 options offered by officials to retaliate against Cuban broadcasts to this country. The White House is seeking support from commercial radio stations for its anti-Cuba Radio Martí plan.

The threat to Cuban radio transmitters was the latest in a stepped-up campaign of hostile propaganda and provocative actions aimed at Cuba.

• On April 19 the State Department ac-

On May 5 the Costa Rican government called on the Organization of American States to provide an OAS "peacekeeping force" along its border with Nicaragua.

Claiming neutrality, the Costa Rican regime has in fact allowed that country to be used as a base for contra attacks in southern Nicaragua.

Nicaragua immediately rejected the proposal for a "peacekeeping" force. The Sandinistas pointed out that an armed force provided by the OAS, which is based in Washington and dominated by the United States government, could serve as a pretext to introduce U.S. troops into the region to be used against Nicaragua.

Further regionalizing the war in Central America would also be a way for Washington to escalate its attacks on the liberation

forces in El Salvador, who continue to batter the U.S.-backed army there. Salvadoran revolutionary fighters of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) occupied Santa Rosa de Lima, a city of 30,000 and the second largest in La Unión province, April 29. The rebels also took over the border town of El Amatillo.

Before they withdrew the following day they destroyed five bridges isolating the border area and cutting off trade with Honduras.

The offensive in La Unión was part of a successful FMLN campaign called "Comrade Mélida Anaya Montes, We Pledge To Win" launched in early April. It was dedicated to the memory of the Salvadoran revolutionary commander assassinated in Nicaragua April 6.

ing diseases to the United States and other countries. A Miami doctor suggested in March that the deadly Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was transmitted to the United States in the 1980 boat lift of Cuban defectors from the port of Mariel.

The "theory" quickly foundered on the fact that no case of AIDS has ever appeared in Cuba.

While many of the charges appear absurd to the point of humor, their intent is deadly serious. The aim of Washington's campaign is to isolate Cuba internationally and pave the way for even more serious attacks against Cuba further down the road.

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Wisc. workers back political asylum fight

Héctor Marroquín was born in Mexico and lived there until nine years ago when he fled to the United States after being falsely accused of terrorism. Marroquín joined the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. Arrested as an undocumented worker, his request for political asylum was rejected by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and he was ordered deported. He has now requested the U.S. Supreme Court hear his appeal of that order.

BY PETER SEIDMAN

MILWAUKEE — Héctor Marroquín's struggle against deportation received solid support from workers, students, and Central America solidarity activists during a six-day tour here April 26-May 1.

Organizers of the tour noted that one exciting feature was attendance at informal gatherings, as well as at meetings, of larger numbers of working people than at previous such activities sponsored here by the Political Rights Defense Fund.

Marroquín met with members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing and

nearby Kenosha were in the audience at an evening meeting in the Racine Unitarian Church.

Union members from other UAW locals, the Allied Industrial Workers and the Food and Commercial Workers — as well as from a non-union tannery here — also met with Marroquín during his tour.

Some 300 activists gave Marroquín a warm round of applause after he addressed a medical aid for El Salvador benefit sponsored by the Central America Solidarity Coalition (CASC) April 30. During the benefit, Marroquín was able to meet members of the El Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugee community here.

Marroquín was invited to present his case at a showing of Nicaraguan films sponsored by the Latin American Solidarity Committee, a student group at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He also met with the General Union of Palestinian Students at UWM.

Marroquín spoke to students at Carthage College in Kenosha and Carroll College in Waukesha.

The tour ended May 1 with a community meeting conducted in English and Spanish at the United Migrant Opportunity Services headquarters on Milwaukee's predominantly-Latino near south side.

Daisy Cubias, a member of the Association of Salvadoran Women and a leader of CASC, was a featured speaker.

She explained that refugees come here from El Salvador because people there are victims of U.S.-backed government terrorism. "Your money is being spent," she said, "so that every day 50 people are dead in the streets."

After members of Cubias's family were killed in El Salvador, she sought papers to bring others to safety in this country. Government officials told her this was not possible. "But," she explained, "you know well that if they were the shah of Iran or Chinese tennis players, they'd have no problem."

In addition to Héctor Marroquín, other speakers at the rally were Ahmad Hawari, a Palestinian activist, and Ruth Chojnacki, a leader of CASC and the Refugee Sanctuary Coordinating Committee in Milwaukee.

Marroquín's case received extensive attention in the media here, including: the local ABC and NBC TV news affiliates, the *Spanish Journal*, the *Milwaukee Journal*, the *West Side News*, *La Guardia*, *Racine Labor*, and WORT radio in Madison.



Militant/Peter Seidman

Marroquín speaking in Milwaukee. At left are Ahmad Hawari, Ruth Chojnacki.

Labor editor: 'Case has high stakes'

The following personal message was sent to the May 1 meeting in Milwaukee by Roger Bybee, editor of 'Racine Labor.'

The case of Héctor Marroquín is a disturbing reminder of the gulf between government rhetoric about human rights and the actual reality that we face. The Reagan administration's denial of Marroquín's right to asylum is in direct violation of a United Nations protocol on political refugees, and ignores the fact that Marroquín's life will be endangered if he is deported back to Mexico.

There is a tragic irony in this case in that the United States is a nation born in revolution and populated by refugees from political and religious persecution in their homelands. On this level, it is hard to understand how our government could deny asylum to Héctor Marroquín.

But on another level, the actual reasons for this denial are all too apparent: the Reagan administration is eager to destroy what should be a cherished human right, the right to political exile in this country.

The struggle over this right has implications for thousands of refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala.

The administration's desire to undermine this right is obviously all the more intense because of Marroquín's openly socialist views. Reagan and company would have us believe that Marroquín is a dangerous "alien" possessing an "extra-terrestrial" and illegitimate ideology.

The case of Héctor Marroquín therefore has high stakes for all people who want a more just society. His plea for asylum represents both an assertion of the importance of the right to political asylum and the freedom to advocate a different vision of society.

We must not allow the government to deprive Héctor Marroquín of these rights.

Palestinian student: 'We also know INS'

The following are excerpts of remarks made by Ahmad Hawari at the Milwaukee rally for Marroquín.

In the name of the General Union of Palestinian Students, we carry to you the support of all the Palestinian students of Milwaukee. We believe the struggle of the Palestinian people is a twin struggle along with that of the people of Central America against U.S. imperialism.

The issue of denying political asylum to a Mexican refugee is one case of thousands. The U.S. government refuses to recognize human rights, not only around the world, but here as well.

Denying asylum is a continuation of the policy of denying a people the right to live freely in their own homeland. This is done against the Arab countries, South Africa, and South America.

The case of Héctor Marroquín is not unusual. We as Palestinians in the United States have also suffered from the Immigration Service. For example, there is the case of Ziad Abu Eain [a Palestinian extradited by the U.S. government to Israel, where he was sentenced to life imprisonment].

The thousands of people who cross the border into North America have a good reason — not an economic reason, as the State Department says, but a political reason. The solution cannot be to deport them. It should be to give the people of Latin America the right of self-determination!

The root of the problem is not the immigrants, but the military presence of the United States in Central America.

How can a small country like Nicaragua be a threat to the United States, while Washington insists that countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia are not a threat to the Soviet Union?

We in the Palestinian liberation movement believe the struggle of the people of Central America is part of our struggle. The victory of the people of El Salvador will be our victory. Our victory will be theirs.

Judge OKs 'evidence' in Louisville frame-up

BY CHUCK PETRIN

LOUISVILLE — In spite of growing public opposition, a state court judge has given authorities here the go-ahead to frame Al Horsley for a crime he did not commit. His case is scheduled to go to trial June 13.

At a hearing April 25, Judge Joseph Eckert ruled against a motion by Horsley's attorney to suppress phony evidence presented by the police.

Horsley, a Black worker and longtime community activist, was arrested this past January on trumped-up charges of kidnapping and robbery.

Support for his defense has come from many local groups, including Louisville NAACP, Kentucky Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, and Socialist Workers Party. Thousands of individuals have signed petitions demanding that the frame-up charges be dropped.

Horsley's attorney, John Michael Brown, requested the April 25 hearing. Brown aimed to prove that the police had operated on the basis of political prejudice against Horsley. Legally, such prejudicial evidence should be "suppressed" — the cops should not be allowed to present it at the trial.

Carolyn Pierce, head teller at a branch of the Liberty National Bank, was the state's star witness. She testified that on the morning of December 30, 1982, she was stopped by a Black man in downtown

Louisville who forced her into her car, drove her to an all-white neighborhood, and robbed her of some money and jewelry.

Asked to identify the man, she said it was Al Horsley. But Horsley's physical appearance bears little resemblance to the description of the alleged kidnapper Pierce gave to the cops when they first questioned her.

Nevertheless, Pierce was showcased as somewhat of an expert at identifying criminals. She was trained for that, she said, by the chief of security for the bank, a Mr. Gitschier. Gitschier, it turns out, is former Special Agent Gitschier, a 22-year veteran of the FBI.

No testimony was allowed concerning the possibility of FBI involvement in the frame-up. It is a matter of public record, however, that the FBI, acting in coordination with state and local police, have spied on and attempted to disrupt many of the organizations Horsley has been associated with over the years. These include the Black Workers Coalition, Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Louisville Anti-Klan Coalition, Young Socialist Alliance, and Socialist Workers Party.

The second witness questioned by Brown, Police Officer Fenster, testified that he was told by higherups to proceed on the assumption that Horsley — and Horsley alone — was the suspect. Thus, in effect, he was instructed to disregard the detailed description given by Carolyn

Pierce of the man who supposedly kidnapped her.

Police Detective Rogers testified that he put together five mug shots, including one of Horsley. He then called Pierce to come in, saying, "We have a suspect. Do you think you can pick him out?"

Rogers boasted on the stand that, "In all my years as a detective, in all my years with the police department, I have never known a witness to be more positive about an identification."

To make their story seem more credible, the cops said they had been "on the watch" for Horsley since December 29, the day before the kidnapping supposedly took place.

Horsley, they said, had created "an incident" at the Federal Reserve Bank and the police robbery division had been called in to investigate.

The "incident" was that Horsley had filed a written complaint with the bank regarding a deposit that had not been credited to his account.

The Al Horsley Defense Committee is urging that letters and telegrams demanding that frame-up charges against Horsley be dropped be sent to the state prosecutor at the following address: David Armstrong, Commonwealth Attorney, Hall of Justice, 601 W. Jefferson, Louisville, Ky. 40201. Such a public outcry is crucial if the authorities are to be forced to back off from their attempts to railroad Horsley to jail.

Financial contributions and copies of protests should be sent to: Al Horsley Defense Committee, P.O. Box 748, Louisville, Ky. 40201.

How Nicaraguan women organized to topple dictatorship of Somoza

Speech by Nicaraguan consul-general to U.S.

The following speech was given by Leonora Argüello de Hüper, the Nicaraguan consul to the United States, in Pittsburgh on March 11, 1983, at an International Women's Day panel discussion.

Greetings, *compañeras*.

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to take part in this discussion.

Nicaraguan women's participation in their people's liberation struggle dates back to the days of the Conquest, [of Nicaragua by Spain in the early 16th century], grows with the anti-interventionist struggle led by the Father of the Revolution, General of Free Men, Augusto César Sandino, and becomes massive with the creation of AMPRONAC (Association of Nicaraguan Women Confronting the National Problem) in 1977, during the final victorious stage of our liberation war.

The socio-economic formation of our country, like that of the rest of the Third World, turned women into objects of social, economic, and political oppression and repression.

Illiteracy, ignorance, undernourishment, high rates of infant mortality, prostitution, and indigency became the historical burden blocking full-scale, organized participation of women in the country's political life.

Founding of AMPRONAC

I want to tell you about AMPRONAC.

We were born in 1977. One afternoon I received a call from a *compañera* with whom we had been meeting and studying with little direct leadership from our vanguard, the Sandinista National Liberation Front [FSLN].

She asked me to come to her house in the Bosques de Altamira neighborhood. I recall it was a very hot afternoon in May, the air was heavy as it becomes throughout the tropics just before it rains, but the atmosphere was filled with something more than the May rains.

I entered and found six *compañeras* waiting there — five of them with whom we had been meeting more or less regularly — plus a sixth, a tall, thin woman I had never seen before. I understood immediately that Lea [Guido, now Minister of Public Health in the Nicaraguan government], which I learned was her name, had come with a message. And the message was: start organizing, start working in the *barrios* [neighborhoods] of Managua [Nicaragua's capital].

She spoke of the need for a pluralistic organization, one that could group together all Nicaraguan women. We understood, of course, that it would be very difficult to bring about such a broad grouping that could function. Seeking breadth, we chose the name AMPRONAC, Association of Women Confronting the National Problem. Everyone could fit under such a title. And what was the national problem? The

dictatorship [of Anastasio Somoza Debayle] that spawned death, poverty, vices of all kinds.

Problems with organizing women

But allow me to go back a little.

There had been two previous attempts to bring together Nicaragua's women in a common cause against the tyranny, two attempts to raise women's consciousness of their rights and duties. These were the unsuccessful Women's Democratic Federation of 1962 and the Patriotic Alliance of Nicaraguan Women of 1969. Both reeked of elitism, and neither came to very much.

How difficult it was to raise our women's consciousness! For many different reasons they felt they had so much to lose. They didn't want to get into trouble, their husbands wouldn't hear of it, they were afraid.

In other cases (and this naturally was common among the upper crust) they didn't give a damn about what was going on around them — just so long as they were okay, everything was "all right." And then, of course, a host of material limitations — poverty, kids to care for, work to do, etc. — made activism and organization exceedingly difficult.

What made the work of this group of seven women more successful? It must be remembered that in 1977, the Somoza dictatorship's repression had reached such a level of brutality and genocide that women's mostly silent suffering gave way to involvement and firm conviction that by fighting alongside workers, peasants, students and intellectuals the dictatorship could be overthrown.

Nicaraguan women began to comprehend little by little that our problems could not be considered as something separate from the problems faced by our people as a whole. We understood that only by uniting behind a single goal and subsuming our many individual demands and slogans under the overall call of "Down with the dictatorship" and "Viva the Sandinista popular revolution" could our homeland be liberated and our goals as women be met.

Raising consciousness

But before continuing, let me explain how, under leadership of our vanguard, we began working to raise women's consciousness.

We started in the *barrios*, the neighborhoods and communities of our beloved country about which our poets and singers have sung, so many times, the poorest areas where the level of misery was matched only by nobility of spirit and spirit of sacrifice shown by their residents. I'm talking about Acahualinca, the Fishermen's Barrio, la Rebusca, and so many others.

Our impoverished and disenfranchised society had the characteristics of patriarchy, inasmuch as women were not only

victims of society's abuse, but also the abuse of their men who often abandoned them and their children, taking advantage of women's traditional generosity and abnegation, and often taking all the family's meager possessions with them.

In the face of adversity, of course, our women grew and endured bitter sacrifices. They took charge of the home and of raising the children, of sending them to school when possible, of feeding and dressing them. As a logical consequence of these conditions, our women tended to develop a great deal of possessiveness toward their children. For them they would do anything.

No matter how rundown and poor the house we'd visit, we always were met with a smile. They'd run to clean off a plank for us to sit on. They'd receive us warmly. But sometimes when we would invite them to attend a meeting, or to meet us at some church, they would react with fear, mistrust and sometimes even hostility.

Who could blame them, really? For centuries our women had been abused, tricked, taken advantage of. Why should they believe us?

And underlying everything was that fear for their children. "Listen my dear, you don't know how things are here. The National Guard comes around and they take whatever and whomever they want. I don't want to get involved. What for? Things never change, anyway. I don't want my son to get involved, they'll kill him, he's my only hope, he's in sixth grade, he's a good student."

Persistence and patience

And that's where our work began. With patience, we would try to persuade her that this time things would be different, that work was really being done and that her cooperation would make all the difference in the world.

Persistently, patiently, we gained the trust and affection of our people. In many cases, the children had already done part of our work for us. You see, they often belonged to organizations at their schools. They often knew one of us. And they were crucial in helping us convince their mothers to join us.

Nicaraguan women have always identified themselves as being a mother first, before being lovers, wives, or anything else, a characteristic quite common throughout Latin America.

In the case of middle- and upper-class women, in their homes patriarchy was enthroned. There, the paterfamilias was the lord and master, provider and decider.

Women allowed themselves to be maintained economically and in exchange for this security for themselves and their children, they erected a wall between themselves and all suffering, injustice, and exploitation. "My hubby doesn't want me to get involved. He says you're all politicians and that politics is only for men. My daddy says he'll lock me up, take away my car, if I go to the demonstration. He says that if I'm ever arrested he'll let me rot in jail."

First public meeting

But little by little we made headway, even among these women.

And by the end of August 1977, in a little warehouse alongside the Church of the Palms in Managua, we had our first public meeting. We were about 60 women. I gave the welcoming talk and then Nora [Astorga, now Special Attorney General of Nicaragua] and Lea went into an explanation of why and how we were going to organize a movement, and why their cooperation was needed.

They explained that our first goal was to obtain legal recognition for the organization and our first campaign would be to win release of our jailed sisters. This interested them as women.

We also addressed the problem of the high cost of living, the need for a more just society, but basically we presented them with the following proposal: all those in-

terested in being members of AMPRONAC were free to espouse any political ideology so long as they worked for these goals: (1) women's active participation in the solutions to the country's problems; (2) defense of women's rights — economic, social and political; (3) defend and take up the struggle for human rights.

We felt encouraged by the turnout and by the active question and answer session that followed. We set the date for the next meeting which, more than a meeting, would really be a rally: September 29, also at the Church of the Palms.

Peasant women of Cua

Some two thousand came out for the rally. We introduced several priests and pastors from the Atlantic Coast, who testified to the atrocities they had witnessed or heard about, committed by the hated National Guard against the defenseless population.

They told of the massacre of the peasant women of Cua.

The church was surrounded by National Guardsmen at a prudent distance, but they didn't intervene. We felt encouraged by this first attempt at organization.

We didn't stop there. We began visiting other cities and rural zones: Lea went to the area of the mines; I went to León and Matagalpa; others went to Granada, Rivas, Chontales, Estelí. And so, little by little, we covered the entire national territory. In the funeral of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro,* AMPRONAC played an active role. Several of our members were jailed after demonstrating in front of Somoza's newspaper, *Novedades*.

International Women's Day

March 1978. We decided to have a week of activities culminating in International Women's Day. The afternoon of March 8 all over Managua, we held meetings in churches to set forth AMPRONAC's demands. There were eight basic demands:

1. An end to the repression
2. Freedom of association
3. Release of political prisoners
4. Military torturers and murderers must be brought to trial
5. An end to the rise in prices
6. Abrogation of all laws discriminating against women
7. Equal pay for equal work
8. No more commercialization of women.

We made a public appeal for women to join the struggle for the country's liberation. We argued that women made up 51.9 percent of the Nicaraguan populace and that without the active participation of this majority it would be impossible to call the anti-Somoza struggle a truly popular one.

The contents of our proclamation probably didn't satisfy the international feminist movements, because our emphasis was on our people's general struggle. But we understood that this struggle was intimately linked to the needs of Nicaragua's women, who had become aware that the basis of equality between the sexes could be attained only through the construction of a totally new Nicaragua.

Class divisions widen

Our presence asserted itself more and more. The movement grew. We started a campaign of occupations of public offices, the Red Cross, the United Nations. We joined a march in Diriamba organized by the Association of Rural Workers, which was brutally dispersed by the National

* Pedro Joaquín Chamorro was the editor and publisher of *La Prensa*, Nicaragua's bourgeois opposition newspaper under the Somoza regime. He was prominent among the anti-Somoza forces. His assassination on January 10, 1978, precipitated massive demonstrations by the Nicaraguan people against the dictatorship.

Today, *La Prensa* is the leading voice inside Nicaragua of the counterrevolutionary opponents of the revolution.



Leonora Argüello de Hüper, Nicaragua's consul-general to U.S. She was a founder of AMPRONAC, women's organization which Sandinista National Liberation Front organized to unite women in struggle against Somoza regime.

Militant/Lou Howort



Militant/Gary Bridges



AMPRONAC rally in Managua. Women, who suffered greatly under Somoza regime, played a big role in Sandinista revolution.

Guard and in which two of our comrades were wounded.

In the course of the popular struggle one could see the division widening between those of us who collaborated with the Sandinista National Liberation Front and those women of the bourgeoisie who were part of the traditional, timid opposition to Somoza. They feared genuine change because they could lose something as a result. They wanted AMPRONAC to be a group of personalities seeking an end to abuses, that's all.

On the other hand, the pro-Sandinistas wanted to turn AMPRONAC into a mass organization with a democratic program questioning the very structure of the system.

In the month of July, after a series of meetings with delegates from all the departments of Nicaragua, we held a special conference of 150 representatives of over 1,000 women from nine cities, during which we adopted, by overwhelming majority, the line proposed by those of us favoring the FSLN.

Insurrection

From then on, we entered the stage of preparations for the insurrection scheduled for September that same year. We established caches of medicines, weapons, etc.

After the unsuccessful uprising of September, AMPRONAC became part of the MPU (United Popular Movement), a coalition of grassroots and opposition organizations, and alongside other organizations in it, played a decisive role in preparing for the final insurrection of July 1979. This was how women of all social sectors massively joined the struggle, whether in the

cities or the mountains, and displayed genuine heroism.

Through this participation, Nicaragua's women won one of their greatest and most significant victories. They began their process of liberation from the psychological and cultural barriers determined by women's secondary role in society. By taking up frontline positions in the battle against the dictatorship, women ensured themselves a leading role in the reconstruction of our homeland.

July 19 was a victory for Nicaraguan women, as it was for all the people, and we have won the right to an equal place in society, at the same time as we are undertaking the multiple tasks of reconstruction.

In order to rebuild our country, Nicaraguan women are fighting in the "trenches" of production, in the communities and in

the state to build a new Nicaragua and become new women.

To our sisters throughout the world, and especially to Latin American women here today, I want to say that Latin America's hour of awakening has come and that women's collaboration must be total. In every area women's role is decisive in attainment of liberation in the great homeland of Latin America. Women will never achieve freedom in an integral way under a system that oppresses both men and women.

We do not accuse men per se of being *machista* — it is often the society, the system, that pushes them into that role. The problem is a decadent, unjust society that creates such myths.

Let us help men to free themselves of these chains. Because only in this way,

through the liberation of our peoples, can we also attain our own liberation as women which to us does not mean to be more or less than men, but simply to assume responsibilities and demand our rights.

Without women's participation, Latin America will remain submerged in misery and injustice. We must and we can do it. Modesty aside, Nicaraguan women, Salvadoran women, Guatemalan women are living models.

We, the Nicaraguan women, cannot claim to have achieved our total liberation, but we are certainly on our way and with the total liberation of our homeland we will reach our objective. Mothers, sisters, daughters, compañeras all. Arm in arm with our men, let us obtain total liberation. Onward, compañeras and thank you very much.

N.Y. meeting links women's rights with struggle in Central America

BY NANCY COLE

NEW YORK — "Women of the Americas — their struggle for liberation" headlined a forum here on May 6 attended by 200 socialists, unionists, and solidarity and women's rights activists.

The meeting was cosponsored by the Militant Labor Forum, the New York chapters of the Nicaraguan Women's Association — Luisa Amanda Espinosa (AMNLAE) and the Committee in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

The keynote speaker was Leonora Argüello de Hüper, consul-general of Nicaragua to the United States. She spoke of the "pressing issue of the moment," the U.S.-backed invasion of her country.

Hüper summarized the history of Nicaragua until the Sandinista triumph on July 19, 1979. During the 46 years of Somoza's dictatorship, she said "nobody cared whether we had free elections in Nicaragua or whether we had any kind of elections."

Now, Hüper continued, "all of a sudden we find ourselves *destabilizing* the region, *inflicting* the region, *exporting* revolution, as if a revolution is something you can export, as if it's a commodity. Revolution is something that has to come from within. To have a revolution, you have to have certain conditions, and let me tell you, all of Latin America is ripe for revolution."

Referring to Reagan's remarks at his news conference earlier in the week, Hüper said, "Now they call the counter-revolutionaries, those murderers who were Somoza's *Guardia Nacional*, they call them freedom fighters!"

Women in Nicaragua formed 40 percent of the army during the war against Somoza and are 30 percent of the regular army now. "A man has to respect a woman who has the guts to die fighting," she said. "We have earned that respect, but we realize that it is only through the revolution that women in Nicaragua are going to obtain our freedom and equality."

Hüper ended with an appeal to those in the audience to take action against U.S. in-

tervention. "We are running out of time. It is up to you to decide what is going to happen in Central America."

Marilyn Meyers, mother of a draft resister and a member of the Coalition Against Militarism in Our Public Schools, spoke of her political evolution.

"Our task is to let these macho men who are our leaders know that we have other plans for our children," she said. "These macho men, even those with names like Margaret and Indira, have simply got to be taught they will have to solve their political and economic problems by some other means."

Lourdes García of Church Women United visited Nicaragua in March as part of an interfaith study tour made up of 31 women from 16 states. She was there during the pope's visit, which occurred right after 17 youth had been killed by counter-revolutionaries at the border.

"There was tremendous emphasis on having the pope at least address the question of the need for peace in Nicaragua," she said. "So you can understand what it means when the people say, 'Your eminence, a message of peace,' and the pope responds, '*Silencio!*'"

In the United States, García told the meeting, "It's easy for us to pick at what the Nicaraguans aren't doing. We've seen it from the right and from the left." She described it as a "check list" that the Nicaraguan revolution is supposed to live up to.

But when you realize the devastation and poverty they have had to overcome to take the tremendous strides forward in literacy, health care, and housing, "your check list becomes meaningless," she said.

Mary-Alice Waters, national cochairperson of the Socialist Workers Party, recalled the beginnings of the second wave of the U.S. women's liberation movement in the 1970s and international and national developments that made its growth possible.

Today, she said, Nicaragua is building a society whose social and economic foundations make women's liberation possible because it's based on meeting the most basic

needs of working people. Waters pointed to the Nicaraguan literacy crusade, health campaigns, efforts to create jobs, child-care facilities, and housing — at the same time as all these basic needs are being cut back in the United States.

"That's why Washington is determined to crush the Nicaraguan revolution," Waters said. "And it's why women here must oppose U.S. intervention. The fight for women's liberation is the fight to transform society as the Nicaraguans are doing."

Cecelia McCarthy, vice-president of Local 3369 of the American Federation of Government Employees, and the New York-New Jersey district women's coordinator of her union, spoke of her union's opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America.

As government workers, "we know what it is like to be under attack," she said, pointing to the example of Reagan's busting of the air traffic controllers' union, PATCO.

Unfortunately, she said, most of the trade union leadership in this country promotes a narrow view of trade unionism. The idea that you're only supposed to buy union-label goods, or goods made in this country, she said, ignores the fact that "there are workers all over the world who are put in a horrible situation by the multinational corporations."

She continued, "My hope is that some day there will be workers organized all over the world in control of their work environments and their lives."

Also speaking was María Meneses of the Arlen Sui chapter of AMNLAE in New York and Geraldine Miller, founder of Household Technicians and current president of the Bronx chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Messages were read to the meeting from the Grenada Women's Organization, Women's Section of the National Black United Front, New York City chapter of NOW, and Emagene Walker, president of the New York City chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Human rights violations in El Salvador: A trade unionist speaks.



CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Hear Alejandro Molina Lara organizational secretary of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers' Unions (FENASTRAS). Other speakers: Miguel Machuca, regional director, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Representative, District One office, Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union; Sr. Patricia Krommer, Executive Director, Archbishop Oscar Romero Relief Fund. Translation to English and Spanish. Fri., May 20, 7:30 p.m. ILGWU, 400 W 9th St. (at Olive). Ausp: Los Angeles Molina Lara Tour Committee. For more information call (213) 734-2787 or 461-4435.

NOW conferences discuss elections, war, Aug. 27 march

BY MARGARET JAYKO

Nine hundred women attended three regional conferences of the National Organization for Women (NOW) the weekend of April 15-17.

The Mid-Atlantic conference was held in Baltimore; the Great Lakes conference in Cincinnati; and the South-Central conference in Arlington, Texas, near Dallas. Six more regional meetings are scheduled for May and June.

The central activity that the National NOW leadership projected at the conferences was working to get Democrats elected in the 1984 elections, and lobbying around some women's rights issues. Most of the NOW leaders also mentioned the August 27 march for jobs, peace, and freedom in Washington, D.C., as something NOW members should get involved in.

Former NOW president Eleanor Smeal spoke at the Mid-Atlantic conference.

She argued that the central thing women's rights fighters should be involved in from here on out is defeating Ronald Reagan in 1984.

She mentioned some of the big attacks by the government on women's rights, all of which she blamed on Reagan, failing to mention that the Democrats, by their votes, have enabled the White House to carry out these moves.

She called on NOW to register people to vote, pointing to the campuses as the primary arena for such an effort.

Smeal said that while she wasn't "married only to electoral strategies," other methods of struggle were not useful in the current "hostile climate."

During the discussion period, one person referred to the discussion going on among Black leaders about running a Black person in the Democratic Party presidential primary and asked Smeal who NOW should back in the 1984 elections.

Smeal responded that "we should not rule out the fact that there should be a woman on the ticket" of the Democrats in 1984. But whether there is or not, Smeal said, women must pressure all the Democratic candidates to take a "strong" position on women's rights.

Smeal warned the conference that "too many active feminists tell me they don't see where the difference is" between Democrats and Republicans and that "too often

'Nicaragua is what we've been talking about all week'

The U.S. government's dirty war in Central America and the Caribbean was on the minds of many participants at the mid-April National Organization for Women (NOW) regional conferences.

One sign of this is the response to the *Militant*, which had a banner headline "Secret gov't document details U.S. war in Central America." Seventy-two copies of the *Militant* were distributed, and 7 subscriptions were sold.

At the Arlington, Texas, conference, participants expressed deep suspicion about what Reagan is up to in that region.

A couple of women, seeing the *Militant's* headline, commented, "That's what we've been discussing all week."

Many of the books and pamphlets purchased from socialist literature tables at the conferences were about Nicaragua and El Salvador, as well as women's rights.

At the Cincinnati conference, women picked up the *Militant* to find out "what's really going on Nicaragua." They also bought eight copies of a pamphlet by Nicaraguan leader Tomás Borge titled, *Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution*.

There was also a lot of interest in the *Militant's* coverage of the Chicago mayoral elections; the recent gang rape in New Bedford, Massachusetts; and the upcoming national conference of women coal miners.

people say well, there really are no choices."

This general perspective of the NOW leadership of focusing work inside the Democratic Party, and emphasizing getting out the vote for Democratic candidates was repeated at all three regional conferences.

But other questions were taken up as well.

August 27 march on Washington

The August 27 jobs, peace, and freedom march, which will take place in Washington, D.C., to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 1963 civil rights march, was discussed at each of the conferences.

The march was initiated by the major civil rights organizations. It has won the backing of many other important groups, including the AFL-CIO, American Agriculture Movement, and many women's organizations. NOW, the National Council of Negro Women, Bella Abzug's Women USA, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, are all supporting the march.

Included on the leaflet for the march is the demand for equal rights for women and "education to provide training in jobs with a future, particularly for Blacks, Hispanics, Women, the Disabled and Youth."

Mary Jean Collins, NOW's Vice President-Action, told the reproductive rights workshop at the Great Lakes conference that it's very important for NOW to build the August 27 march.

"We must go to our chapters," said Collins, "form coalitions, organize buses, and get people to go."

She concluded that NOW members should make abortion rights a big issue at the August march.

The same theme was hit on at the Mid-Atlantic conference.

U.S. war in Central America

The U.S. government's moves toward a new Vietnam in Central America and the Caribbean were on the minds of many of the women at the conferences. But there were no workshops, keynote speakers, or candidates for national board who addressed this issue.

At the Mid-Atlantic conference, participants in the "We cannot afford to be divided" workshop discussed the importance of NOW actively building August 27 as a vehicle to reach out to Black, Latina and Asian women. This was linked to the need to take a stand against U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

The workshop unanimously passed a resolution that centered on the need for unity between women, oppressed nationalities, and the labor movement in the fight against "the attacks on our rights here and the U.S. war in Central America."

The resolution pointed out that the U.S. government is escalating its war "against our sisters and brothers in Central America who are fighting for human rights and dignity as we are fighting for human rights and dignity."

It called on the conference to urge all NOW chapters to build and participate in the August 27 march.

As soon as this resolution hit the floor of the plenary session, national board member Gloria Sackman-Reed made an "amendment" to delete everything except the sentence endorsing the march.

'Muddying up' the issues

Sackman-Reed began the motivation for her amendment by reporting that the march had originally been named after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech, but was then changed to peace, jobs, and freedom.

She said the NOW national board had passed a resolution urging the march committee to change the focus back to commemorating King's speech.

If that failed, Sackman-Reed said, the NOW board wanted equality included as



Militant/Duane Stilwell

Many women at regional NOW gatherings wanted to discuss fight against a new Vietnam in Central America.

one of the themes along with peace, jobs, and freedom.

Referring to the points in the resolution on Central America, Sackman-Reed said these would "add another dimension" to the march, which "muddies up the civil rights movement and the quest for equality for Blacks." She proposed the conference adopt a "clean" resolution which would not mention any political issues.

She added that NOW should have "a big turnout identified as NOW in this march so that they will know that the National Organization for Women is indeed fighting for civil rights for minorities in this country."

But Martin Luther King, Jr. was an *outspoken opponent* of the U.S. war in Vietnam, a position he saw as inextricably linked to the struggle for civil rights for Black people.

And women's equality is one of the demands of the march. Sackman-Reed's actual objection was the linking of the fight for women's rights to opposition to U.S. intervention abroad, and the war against working people at home.

The supporters of the resolution saw this, not as a *substitute* for fighting for women's equality, but as a way to *strengthen* this fight.

But unfortunately the resolution's backers were never able to get the floor to explain their point of view. After Sackman-Reed spoke, the discussion was closed and the amendment voted up, with the sentence in support of the march being passed virtually unanimously.

Antiwar sentiment

While NOW leaders prevented resolutions condemning the war in Central America from being discussed, the antiwar sentiment of many NOW members, and their interest in the struggles of women in Central America and the Caribbean, was shown by the response to a few events that took place during the course of the conferences.

Alejandro Molina Lara, a Salvadoran trade union leader, came to the Mid-Atlantic conference during lunch-time on the first day to talk about the struggle in his country against the U.S.-backed dictatorship. The get-together had been announced from the podium, and several NOW members came to talk to him.

At both the South-Central and Great Lakes conferences, NOW members who had recently visited Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada held slideshows illustrating the gains women have made in those countries as a result of their revolutions. About 50 women came to the two showings.

Women miners

While the number of working-class women at the conferences was small, and the number of Blacks and Latinas even smaller, those who did come made an impact on the meetings.

In fact, how to involve working women in NOW, and Black and Latina women in particular, was a question raised by many NOW members at all three conferences.

Seven women from the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), all of whom were underground miners from Pennsylvania and West Virginia, attended the Mid-Atlantic conference. They spent much of their time staffing a Coal Employ-

ment Project (CEP) table. The CEP is a national organization that fights to get mining jobs for women and equal treatment for women miners. It is holding a conference June 24-26.

On Sunday morning, greetings from the women miners were read to the conference.

The greetings invited NOW members to the women miners conference, which will be in Pennsylvania. The UMWA has endorsed the conference, and UMWA President Richard Trumka will be the keynote speaker.

Many in the room applauded and about \$45 worth of CEP T-shirts and bumper stickers were sold.

Most of the women who came by the CEP table had a lot of questions about what it's like to be a woman miner. Many NOW members were inspired by the fighting spirit of sisters in the coal mines. As one woman said, "Meeting you women miners was the best thing that happened to me at this conference."

Two of the women miners had never been to a NOW gathering like this before and they both decided to join NOW.

Non-union hotel

Right up until the day the Mid-Atlantic conference began, there was a good chance that it would be picketed by members of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union Local 36 because the Inner Harbor Holiday Inn, which NOW had selected as the conference site, is a nonunion outfit.

At the eleventh hour, a compromise between NOW and the union was reached. Kim Keller, an organizer for Local 36, addressed the conference on Sunday morning.

She identified herself as both a feminist and a trade unionist, and her talk was punctuated by applause.

She focused her remarks on explaining the common interests shared by the union movement and the women's rights movement.

Keller told the conference about a sex discrimination suit that her union is bringing on behalf of women who were fired from a restaurant for refusing to wear "playboy bunny" outfits which the owner decided were mandatory.

At the Great Lakes conference, two workshops focused on women workers.

The "Women in the Construction Trades" workshop included on its panel an electrician and a pipefitter, both of whom were Black. They pointed to the role Cincinnati NOW had played in forcing the city to adhere to federal affirmative action quotas in construction projects.

Lucy Green, an affirmative action attorney, told the workshop, "It's unfortunate that we have a recession and jobs are hard to find. But Black and white women have to have an equal share of whatever work is available, or we'll lose everything we fought for."

Participants in the workshop on waitresses discussed how these workers are organizing themselves to fight the newly-imposed tax on waitresses' tips.

This article is based on reports by Beverley Andalaria, Margaret Jayko, Kathy Rettig, Robbie Scheer, and Elizabeth Ziers.

International Socialist Review

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE MILITANT May 1983

The birth of the Communist movement in the U.S.

The following special feature is a chapter from a new book by Farrell Dobbs to be published later this year by Monad Press. *Revolutionary Continuity: The Communist Years (1918-1921)* will be the second volume of a history of the development of Marxist leadership in the United States.

The first volume, *Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years (1848-1917)*, appeared in 1980.

In March 1982 the *International Socialist Review* published an earlier chapter of the new volume. Entitled "A Reinspired Left Wing," it recounted the initial impact of the 1917 October revolution in Russia on the socialist movement in the United States. The chapter printed here continues that story.

In March 1919, under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik party of Russia, the Communist International was founded. It began the regroupment of the revolutionary socialist parties and workers' organizations around the world that looked to the Russian revolution and its leadership for guidance. It became known more popularly as the Comintern or the Third International.

The Second International had shattered and collapsed with the outbreak of World War I. The leadership of most of its constituent parties had discredited themselves by supporting their own imperialist governments in the world slaughter. During the tumultuous aftermath of the war, however, the Second International was resurrected by the anticommunists in the international labor bureaucracy. They hoped thus to counter the powerful attraction of the Russian revolution and the determination of growing numbers of workers throughout the world to learn from and emulate the Bolsheviks.

Those forces within the socialist movement that defended a course of trying to reform the capitalist system and opposed the new workers' and peasants' government of Russia were rallied at a conference held in Bern, Switzerland, in February 1919. With charges like those being leveled today against the workers' and farmers' governments of Nicaragua and Grenada, the Second International denounced the revolutionary soviet government as a new tyranny no better than the Czarist despotism the workers and peasants had overthrown.

Within the United States, as elsewhere, the Socialist Party divided between the supporters of the Russian revolution and its opponents. New parties striving to follow the Bolshevik road were formed.

The following chapter entitled "Socialist Party Split," recounts this process which gave birth to the first parties calling themselves communist in the United States. It is copyright © 1983 and reprinted by permission of the Anchor Foundation.

The author has been a communist since 1934. A leader of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes, Dobbs was the central Teamster organizer of the first campaign to organize over-the-road drivers. He served thirteen months in federal penitentiary in Sandstone, Minnesota, for his political opposition to U.S. imperialism's course in World War II.

Dobbs was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States in 1948, 1952, 1956, and 1960. He was the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. He is currently writing the history of which this chapter is a part.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

The founding of the Communist International had a polarizing impact upon the Socialist Party in the United States. Left-wingers in the party called for an official break with the Second International and affiliation to the new world communist movement. The right wing took an opposite stand. It lined up in support of the campaign initiated at the Bern conference to reconstitute the Second International as a supporter of "democracy" and to oppose the Comintern as a proponent of "dictatorship."

A small group of centrists straddled the issue. They rejected the reformist line favoring the bourgeois parliamentary system in the name of abstract "democracy." At the same time, they counterposed a vaguely defined

"industrial democracy" to a proletarian dictatorship based upon soviets, that is, to a workers' state such as the Bolsheviks had led the Russian toilers in establishing. While agreeing that a new proletarian world movement should be established, the centrists sought to delay a decision. They treated the action of the Moscow congress establishing the Communist International as premature, on the grounds that it had been taken without representation from the vanguard parties of all countries.

Early in the spring of 1919 the SP held a referendum on this question. An overwhelming majority of the membership voted to leave the Second International and seek affiliation to the Comintern. Implementation of this decision was then held up by the party officialdom, consisting mainly of right-wingers and centrists.

The left wing's victory in the referendum stemmed from changes in the composition of the party. Petty-bourgeois desertions from the ranks of the SP during the war had been largely compensated by recruitment of foreign-born workers opposed to the imperialist blood-bath. This trend was accelerated by the victory of the October revolution. The shift in class composition strengthened the working-class character of the SP and accounted for the procommunist stand in the ranks on the issue of international affiliation.

During the Marxist movement's initial period of development in the United States, it had consisted mainly of foreign-born workers. Most of them came from Germany and elsewhere in western and northern Europe. The political sectarianism of many of these socialists initially blocked their full participation in important developments in the young U.S. labor movement and slowed down recruitment of native-born revolutionary workers. In correspondence with socialists in the United States, Engels urged them to rid their movement of this ultraleft sectarianism toward U.S. labor organizations and to learn English in order to be able to communicate with the majority of the working class.

Changing composition

By the time the Socialist Party was founded in 1901, however, a majority of its members were native-born workers. This composition shifted once again over the next two decades, primarily due to the enormous new influx of immigrants that began in the 1890s, this time primarily from southern and eastern Europe. Already at the turn of the century, four out of ten people in the twelve largest U.S. cities were foreign born, and the figure rose to six out of ten if second-generation immigrants were included. The overwhelming majority of these immigrants became part of the working class, of course.

By 1909 eastern and southern European immigrants comprised one-third of the labor force in industry; in twenty-one important branches of industry, nearly two-thirds of the labor force were either immigrant or Black. Among iron- and steelworkers, for example, 58 percent were first generation immigrants, another 13 percent second generation, and 12 percent Black. By 1917 some two-thirds of the workers in munitions plants were foreign-born.

By 1919 immigrant workers once again made up a majority of the socialist forces in the United States.

For Marxist revolutionaries to exercise leadership in the labor movement in the United States clearly required the construction of a strong multinational party, a party organized along Bolshevik lines and with a membership and leadership that was both native-born and foreign-born, white and Black. But the SP was not organized along revolutionary centralist lines with a democratically elected leadership that represented the actual composition of the socialist movement.

Language federations

Most immigrants joining the SP were enrolled in semiautonomous federations, organized according to language spoken. Often these workers did not have a right to vote in the SP itself. Many right-wing and centrist SP leaders joined in the chauvinist anti-immigrant agitation whipped up by the capitalists and bureaucracy of the

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John Reed (top) and Charles Ruthenberg. Along with Louis Fraina and Benjamin Gitlow, they were leaders of a current at June 1919 national left-wing conference that opposed abandonment of political struggle within the Socialist Party.

Continued from preceding page
American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Among the various language federations were Finnish, Hungarian, Jewish, Lettish, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Scandinavian, South Slavic, and Ukrainian organizations. By 1919 a change had occurred in the relative strength and influence of these various language units. Inspired by the proletarian victory in Russia, new members had joined the Russian federation at an increasing rate. In addition, the Russian-Americans had acquired higher political standing among revolutionary workers in the United States. Some of the respect for the capabilities of the working class in their native land rubbed off on them. These twin gains had enabled the Russian federation to displace its Lettish counterpart as the leading force among the language units of the socialist movement.

The left wing's main strength lay in the language federations — especially in the Hungarian, Lettish, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, South Slavic, and Ukrainian bodies. But many of these foreign-born militants had little contact with the organized U.S. labor movement and even less understanding of its nature. Their tendency was to misread from afar developments in Europe. They would then propose policies for vanguard workers in the United States analogous to those they thought were being followed by revolutionaries in the European class struggle.

This situation created problems for those left-wing cadres in the SP, including the substantial numbers outside the language federations, striving to build a movement that was seriously oriented toward the class struggle in the United States. Moreover, the militants who were not part of the language federations helped to erect yet another obstacle to realization of their objective. Together with the left-wing faction in the language federations, they developed a sectarian political line in reaction against the reformist policies and practices of the right-wing leaders.

(It should also be stressed in passing that the class-collaborationist policies of these SP misleaders were largely responsible for the strength of revolutionary anarcho-syndicalism in the United States in the early 1900s. From 1906 on, a growing chasm opened between the reformist-dominated leadership of the SP and the revolutionary-minded cadres of the Industrial Workers of the World. The overlap in membership dwindled, as many IWW members were expelled from, left of their own accord, or were repelled by the SP. And mistaken policies by left-wingers within the SP accelerated this process. The net result had been a significant increase in the relative weight and influence of the non-working-class forces inside the SP.)

Virtually all the left-wing socialists rejected identification with workers' immediate demands. Such demands were considered to be a concession to reformism. The left-wingers called upon the party to directly mobilize the proletariat to overthrow capitalism. Mass action at the industrial level was counterposed to any and all forms of socialist participation in the electoral arena. The workers were urged to quit the AFL craft unions and build revolutionary industrial unions. These perspectives, it was assumed, would soon gain mass support without the proletariat having to go through experiences in the class struggle that would lead them to develop greater political consciousness of themselves as a class whose interests are in permanent and irreconcilable conflict with those of the capitalists.

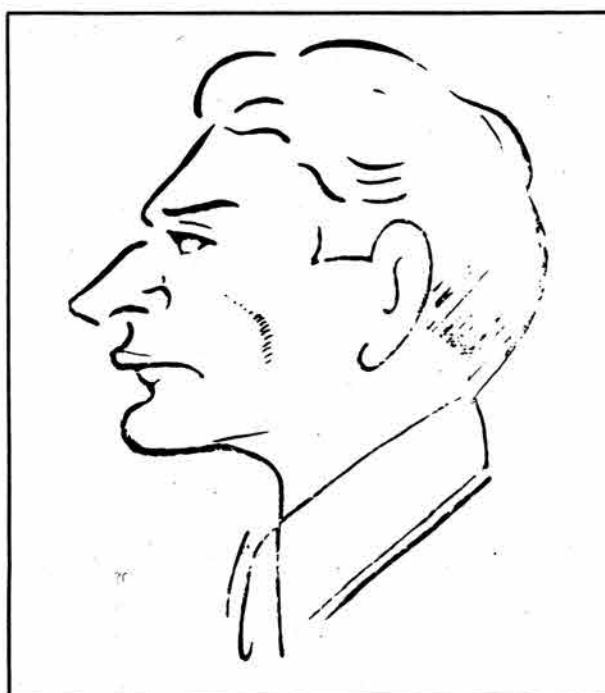
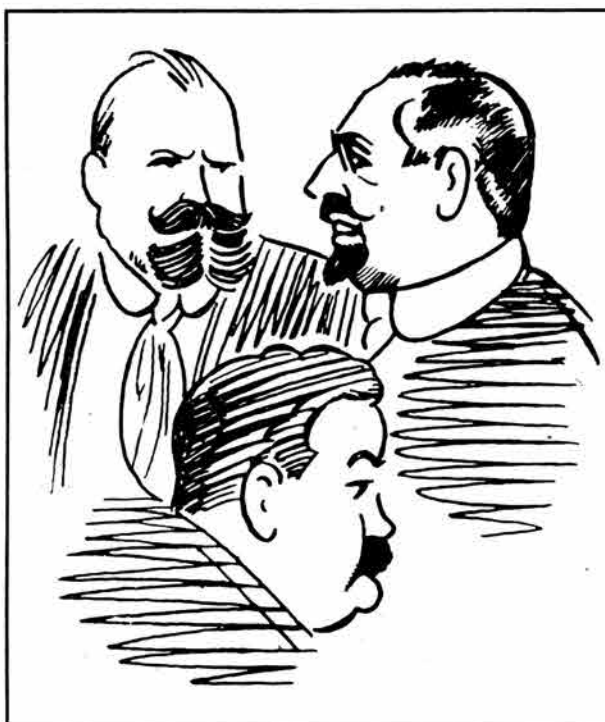
Left wing organizes

As the first step toward implementation of their line, the various components of the left wing came together to fight for their right to exercise majority rule within the Socialist Party. Their key aims were to secure official adoption of a revolutionary program and to elect a new party leadership ready to carry it out. Toward those ends they demanded that an emergency convention be held at an early date.

By March 1919 revolutionists in New York were spearheading this campaign. They had accumulated sufficient forces and resources to publish their own local organ, *The New York Communist*. Using it as an aid, revolutionists in New York assumed the role of a national organizing center mobilizing and coordinating left-wing cadres, thus helping to speed the formation of revolutionary groups throughout the party. The left wing was on the way to organizational consolidation of its victory registered in the referendum on international affiliation.

As matters then stood, the right wing was at a political disadvantage. If organized on a basis that allowed rank-and-file opinion to be reflected, a party convention appeared certain to favor revolutionary over reformist policies. So the right-wingers used their control of the party apparatus to postpone the scheduling of a convention until the majority left-wing influence within the party could be whittled down to a minority by bureaucratic organizational means.

The centrists went along with this perspective. Fearing



These sketches by Art Young done at communist conventions in 1919 picture Missin, Hourwich, and Stoklitsky, leaders of the Russian language federation (top) and Alfred Wagenknecht, first executive secretary of Communist Labor Party.

that a majority wanted to change the party from an all-inclusive, undisciplined socialist party into a communist organization, they attacked the left-wingers as splitters whose loyalty to the party was in question. This charge provided the reformists a cover for their bureaucratic assault upon the revolutionists. It began in New York.

Right-wing attack

Both the left and right wings had tightly organized factions in New York, which fought each other on equal terms in that respect. But the right wing had a tactical edge on one count; it dominated the official executive

“When votes were counted, left wing had won 12 of 15 posts on National Executive Committee. As this sweeping victory demonstrated, a majority of party wanted to adopt revolutionary course. . . .”

bodies above the branch level and also controlled the main party newspaper, *The Call*, which was published in Manhattan. This advantage enabled the minority right wing, not only to use the official apparatus against the local opposition, but also to circulate factionally slanted accounts of the local conflict throughout the party.

The bureaucratic attack was triggered by centrists in the New York state committee, who moved to revoke the charters of party units backing the revolutionary faction. The right wholeheartedly backed this initiative and began to stage walkouts in New York City branches where the left wing had a majority. The city executive body then proceeded to reorganize these units. In each instance they were officially reconstituted around the reformist-centrist

minority, and the revolutionary majority was suspended from the party.

At this point the annual elections to the Socialist Party's National Executive Committee were held. They were conducted through a referendum on the basis of candidate lists submitted to the membership for balloting. A full slate of nominees was presented by the left wing. It hoped to win a majority on the party's top executive body, which could then parry the bureaucratic assault by the incumbent officialdom and schedule a convention to politically reorient the socialist movement. When the votes were counted, the left wing had won twelve of the fifteen posts on the National Executive Committee. As this sweeping victory demonstrated, a majority of the party wanted to adopt a revolutionary course. It had elected a leadership whose responsibility now included organizing these forces for disciplined action in the internal party struggle so that majority rule could be reasserted. With those aims in mind, a call was issued for a national left-wing conference to be held soon in New York.

Much was to happen, though, before the New York conference took place.

A leadership coup

The old National Executive Committee refused to yield office to the successors chosen by the party membership. Alleging fraud in the balloting, it declared the elections null and void. It then handed down a ruling that a new committee would have to be selected by an emergency convention and served notice that such an official gathering would be held in Chicago on August 30, 1919.

Posing as the authentic National Executive Committee, the reformist and centrist usurpers simultaneously took steps to rig the upcoming convention. They widened the bureaucratic assault on the left wing with the aim of barring it from the Chicago session. Seven language federations — the Hungarian, Lettish, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, South Slavic, and Ukrainian affiliates — were suspended from the party for supporting the left-wing program and for protesting the suspension of revolutionists from the New York branches.

The entire Michigan unit of the Socialist Party was expelled outright on the grounds that it opposed legislative reforms. Before long, further suspensions and expulsions were decreed, on one or another pretext, against the Massachusetts and Ohio state formations, the Chicago organization, and smaller bodies with revolutionary majorities elsewhere in the country.

About 70,000 members were thus stricken from the party rolls. The total membership, as recognized “officially,” shrank from around 109,000 earlier in 1919 to a bit over 39,000 by July.

Among those not expelled from the SP were politically confused members who had not joined either faction. Most of them opposed the suspensions and expulsions and stood ready to defend the democratic rights of the left wing within the party, including its right to participate in the Chicago convention.

Some of these socialist-minded workers were sympathetic to the left wing in other respects, as well. They favored a class-struggle line, supported the Soviet Union, and wanted to be in an International that included the Russian communists. Many of those members had the potential to develop into convinced revolutionists.

Such was the internal party situation when the national left-wing conference opened in New York on June 21, 1919.

Tactical differences

During the conference, the delegates polarized into two opposing blocs. On one side stood the main body of representatives from the language federations, together with those from the Michigan state organization. On the other side were the majority of the primarily English-speaking and native-born delegates and a minority from the language federations. These blocs were in general agreement on the political need for a definitive split with the class collaborationists in the SP in order to form a communist movement, but they differed over how that course should be pursued.

In carrying out a split that is politically necessary within the proletarian vanguard, Marxists have a dual aim: to uphold revolutionary socialist principles, and to mobilize the largest possible numbers on their side. Toward the latter end, organizational moves are subordinated to clarification of the programmatic issues in dispute. Patient efforts are made to help confused party members understand what is at stake in the political confrontation in order to win their support.

The SP left wing already had a majority of nearly two-to-one in the ranks. Nevertheless, the fact remained that many SP members had refused to take sides in the factional struggle. They were still open-minded about the political issues in dispute; at the same time, their neutrality reflected a desire for party unity. Thus, the left wing

could win an objective hearing from such individuals by fighting for reinstatement of its victimized supporters into the party. Right-wing resistance to that demand would help to show that revolutionists and reformists could no longer remain united organizationally; those who were still on the fence would begin to understand that they had to make a political choice in their future party affiliation.

It was not sufficient simply to recognize the fact that a split had become necessary over issues of political principle. The revolutionists had not yet politically prepared the impending break.

There was no justification for disrupting the left-wing faction over differences about the timing of organizational steps in the SP fight. Such matters could have been handled on the basis of compromise and majority rule within the faction, and the course adopted could have been modified through the same procedure, as required by further developments. But things did not work out that way.

Call to abandon struggle in SP

On the eve of the New York conference the Michigan group, led by Dennis Batt and John Keracher, had issued a call for a change in tactics. It had urged the left wing to abandon the struggle within the SP and proceed at once to form a new party. When the gathering convened, the Michigan proposal was strongly backed by most delegates from the language federations; this bloc of forces had already been expelled from the SP. Those speaking for the Russian federation, led by Nicholas Hourwich and Alexander Stoklitsky, were especially aggressive in pressing for adoption of the new course advocated by the Michigan group.

The leaders of the Russian language federation based their views on mistaken interpretations of the decisions made at the founding congress of the Communist International held in Moscow earlier in the year. The Bolsheviks, they argued, had not tried to capture the Second International; they had taken the lead in launching the Comintern. In keeping with the Bolshevik example, the left wing in the United States should neither seek control of the politically heterogeneous Socialist Party, nor engage in maneuvers designed to win supporters among those they labelled centrists in the party. Immediate steps should be taken, instead, to declare a communist organization.

These views were in error on two main counts. First, the specific reasons for the organizational action taken by the Bolsheviks at the Moscow congress (which are outlined in the previous chapter) did not justify attempts to apply that example mechanically to other concrete situations, which had to be judged on their merits. Moreover, the proposal that the left wing turn its back on politically confused workers in the SP ran counter to the Comintern's policy of striving patiently to win such militants away from social democracy and centrism to communism.

The Russian language federation leaders in favor of an immediate break held that it was necessary for the vanguard party to evince two key qualities. The vanguard needed to be not only principled but flawless — in practice, doctrinaire — in its political outlook. With those attributes, they contended, a small party could lead the proletariat to power as the Bolsheviks had demonstrated in 1917. In actuality, however, such notions bore no relationship whatever to the character of the Bolsheviks or the course they charted before and during the revolutionary upheaval in Russia. [See *Revolutionary Continuity, The Early Years, 1848-1917* (vol. 1), pp. 145-66.]

In still another respect the leaders of the Russian language federation misconstrued Bolshevik practices. They held the sectarian belief that a vanguard party had to remain quite small in order to maintain political homogeneity and a flawless revolutionary orientation. On that premise, they assumed the role of guardians against what they considered "opportunistic" deviations within the left wing.

Majority of left wing opposed

The majority of the delegates at the left-wing conference, in contrast, opposed abandonment of the political struggle inside the SP. This current was led by Louis Fraina, Charles Ruthenberg, John Reed, Benjamin Gitlow, and others. Further efforts were needed, they insisted, to influence and win militants sympathetic to the left wing who had not joined its ranks. Such militants in the SP wanted to safeguard organizational unity, and they were averse to participation in the factional conflict that was tearing the party apart.

A premature split would not allow sufficient time to pose the key political questions to such members. Therefore, the struggle should continue on an internal party basis until the forthcoming convention where the left wing could fight for its right as a majority to reorganize and reorient the party's committees and publications. If



A 1928 photograph of Benjamin Gitlow. Along with John Reed he helped lead left-wing delegates at August 1919 SP convention in attempts to force re-admission of expelled left-wing SPers.

that effort failed, many uncommitted members would perceive that an organizational break was unavoidable. A communist party could then be formed by a further-expanded revolutionary majority.

The conference rejected the Michigan delegation's proposed change in tactics by majority vote. General agreement was then reached on the need for a national council to guide the majority faction in its ongoing confrontation with the reformists and their centrist allies. Seemingly, the left wing's initial course of remaining in the SP had been reaffirmed, but that was not the case.

The dispute continued in the changed form of a maneuver by the conference minority to impose its line in an indirect manner. It raised the demand that the proposed national council include a representative from each language federation. The aim was to secure a majority on the left-wing faction's central executive body, which could be used to obstruct implementation of the line adopted by its national conference and precipitate a hasty organizational rift in the SP.

More was involved in this proposal than just a maneuver in the fight to overturn the majority at this particular conference. The leaderships of the language federations were seeking to establish a precedent to carry over into the Communist Party the principle of organizational autonomy of these federations. They saw this as vital to retaining the predominance of their political views in the organization, views that, in reality, were ultraleft sectarian and would isolate the communists from the rest of the labor movement and broad masses of workers in the United States.

The majority of delegates understood this and opposed it. Thus, the attempt to undermine conference decisions was defeated. At that point most of the language federation contingents, along with the Michigan group and a few other delegates, bolted the conference. They were splitting the left wing over an organizational issue, an act that weakened it in the political battle against the reformists.

After the minority's departure, the remaining delegates went ahead with the task of implementing the tactical course adopted by majority vote. A national council of nine was elected. *The Revolutionary Age* was made the official organ of the left wing, with Fraina continuing as the editor. It was decided to hold another left-wing conference in connection with the impending Socialist Party convention. That second left-wing conference was to decide, in the light of developments at the SP gathering, whether to continue functioning as a communist faction in the SP, or to form a separate communist organization.

Two left-wing conferences

Another call for a new faction conference was issued by the bloc of most of the language federations and the Michigan organization following its break with the rest of the left wing. This, too, was scheduled concurrently with the SP convention, but the sole purpose was to line up dissident socialists behind a move to declare a new party at that time. To prepare such action, the language federation-Michigan bloc set up the National Organization Committee. It also launched its own faction organ, *The Communist*, with Batt of the Michigan group as editor.

By then those who wanted to continue the fight inside the SP had undertaken a new move in the internal party struggle. A meeting was held of the left-wing majority elected to the National Executive Committee of the

Socialist Party in the spring 1919 referendum, which the right-wing incumbents had bureaucratically declared invalid. Acting as the democratically elected party leadership, those present ordered the reinstatement of all members ousted from the organization; called for affiliation with the Comintern in compliance with the decision already made by referendum vote; chose new executive officers; and adopted *The Revolutionary Age* as the official socialist organ. Nothing came of this move, however, since the bureaucratic usurpers simply ignored it and continued to throw left-wingers out of the party.

Growing frustrations

Once again a maneuver undertaken to facilitate the struggle in the SP had failed of its purpose. The resulting sense of frustration ran so deep that it caused a split in the ranks of those who had adopted this course. A large group, led by Louis Fraina and Charles Ruthenberg, abandoned the fight for control of the SP. It now concluded that the Russian language federation had been correct in branding that policy a "centrist" struggle for a false unity.

Ruthenberg, an Ohio-born white-collar worker, had joined the Socialist Party in 1909. He had soon acquired leadership status as a capable party organizer and as a socialist candidate for various public offices in his home state. His opposition later on to this country's entry into the imperialist war had brought him an indictment in November 1919 for making antiwar speeches; in mid-1920 he went to jail for two years. Ruthenberg's militancy had elevated him to prominence in the left wing of the party, and he had established a base for himself by winning the Cleveland local to support of revolutionary policies.

Toward the end of July, the Ruthenberg-Fraina group went over to the side of the language federation-Michigan bloc. These combined forces then issued an appeal for broad socialist participation in a "constituent assembly" with the aim of forming a Communist Party. So far as they were concerned the dispute about organizational tactics had been settled in their favor.

A considerable number of those who had been excluded from the SP, however, still refused to bypass its upcoming convention. Although no less determined than other left-wingers to establish a Communist Party, they remained determined to have as substantial as possible a base among native-born workers, as well as members of the language federations. The best way to serve that aim, they still believed, was to rescue politically confused proletarians from entrapment in the reformist camp. Led by John Reed and Benjamin Gitlow, this group went ahead on its own in keeping with that outlook.

Reed was born in Oregon and was put through Harvard University by his well-to-do parents. He then worked in New York as a journalist, where he came into contact with the socialist movement. Under this influence Reed became a trade union sympathizer whose news stories about strikes were helpful to the workers. In 1913 he drew an assignment to cover the Mexican revolution, and in carrying it out he came to admire Pancho Villa, one of the leading revolutionists.

Two years later Reed went to Europe as a war correspondent on the eastern front. His firsthand view of the slaughter taking place there made him an opponent of the imperialist war. But he remained politically naive, as shown by his support of President Woodrow Wilson for reelection in 1916 on the premise that Wilson represented a "lesser evil" in United States politics.

In September 1917 Reed went to Russia as a reporter. Stationing himself in Petrograd, he witnessed the events leading up to the October 1917 revolution. During that experience he became a staunch partisan of the Bolsheviks, and upon returning to the United States in the spring of 1918 he joined the Socialist Party as a supporter of its revolutionary wing.

Gitlow was a New Yorker born into a poor family of Russian-Jewish immigrants. He had worked at whatever jobs were available before joining the Socialist Party in 1909. Shortly thereafter he became head of the retail clerks' union in New York. A bit later, when syndicalist influence became strong in the party, he involved himself in IWW activity. Gitlow also spent a year or two studying law, after which he was elected to public office in 1917 as a candidate for assemblyman on the socialist ticket in the Bronx. Then he became sympathetic to the Bolsheviks under the impact of the October 1917 Russian revolution, and early in 1918 he lined up with the left-wing socialists.

Reed and Gitlow believed that a basis still existed for continuation of the left-wing struggle within the socialist ranks. Only part of their group had been suspended or expelled, so a significant number of its adherents remained in good standing in the party. These forces, Reed and Gitlow thought, would be able to lead a fight for the right of their proscribed comrades to participate in the socialist

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convention. A campaign was opened to win support of that demand among uncommitted delegates to the official gathering. To give the effort added weight the group circulated its own publication, *The Voice of Labor*.

Chicago conventions

A few weeks later representatives of all the socialist factions headed for Chicago. They assembled there for a struggle, confusing and unclear even to its leading participants, that was to organizationally fragment the young communist movement at its birth. The fight began when the Socialist Party convention opened on August 30, 1919. It was rigged to exclude left-wing members who had bureaucratically been denied continued association with the party. The customary delegate credentials issued by party units were ruled invalid. Special cards were provided on a selective basis for those allowed to participate in the gathering, and the Chicago police were on hand to keep everybody else out.

The delegates from the Reed-Gitlow group challenged this procedure. Those who had been ousted from the party entered the convention as a body and demanded to be seated with voice and vote. Replying in brutal fashion, the right-wing bureaucrats had the cops eject them from the hall.

Some of the group's delegates escaped this treatment. They still held party membership, which enabled them to remain at the gathering pending action on challenges of their credentials. It soon became apparent, however, that the credentials committee intended to keep them in limbo by delaying its decision on the challenges, and they walked out in protest.

The Reed-Gitlow group's initial move had gone awry, so it decided to hold a separate convention. There were two categories of participants: direct supporters of the group and militants not previously committed to any faction, who had also walked out of the SP meeting in protest against the usurping officialdom's undemocratic conduct. On September 2 this gathering formed the Communist Labor Party (CLP). Alfred Wagenknecht, formerly state secretary of the Ohio SP, was made executive secretary of the new party. *The Voice of Labor*, edited by Reed, became its official publication.

Meanwhile, a third convention in Chicago, which began on September 1, had founded the Communist Party of America (CP). This step was taken by a coalition of delegates from separate factions. The strongest of these factions was based on the language federations. Second in terms of numerical weight came the Ruthenberg-Fraina group. Another formation, by far the smallest, consisted mainly of the Michigan organization. Each of these sets of delegates acted as a disciplined caucus, and the leaders of the different caucuses sometimes met off the convention floor to seek a compromise on issues where opinions were divided.

Since the leaders of the language federations considered it best to have a native-born figure publicly head the CP, they helped elect Ruthenberg national secretary. The Ruthenberg-Fraina group agreed in turn to adopt *The Communist* — used earlier as a factional instrument of the language federation-Michigan bloc — as the official party organ. Fraina was chosen to edit this magazine.

Communist forces fractured

Organizationally, the left wing that originated in the Socialist Party was now split three ways. Dual communist parties, with programs that were akin in all major respects, had come into being as rivals; and a substantial number of communist-minded workers and potential communists had been left behind in the SP. Moreover, this divisive situation was further accentuated by the hardening of factional alignments inside the communist movement.

Along with the conflict between the two organizations, there were big internal frictions inside the Communist Party, as well. A dispute arose over the formulation of its program. Two drafts were submitted to its founding convention. The draft of a bloc between the language federations and the Ruthenberg-Fraina group won the majority.

The other draft was presented by a minority led by the Michigan organization and its supporters from various areas. The Michigan group stood aloof from the mass movement. Revolutionists, it contended, should concentrate almost solely on educational and propaganda activities, and these functions should be designed to convince workers through political enlightenment of the need for an advance from capitalism to socialism.

When the majority draft was adopted, those supporting the minority position served notice that they would neither accept responsibility for the official program, nor take any party office to help carry it out. As was to happen generally inside the new party, the Michigan-led formation was assuming the stance of a permanent faction.

Centralized party vs. federation of fractions

Another, more complex problem of an internal nature affected both communist parties. Would a disciplined,



The New York Communist was published in spring of 1919 by revolutionists as an aid in mobilizing and coordinating left-wing cadres. *The Communist* became official organ of the Communist Party of America in fall of 1919.



The Class Struggle had been founded by Louis Boudin, Ludwig Lore, and Louis Fraina in 1917. With its November 1919 issue it became organ of the Communist Labor Party, under Lore's editorship.

A few weeks later representatives of all socialist factions headed for Chicago. They assembled there for a struggle, confusing and unclear even to its leading participants, that was to organizationally fragment young communist movement at its birth. . . .

politically homogeneous, centralized party be constructed? Or would the language federations continue to operate in a semiautonomous way in regard to democratic decisions of the party and its elected bodies thus institutionalizing permanent factions which would increasingly operate outside the party as well as internally?

Back in July the Ruthenberg-Fraina group had split the majority bloc formed at the earlier New York conference over a question of organizational tactics in the fight against the reformists. That rift had now been perpetuated by adherence of the Ruthenberg-Fraina and Reed-Gitlow groups to separate parties. As a consequence, each of these groups stood alone in trying to cope with difficulties created by the history of autonomy for language federations.

Since the Reed-Gitlow group had a majority in the

Communist Labor Party, it was able to approach the problem in a direct manner. An official decision was made that all internal formations had to implement the political line of the party decided by majority vote. This action was not very effective, however. Taking advantage of the factional atmosphere prevailing within the movement, the language federation minorities affiliated to the CLP continued to act more or less on their own authority.

An even more difficult situation faced the Communist Party. The language federations constituted the biggest faction, and they used that edge to preserve the autonomous rights they had formerly exercised in the Socialist Party. From that vantage point the language federations were able to impose their positions upon the CP. The Ruthenberg-Fraina group thus found itself a minority in a party dominated by a leadership that had an extremely ultraleft and sectarian orientation to U.S. politics. They needed reinforcements, and to that end they made overtures to the Reed-Gitlow group in an effort to renew their earlier alliance.

Ruthenberg appeared at the Communist Labor Party's founding convention in Chicago to seek its cooperation in efforts to unify the communist movement. His request was opposed by many delegates at that gathering because of their antagonism toward the language federations' majority in the Communist Party. In the end, though, the CLP agreed to negotiate with the other party.

The unification proposal was then introduced at the Communist Party convention. It was summarily rejected there by the language federations and the Michigan organization. The Ruthenberg-Fraina group continued to press the issue, however, threatening to conduct what amounted to a sit-down strike if the convention failed to adopt a more conciliatory attitude toward the rival party. This move caused the language federations to change their tactics. They cooperated in setting up a committee to negotiate with the CLP, assuring themselves a majority on it so as to exercise control over the proceedings.

During the negotiations that followed, the language federation representatives maneuvered to block unity. They invited the delegates attending the CLP gathering to apply for admission into the CP, but there was a catch in it. They insisted that the credentials committee, already chosen by the CP convention, have authority to bar "centrists" in the CLP from the united body. The CLP refused to allow such decimation of its ranks, and the negotiations broke down with the dual-party situation unresolved.

Heavy losses

By September 1919 the revolutionary vanguard had lost heavily in members. Some of its previous supporters had remained in the Socialist Party; others had dropped out of the socialist movement during the intense factional struggle. Earlier in the year the revolutionists had assembled a force of around 70,000 in the left wing of the SP. When things settled down after the battle in Chicago, there was only a little more than half that number in the combined membership of the two communist parties. These surviving forces were divided between them in a ratio that gave the Communist Party a small advantage over the Communist Labor Party in numerical strength.

Moreover, many of those who left were native-born workers. As a result, the language federations had become even more predominant, and this turn of events was to cause difficulties for the communist movement in the period ahead.

Politically, the rival communist formations were in basic agreement. Both supported the Comintern as the leading body in the worldwide proletarian-led struggle against imperialism. They also shared expectations that a revolutionary situation would soon develop in the United States, and the separate programs set forth on the basis of that outlook had contradictory features that were quite identical. On one side, Bolshevik terminology appeared in these programs; on the other, hangovers remained of "mass action" and syndicalist concepts previously adopted and developed within the radical movement in the United States.

Political confusion

Emulating the Bolsheviks, both parties called for the conquest of political power by the workers to expropriate the capitalists and construct a workers' state. In charting a course toward that end, however, they applied many of their own preconceived notions that were alien to Marxism. It was assumed that revolutionary unions, such as those they sought to build in the United States, would perform the functions carried out by the soviets in Russia. These unions were expected to grow out of a massive strike wave arising spontaneously within industry. Once established, they were to serve as a medium through which industrial and political action could be unified in the battle to establish a proletarian dictatorship.

Similar confusion about Marxist concepts was manifested concerning the way in which society was to be reorganized. Control over the means of production and

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How Grenada's working people have begun to run their economy

BY STEVE CLARK

According to U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Fred Iklé, "a totalitarian regime has been established" on the small Caribbean island of Grenada.

"People are being persecuted there," Iklé said recently on the ABC-TV news program "Nightline."

"Freedoms are being suppressed. It's a bad development from the point of view of the people of Grenada."

The same thing has already happened in Cuba and Nicaragua, Iklé added, warning of "spreading military and totalitarian police influence throughout the Caribbean."

"This is not something that the Caribbean people want," he stated, "and it's not something we should have on our southern border."

Iklé had a simple aim in leveling these false charges. He wanted to justify the Reagan administration's escalating military threats against the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) of Grenada. That government was placed in power four years ago by a revolution in which the island's workers and farmers ousted the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy.

The recent barrage of propaganda attacks against Grenada, leveled by everyone from Reagan on down, are closely linked with Washington's stepped-up counter-revolutionary operations against the workers and farmers government in Nicaragua and the freedom fighters in El Salvador. Along with claims of alleged Soviet military "subversion" in the region, the charge of totalitarianism has been a major excuse for the hostile U.S. policy toward Grenada (as it has been in regard to Cuba and Nicaragua, as well).

Dollar democracy U.S.-style

Bernard Coard, Grenada's deputy prime minister, had some harsh words about the capitalist political set-up in the United States during his speech to a March 12 rally on the island called to answer Washington's military threats.

"You either have to be a multi-, multi-millionaire — or backed, financed, and controlled by multi-, multi-millionaires — to become a president, a senator, or anybody of significance in the U.S. government," Coard said.

"That's what they call democracy."

"There is not one single worker in the United States Congress," he told the crowd, made up overwhelmingly of Grenadian workers.

"Not a single worker. That tells you a lot."

One thing it tells you, as Coard also explained, is that the government in Washington does not exist in order to meet the needs of the U.S. working class.

"If Reagan would put his mind to doing some work," Coard said, "and concentrate on running America to provide for the people of America, instead of poking his nose into Grenada's business, maybe the 15 million people who are out of work could get jobs."

"Maybe he should spend some time providing housing to the people of America. Maybe he should restore Social Security benefits and health benefits in America."

"Because while they are closing schools in America," Coard explained, "we've opened three schools in Grenada this week. While they are closing hospitals and clinics in America, we're opening them every year in Grenada. While you have to spend your life savings to see a doctor or a dentist in America, it's free in Grenada."

Coard was educating Grenada's working people about the reality of capitalist rule in the United States.

The U.S. government and both the Democratic and Republican parties represent the interests of big business. Although the labor of working people is responsible for everything that is produced in this country, we have no voice, no control, over how that wealth is used.

Instead, it fills the pockets of the superrich, the coffers of the banks and corporations, and the Pentagon's treasury. But all the books and records are shut tight to our eyes.

Who decided to begin gutting the Social Security system? To cut back funding for schools, hospitals, public transportation, and other social services?

Who decided to jack up the war budget to unheard-of levels? To increase financial support to the murderous dictatorship in El Salvador?

Who decided to lay off millions of workers? To shut down plants? To foreclose on more home and farm mortgages than any time since the Great Depression? To curtail farm production while millions go hungry around the world?

Not the workers and small farmers of the United States. That's for sure. We are the victims of these policies, not their creators.



Grenadian Government Information Service
Delegates study proposed budget and plan at February 24 conference. Unlike budgets of capitalist countries, which are formulated in secret, more than 20,000 Grenadians discussed proposal before approval.

The U.S. government budget is a closely guarded secret each year until it is announced by the president and adopted by Congress. We've gotten the ax before we've even seen it.

And there is no rational development plan, since the entire U.S. economy is geared to the anarchy of capitalist profit-seeking, rather than planned production to meet society's needs.

Workers and farmers government

Things are different in Grenada.

The revolutionary government there represents the class interests of the workers and farmers. While the capitalist class retains substantial property holdings in agriculture, industry, and commerce, it no longer holds political power. It can no longer dictate that the army, police, courts, and government agencies will act to defend and maximize the private accumulation of profits. It no longer exercises a monopoly over education and communication.

Still ahead of the workers and farmers of Grenada lies the major task of breaking the economic power of the capitalist class and establishing a workers state. This will be necessary to consolidate their political power and to institute reliable long-term economic planning and control over the use of the country's natural resources and labor power, as well as the distribution of the wealth they produce.

Accomplishing this historic task is not, as Prime Minister Bishop puts it, like making a cup of instant coffee. As long as the workers and farmers control this process of transition, it is in their interests to carry it out in

the most efficient and least disruptive way. It takes time for the working class to organize itself and its allies, the small farmers, to administer an entire economy and all the industrial, agricultural, and commercial enterprises that make it up. Meanwhile, production has to continue to grow to improve living conditions and to help lay the foundation for future economic and social progress under a nationalized and planned economy.

This is the goal of the workers and farmers government of Grenada. The island's working people, led by the New Jewel Movement, are using their power over the country's fundamental state institutions to guide and transform the economic development of the country in their own class interests, not those of U.S. or British imperialism, or capitalists and landlords in Grenada.

As Prime Minister Maurice Bishop explains, "With the working people we made our popular, anti-imperialist, and democratic revolution. With them we will build and advance to socialism and final victory."

That is what has Washington, and the wealthy handful of capitalists it represents, so worried. They cannot tolerate the extension of the socialist revolution in the Americas. But that is exactly what is happening in Grenada today — just as it is in Nicaragua, just as it did in Cuba a quarter century ago.

When I and 10 other U.S. socialists visited Grenada in mid-March to participate in celebrations of the fourth anniversary of the revolution, we caught a glimpse of one important way in which the workers and farmers are beginning to transform the way their country is organized and run.

We were invited to attend a March 17 conference to hear the presentation of the PRG's 1983 budget and economic plan. The meeting was attended by some 1,000 delegates from the island's parish and zonal councils, trade unions, farmers organizations, the National Women's Organization, the National Youth Organization, and other groups.

This conference had been preceded a month earlier by a similar gathering which had heard the initial report on results of the 1982 budget, along with the plan and projections for 1983. The report was accompanied by a 172-page book, printed by the thousands for distribution across the island (hereafter referred to as "the budget book").

The initial February 24 conference was followed by two weeks of public meetings in parish and zonal councils around Grenada to discuss the budget and plan. The island, with a population of 110,000 and area of 133 square miles, is divided into six parishes, which are in turn broken down into zones. The council meetings were open to all those living in a given parish or zone.

According to Grenadian government officials, more than 100 such budget discussions took place, involving more than 20,000 people. On one night, for example, 2 parish and 9 zonal council meetings occurred simultaneously, involving some 3,500 people in all. On other nights the figure ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 people in various meetings around the island.

A written report summing up the criticisms, questions, suggestions, and proposals was drawn up following each meeting and submitted for review by the government. On that basis, the initial national budget proposal was altered and adjusted.

The March 17 presentation by Deputy Prime Minister Coard (also minister of finance, planning, and trade), was the end-product of that process of democratic participation.

But the discussion didn't stop there. The budget book will continue to be discussed in workplaces during weekly classes. As they did last year, trade unions and workplace councils will participate in monitoring and enforcing the budget and plan in both state-owned and private enterprises.

In addition, the final report will also be published, along with all the suggestions and criticisms from the parish and zonal councils and an indication of what action was taken on them by the government. This, too, will be circulated and discussed to further fine-tune the 1983 plan and lay the basis for next year.

Local discussions

Several of the discussions that took place in the parish and zonal council meetings were described in the March 2 issue of Grenada's twice-weekly *Free West Indian*.

A zonal council meeting in St. David's Parish produced suggestions that coffee production be increased; that

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there be better supervision of road construction work and less waste of materials; that more emphasis be placed on poultry raising; and that the government import low-priced farm tools for small farmers.

A zonal meeting in the town of Grand Roy called attention to the need for stricter enforcement of laws against the theft of unharvested crops and urged construction of more and stronger sea walls along the coast.

A zonal council in the capital city of St. George's heard suggestions that the Marketing and National Importing Board (MNIB) set up more depots on the island to cut transportation costs for farmers who sell their produce to the board; that the MNIB import a broader range of consumer goods instead of so many different brands of fewer products; and that agricultural education be provided to all school students.

The *Free West Indian* also reported on a meeting of senior citizens to discuss the plan. Prime Minister Bishop, who addressed the gathering, "compared the preparation of the budget here with countries such as India and England, where . . . the budget is not seen by the people until Budget Day. In India, the budget is printed in a special unit of the Ministry of Finance, and once this has begun, the workers have to remain at the Ministry until it is released.

"In Grenada, [Bishop] said, the budget is not 'top secret,' but people take part in putting it together, shaping, formulating and cutting it."

Among the suggestions coming out of this meeting was a call for reduced import duties on radios and television sets, to make them more accessible to workers and poor farmers. Another participant said that the discussion itself would have been more fruitful if the budget book had been distributed earlier, giving participants more time to study it.

The pensioners also pointed out that, while current government employees had received pay raises both in 1982 and 1983, there had been no increase for retirees. According to the report by Coard to the March 17 conference, this was raised in other meetings, as well. As a result, the final budget included a 10 percent increase in the pensions of government retirees, retroactive to January 1982, and a 12 percent increase on top of that, retroactive to January 1983.

Second year

This was Grenada's second national budget and plan discussion. In 1979, 1980, and 1981, the parish and zonal councils were just getting off the ground, and the island's economy was just beginning to revive and be reoriented.

Last year the government had hoped that a three-year plan could be projected this time around for 1983-85. But as the budget book explained:

"Our experience in planning, as a people, is so short, that the Ministry of Planning soon discovered that it was extremely difficult to obtain concrete plans of even one year from many Ministries and state companies. . . .

"Thus we have ended up with a broad perspective plan as to our goals for 1983-85 . . . but with concrete state sector plans of only 1 year."

Selwyn Strachan, minister of national mobilization, explained to a gathering of overseas visitors to Grenada that zonal council meetings are already becoming too large for manageable discussions. Plans are under way, he said, to break them down into smaller units. Eventually the goal is to build a representative structure extending from village and neighborhood councils up to an elected national assembly.

The budget book explained that "this year we are going to be called upon to make a far deeper analysis of our economy than we did last year. And so, logically, you are being given more and better information and explanation on the economy." Hence the 172 pages.

Despite the length and detail of the budget book, however, it was written in a clear and educational way. All economic jargon and concepts were defined in everyday terms before being used, and pains were taken to explain what to be on the lookout for in a particular chapter, graph, or chart.

In explaining that the country incurred a balance of trade deficit in 1982, for example, the book had this to say:

"In other words, we had to spend \$100.9 million more than what we earned from selling our exports in order to buy the things we needed from abroad. As in the past, we had to use our earnings from tourism, and remittances — money from our relatives and friends abroad — to provide the extra money we needed to pay for our imports. So as in previous years we had an unfavourable balance in our trade."

The aim, as Coard explained at the budget and plan presentation, is "to bring economics to the people. To demystify economics. Not to let the people believe that economics is some dismal science" only for experts and government functionaries.

The overall strategy of Grenada's path of economic development is laid out in the budget book.

"In order to develop, all countries must industrialize,"



Grenadian Government Information Service
Modernization of agriculture is key to Grenada's longterm economic progress. Here workers in Ministry of Agriculture stand with some of 23 tractors donated by Cuba.

it explains. "Although we have begun to expand our industries, a great deal more will need to be achieved in order to develop our country.

"However, the putting up and equipping of factories is very expensive. Grenada must generate revenue to do this through making profits in agriculture, its main traditional area of the economy, and through tourism, a dynamic growth area of the future."

Under capitalism, money and trade can appear to be the source of society's wealth. In beginning to transform the way that Grenada's economy is organized, the leaders of the revolution have sought to help strip away this false appearance. The social production of material goods, they explain, is the basis of all economic and cultural progress.

The Grenadian leaders also explain why formal independence, such as Grenada achieved from Britain in 1974, does not necessarily mean real political independence from imperialism.

"Since March 13, 1979, we have been the masters of our own house," Coard told the delegates March 17, "the masters of our own land, of our own destiny. Now is the time to work harder, not less. Now is the time to produce more, not less. Now is the time to be more productive, not less. . . .

"The secret to political independence is not to raise your flag, to sing your anthem, to decide what your national tree and national flower are, and all that symbolism.

"The secret of political independence is the liberation of the mind, and the liberation of the stomach from hunger."

That is the goal of the budget and plan hammered out by the revolutionary government with the democratic participation of the workers and farmers of Grenada.

Economic growth

Since the revolution, Grenada has made important strides. In 1982 its economy grew by 5.5 percent. Unemployment fell by 14 percent; from a level of 49 percent in 1979, joblessness is less than 12 percent today.

Grenada's 1982 growth rate was among the highest in the Western Hemisphere, at a time when the world capitalist economy was in the trough of its worst downturn since the 1930s. The economies of other East Caribbean islands, still saddled with governments that defend the interests of the capitalist class, stagnated or declined.

Moreover, according to the World Bank, Grenada's cumulative growth between 1979 and 1981 was 8 percent. In other words, including the 1982 figure, the value of all the goods produced in Grenada has swelled by 13.5 percent since the revolution.

This impressive achievement comes despite serious problems in the two traditional key sectors of Grenada's economy:

1. Due to the worldwide capitalist drive to lower workers' living standards, tourism in the Caribbean has been in trouble for the past several years. In the case of Grenada, this has been exacerbated by Washington's efforts to scare away tourists from the island.

2. There has also been a decline both in the quantity sold on the world capitalist market and the unit price of Grenada's main exports — nutmeg, cocoa, and bananas. This trend was not reversed in 1982.

Central to the economy's growth, despite these negative factors, has been capital expenditure by the government on development projects such as: a new international airport to promote tourism and trade; new roads,

including vital feeder roads for farm produce; building and housing construction and repair; several dozen buses for the island's first National Transport Service; and upgrading of telephone and electrical service, which are now state-owned.

Whereas the Gairy regime spent only \$8 million on development projects in 1978, the revolutionary government has laid out \$237 million since March 1979. In 1982 alone it spent \$101.5 million on these programs.

Some 130 projects are targeted for 1983-85, with priority going to 77 in the 1983 plan. This year's capital spending by the state is projected to grow by 38 percent, with emphasis on completion of the airport by early 1984; road maintenance and construction; further electricity and telephone expansion; farm rehabilitation; agricultural processing and packaging industries; hotel and tourist development; school repairs; and adult education facilities.

How are these projects paid for?

So far, the big bulk of the funding has come from foreign gifts and loans from Cuba, Libya, Canada, the European Economic Community, and so on. In 1982, for example, gifts and loans accounted for two-thirds of the financing. Plans for 1983 are comparable.

Most loans are on a low-interest basis with favorable terms. The Grenadian government is being careful not to mortgage the country's future to imperialist banks and governments. In 1982, for example, only 3.7 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings went to pay off foreign debts, many contracted by Gairy. Next year the figure is projected to be only 4 percent. This is low for countries in the semicolonial world.

Productivity, self-sufficiency

Foreign assistance will remain vital to Grenada's progress. To sustain long-term development and finance social programs to elevate living standards, however, more and more resources have to be generated by the Grenadian economy itself. That is the goal of the revolutionary government.

To achieve this, productivity and profits of the growing state sector in industry, agriculture, and tourism must rise, while the burden of taxation on working people continues to be lifted. The government also aims to increase the country's export earnings, while decreasing imports of food, clothing, and other light manufactures and consumer goods that can be produced in Grenada. The country's limited export earnings and other foreign exchange revenues need to be directed toward machinery, materials, spare parts, and other goods that Grenada cannot produce.

In 1982 there was progress on this front. The real value of Grenada's imports declined. Food has fallen from 30.6 percent of the island's imports in 1979, to 27.5 percent in 1982, with a goal of 25 percent this year.

Prior to the revolution, this island country actually imported most of the fish eaten by its people! With Cuban assistance, it has now developed a fishing industry. Earlier this year the government also launched a scientific livestock breeding center, with the aim of producing a growing share of the pork and mutton consumed in Grenada.

Posters and billboards dot the island with the slogan, "Buy local, eat local." This is one of the concerns most often raised at the parish and zonal council meetings, and not only by farmers.

Coard welcomed this spirit at the March 17 conference, but cautioned that simple administrative measures cannot redress the imbalance of imports and exports.

"We cannot suddenly ban the importation of commodities that people use," he said, "until we are certain that local production in those particular commodities, or in adequate substitutes, will fully provide for the needs of our people."

"We do not want to substitute empty shelves for imports. We want to substitute shelves filled with locally produced items for shelves filled with imported items."

Coard gave an example. A proposal had been made in the parish and zonal council discussions to bar the import of potatoes, which are difficult to raise in Grenada's tropical climate, and to substitute yams and breadfruit, which grow plentifully there. But many Grenadians like potatoes, he pointed out. So the government is working with agricultural specialists to find ways to grow potatoes in Grenada.

The drop in the value of Grenada's traditional exports, mentioned earlier, would have had a far worse impact on its economy had the new government not succeeded in diversifying both the island's export products and its trading partners.

Whereas nutmeg, cocoa, bananas, and mace accounted for 93 percent of the country's exports in 1979, by 1982 clothing, furniture, fruits and vegetables, and other goods had risen to 36.6 percent of the total. The 1983 plan sets a goal of 40 percent for this year.

While under Gairy's neocolonial regime almost all the island's trade was with Britain and other imperialist countries, today Grenada has expanded its trade with the Soviet Union and other workers states, and with other

Caribbean islands. Trinidad is now its number two trading partner.

Agricultural development

"No revolution has been successful without solving the important question of agriculture."

This comment by Minister of Agriculture George Louison is certainly true for Grenada. More than 10,000 people work either as full- or part-time farmers or farm laborers. Agriculture comprises some 40 percent of Grenada's gross domestic product and up to half of its foreign exchange earnings.

Expansion of farm production is key both to generating resources for overall economic development and wiping out unemployment on the island.

Progress on this front has been mixed. Only 37 percent of the target for production was met on the 23 state-owned farms, which occupy only a small percentage of the arable farmland. The budget book outlines three major problems facing agriculture in Grenada:

1. the low level of mechanization and inadequate use of scientific farming methods, which hold down productivity;
2. the generally high age of the farm work force (51 years in 1981), and poor health due to decades of poor nutrition and medical care; and
3. the low educational level, which makes it more difficult to introduce technology and scientific methods.

These problems create a vicious cycle, the book explains. Low productivity leads to low profits. Low profits mean low income. Low income discourages young people from entering farming, especially since primitive methods make the work very hard.

Jobless young people would rather wait for higher paying jobs with better conditions, such as those in tourism, government, industry, commerce, or construction.

The only way to raise wages and farm income and make the work more attractive is to modernize and produce on a more large-scale basis, thus raising productivity. This is the course the government is pursuing.

Last year it developed a state-run pool of 45 tractors. Four new agricultural training schools were launched. Agriculture has been made a compulsory subject for all school students.

More feeder roads have been built to transport farm products at minimum cost and spoilage. Agricultural extension services to advise farmers in scientific methods and efficient management have been expanded. More depots of the Marketing and National Importing Board have been placed around the country to aid farmers in marketing their products.

The government has greatly expanded the supply of low-interest loans to small farmers, as well.

In addition, the government has continued to encourage cooperatives. These include not only marketing and machinery cooperatives for small landowners, but actual farming co-ops for unemployed or underemployed youth. The government helps get them off the ground by providing low-interest loans, equipment, and training in farming and administration.

Young people have been slow in responding to the co-op program so far, for the reasons already outlined. But progress in scientific farming and education promises to raise productivity and thus incomes, drawing more Grenadians into the farm work force.

The government has also sought to bring idle land into production, not only on state-owned farms but on those privately owned. An estimated 95 percent of all farms in Grenada are below 10 acres in size, with well over half of the farmers owning less than 2 acres. These small and middle farmers tend to make full use of their land.

The same is not true of the handful of large landowners, however. At the time of the revolution, some one-third of the arable land lay idle, most of it on large estates. The Land Utilization Act, adopted in 1982, empowers the government to take out a compulsory 10-year lease on any land more than 100 acres that is underutilized to put into production on a cooperative or state-run basis.

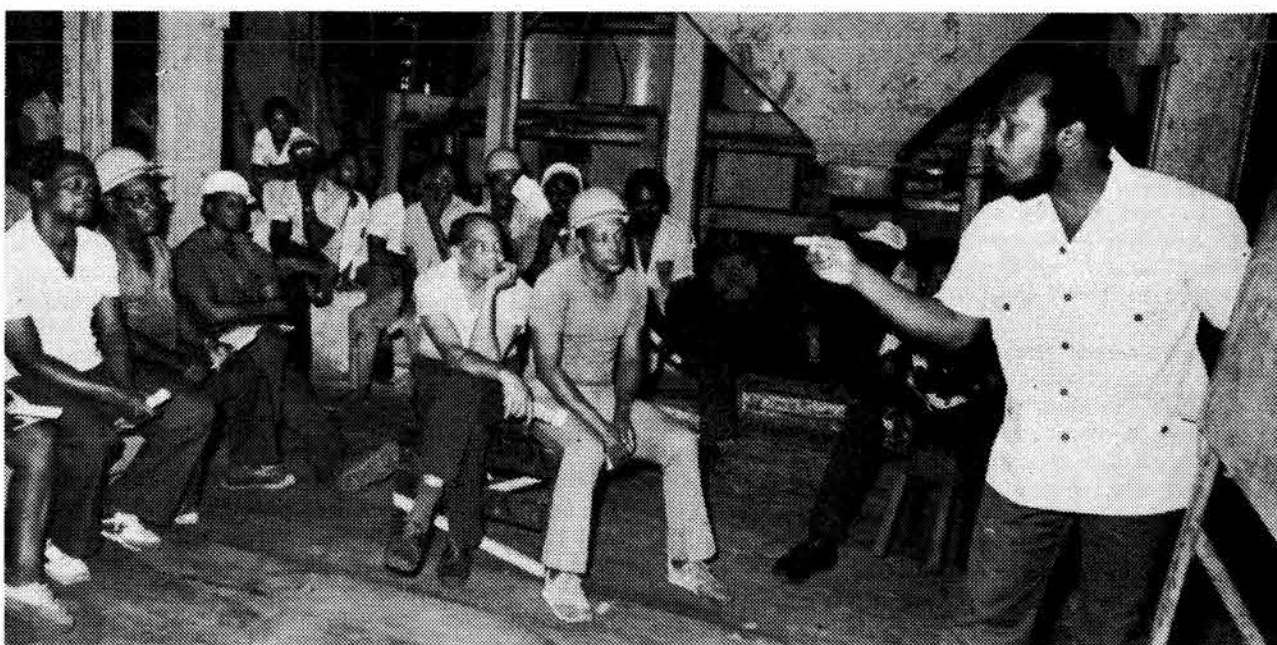
"We are on the verge of a takeoff now that we have investments on the ground," explains Dennis Noel, chief technical officer of the Ministry of Agriculture. "You will see the benefits in three to four years."

As in other aspects of Grenadian society, progress in agriculture is linked to the development of new forms of democratic involvement of working people in discussing problems and formulating solutions. Basic farm policies are now made with the active participation of the island's agricultural workers union, the Productive Farmers Union, and members of the expanding farm co-ops.

Industry

Industry, while key to Grenada's economic future, currently contributes only 4 to 5 percent of its total yearly production. It accounts for some 10 percent of the jobs on the island.

In 1982 the state-owned Grenada Development Bank directed 60 percent of its loans to industrial projects, and a growing share of the government's capital expenditures



Grenadian Government Information Service

Worker education class in sugar mill. Discussion of budget will continue in factories during weekly classes. It will be implemented by workers and farmers of Grenada through their trade unions, workplace councils, mass organizations, and zonal councils.

is going to state industrial enterprises.

The government is seeking to regulate the type of industries built in Grenada, as well. The goal is not to build factories that require massive imports of parts and materials, which are then merely assembled in Grenada and reexported. That is the usual type of industry fostered by imperialism in the oppressed nations, since it allows foreign capitalists to exploit cheap labor while keeping these countries economically dependent.

Grenada, instead, is focusing on industries that use materials produced there and that meet consumer and production needs on the island, as well as adding to its export earnings. This means that agricultural processing has been a major priority.

Grenada is today producing more ground nutmeg, more jams and juices, more sugar and rum. These industries, along with the expanding agricultural sector, also help stock the kitchens of the island's hotels and restaurants, further reducing imports.

In this way, industrialization becomes part of an integrated process of economic development and helps loosen the grip of the capitalist world market.

State and private sectors

The economic plan lays out general targets not only for state-owned companies, but for the economy as a whole, including capitalist enterprises. The latter continue to make up a substantial portion of industry, commerce, hotels, and agriculture.

"It is the policy of the P.R.G.," the 1982-83 budget book explains, "to involve the private sector (preferably local, but also foreign) in the industrial development of the country, as long as the benefits to the country are adequate and are in keeping with the objectives of the P.R.G."

Nonetheless, as the budget book points out, "the state sector, which was actually created by the Revolution, is leading the way in the economic development of the country."

The 32 state-owned enterprises met 90 percent of their production targets in 1982. This represented a 34 percent increase in production over 1981, while private businesses registered a 10 percent increase. The 1983 plan projects a further 30 percent growth by state enterprises, with an 8 percent increase for the private sector.

As an indication of the relative weight of the private and state sectors in industry, the net profits for state enterprises in 1982 amounted to \$5 million, while private enterprises reported some \$2.5 million.

The budget book stresses that it is especially important for working people to follow the progress and problems of the government enterprises, since, "In the Private Sector, the profits of production after taxes have been paid belong to the few individuals who own the businesses. But in the case of our State businesses the owners are all the people and the profits are ours to use, to build our country with."

In his March 17 speech, Coard reemphasized this point. The current economic strategy of the government, he said, is of a "mixed economy with the state sector dominant, with the state sector playing the leading entrepreneurial role."

Coard explained the purpose of the new Investment Code adopted March 2. The code seeks to use incentives and penalties to direct the investment of private capital.

"We have said publicly and privately," Coard told the conference, "to our people as a whole and to the private sector directly, 'We want you out of merchandising. We want you into direct production.'"

"The day of simply importing something and slapping

a markup on it and then passing it on by selling it — those days are over."

The state enterprises in construction, commerce, and industry experienced substantial growth in 1982. Because of poor conditions on the world market, as well as problems of poor management and low productivity, the state-owned farms, fisheries, and hotels, however, fell far short of their targets, registering no growth. Reversing this is a priority of the 1983 plan.

Raising living standards

Since Grenada today has a workers and farmers government, its economic goal is not profit for profit's sake. Its purpose is not to maximize the private, individual accumulation of wealth, as is the case with governments that represent the class interests of big business.

Grenada's economic plan aims instead to improve the quality and conditions of life of working people.

Big gains have been achieved during the first four years of the revolution. And more are planned for 1983.

Real wages increased by 3 percent in 1982. Living standards actually rose more than indicated by this figure, since the decline in unemployment by another 14 percent meant higher family incomes in many cases.

Most important, there has been a dramatic increase in the "social wage" — that is, the vital services and commodities provided free or at low cost to the population.

Health and dental care are now free in revolutionary Grenada. Medicine is free for hospital patients, and sold at low cost to others in clinics that have sprung up throughout the island since 1979.

Secondary school is today a right, not a privilege, for all Grenadians. Before the revolution, tuition was required. In addition, hundreds of students have received scholarships for university education, or advanced technical training, never before available to the average Grenadian.

Free milk is distributed to thousands of families. Price controls on basic imported items such as sugar and cooking fuel have helped hold down the cost of living, as has the lessening dependence on imports overall.

Thousands of families have received low-cost loans and materials to repair their homes. And the newly opened Sandino Housing Plant — a gift from the Cuban people and government — is now on line to begin turning out 500 prefabricated housing units each year.

In all, more than one-third of the country's 1983 budget (excluding expenditures on development projects such as the airport) will go to health and education. The size of these sums for social programs is not only the fruit of Grenada's expanding economy; it is also a political choice that follows from the class interests the government defends. It is vital to further economic development and the well-being of working people in Grenada.

Since working people tap and produce the island's wealth, their improved health and education upgrade the most important of its resources.

Year of education

In industry, in agriculture, in tourism, in commerce — the key to steady growth is technological progress, increased productivity, more efficient administration. All this requires an educated and self-confident work force involved in making the basic economic decisions.

"Education is the most critical factor to change our situation," the budget book explains. "It will be necessary also to raise the political consciousness of our people. Our workers must fully understand the process of national development, so that they can play their full role in ensuring the progress of the country."

Continued on next page

How Grenada's working people have begun to run economy

Continued from preceding page

This theme was at the heart of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop's January address to the nation launching the "Year of Academic and Political Education."

"We cannot build a national economy, we cannot reclaim our economy from the grips of imperialism, without a well-trained and highly skilled work force," Bishop stressed.

"Our people must develop in the new year a mental grasp on the true nature of the international capitalist crisis, which is holding back the progress of our revolution and the development of all poor countries in the world. They must know the causes and origins of this crisis. They must see clearly the link between politics and economics, between imperialist exploitation and persistent poverty, between the mad buildup of arms by imperialism and the economic crisis."

That is why the Grenadian government is putting such big resources into improving schools and teacher training. That is why it has launched a major adult education campaign, the Center for Popular Education.

And that is why it is organizing regular classes and discussions in every workplace to educate the working class about its leading role in Grenada's further progress, the way imperialism operates, struggles in other countries, and fundamentals of a materialist and class understanding of history and social relations.

The trade unions and other mass organizations are playing the leading role in carrying out this year's nationwide campaign of political and academic education. Everywhere our tour group visited on the island, there were signs encouraging people to enroll for the various programs of study. Everywhere we went we met people either participating in classes or heading them up.

This is important, because councils of workers and farmers cannot work magic. It is not enough to set them up, encourage people to attend, and then announce to the world that real democratic participation has been achieved in charting the economic and political course of the country.

It is a process, and cannot be accomplished overnight.

The entire national budget and planning discussion is

itself a vital part of that process of workers and farmers learning to run their country and their economy.

For several weeks the island becomes one big school in basic concepts of economic and social development: relations between imperialism and oppressed nations; the labor theory of value; the social character of production and its primacy over trade and money relations; the key role of productivity, of the efficient use and allocation of society's labor time, in measuring the progress of humanity.

A living example

What is happening in Grenada is a living example for the entire English-speaking Caribbean of what workers and farmers can accomplish when they throw off imperialist-imposed regimes and establish a government to advance their own class interests and those of their brothers and sisters around the world.

In fact, Grenada provides an example to workers and farmers everywhere, including right here in the United States.

That is why the U.S. capitalist rulers are so determined to crush the Grenada revolution, the revolutions by other peoples traveling the same path in Cuba and Nicaragua, and those under way in El Salvador and Guatemala by workers and peasants fighting arms in hand to enter onto that path.

Nothing threatens U.S. imperialism more than new victories of the world socialist revolution. And that is what is occurring in Central America and the Caribbean.

"Now wait a minute," some readers may be saying to themselves. "Just because these things are happening in a tiny island like Grenada, that doesn't mean they are applicable to a gigantic industrial country like the United States."

Not true. Grenada *does* provide a model of what U.S. workers can accomplish if we use our potential strength, leading the farmers and others of the oppressed and exploited, to wrest political power from the capitalists and establish a government of our own.

Of course, there are many differences. Our ruling class

and its state are much more powerful. The U.S. economy is much more complex. The productive capacity, technology, agricultural productivity, educational and skill level of the working class, and just plain wealth are all much greater than Grenada's.

Far from convincing us that we have little to learn from Grenada's workers and farmers, however, these things should be proof of how *much* we have to learn from them. What tiny Grenada has begun to do — despite its size and centuries of colonial oppression and underdevelopment — should be an inspiration to us about what we can achieve in the United States if we do what the workers and farmers of that country did. If we make a revolution. If we establish a workers and farmers government.

Vladimir Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party and Soviet government in Russia, had something to say to skeptics in Western Europe who doubted they had much to learn from the Russian revolution, since it had occurred in a country with much less industry and an overwhelmingly peasant population.

After "the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries," Lenin wrote in 1920, "a sharp change will probably come about: Russia will cease to be the model and will once again become a backward country (in the 'Soviet' and the socialist sense)."

"At the present moment in history, however, it is the Russian model that reveals to *all* countries something — and something highly significant — of their near and inevitable future."

Grenada is the opposite of the totalitarian police state that Reagan claims. And the United States is the opposite of the "democracy" he and his class would have us believe, as well.

All the major decisions that affect our lives in this country are made by the ruling rich.

And Grenada, with its steps toward a planned economy and real democratic participation by the workers and farmers, should reveal to working people here something highly significant about *our* inevitable future — and what to do about it.

The birth of the Communist movement in the United States

Continued from ISR Page 4

distribution was allocated in a contradictory manner to both the industrial unions and a workers' government. In like vein the terms *industrial republic* and *communist commonwealth* were intermingled in describing the new social order envisaged.

Counting on the early development of a revolutionary upsurge in this country, the communists neglected the actual tasks of the day. Little attention was paid to trade union struggles then taking place around immediate demands for limited concessions from the bosses. No plans were made for participation in these actions to help the workers attain higher levels of class consciousness through their strike experiences. Instead, emphasis was placed solely upon the circulation of revolutionary propaganda among the proletarian masses from the outside.

Although the previous opposition to activity in the electoral arena was discontinued, the policy adopted had an ultraleft bent. Nothing was said about running candidates in elections to help promote mass independent labor political action based on the trade unions. Narrow perspectives having no connection with objective reality were set for communist election campaigns. The primary aim, it was decided, should be to expose the legislative system as a form of capitalist dictatorship and call for the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship.

A different matter related to electoral activity was also dealt with by the Communist Labor Party. Remembering the past treachery of right-wing socialists holding government posts, it marked an advance by stipulating that strict party control was to be maintained over all members elected to public office.

An abstentionist attitude

The communist line on concrete issues in the class struggle was based on the ultraleft view that demands for immediate economic and social concessions were self-defeating. Such demands, both parties contended, only sowed reformist illusions among the workers and thus helped the bosses keep them tied to the existing system. Therefore, they believed, it was necessary to concentrate on efforts to convince the proletariat that capitalism had to be overthrown. The communists refused to cooperate in any way with other political organizations in the fight for immediate demands, and they included in that category such far-reaching demands as an independent labor party based on the trade unions, since they held it would not have a revolutionary character at the outset.

This abstentionist attitude toward class-struggle realities was also manifested in the case of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities. Their demands for economic, political, and social equality were viewed by the communists as just another form of reformism. Both parties failed to perceive the connection between revolutionary proletarian objectives and the aims of the oppressed nationalities. Neither party was able to shape a course that both solidarized the communists with the democratic aspirations of these superexploited masses and imparted revolutionary content to the struggle for their goals. No specific special effort was made to recruit militants among the Afro-American and other oppressed nationalities into the proletarian vanguard.

Comparable inability to set a realistic course was reflected in the approach to class-struggle activity within industry. Insofar as a specific policy was developed, it centered on plans to displace the AFL craft setup with revolutionary industrial unions. The communists were in general agreement that strikes having limited objectives should be supported. But this policy was intended mainly to open the way for propaganda having two key aims: to stress the revolutionary implications of mass action in relation to the overthrow of capitalism, and to urge reorganization of the labor movement on an industrial union basis.

Differences existed on this point only as to the manner in which the proposed reorganization was to be undertaken. The Communist Labor Party thought it could be brought about through expansion of the Industrial Workers of the World. Plans for a broader initiating force were adopted by the Communist Party. It hoped to begin with a four-way unification of the IWW, a De Leonist split-off from that body called the Workers' International Industrial Union, militant AFL units favoring the industrial form of organization, and independent unions.

Political sectarianism was thus far from the exclusive property of the language federation leaderships. It also prevailed among the big majority of those who had earlier sought to continue the fight inside the SP, arguing for the need to become more deeply involved in the U.S. labor movement. Since the Reed-Gitlow group had no *political* answers as to how this could be done, however, it tended to reduce differences over this question with the CP leaders to whether the party was going to be controlled by "Americans" or by the language federations. This in turn gave an easy way out to the sectarian leaders of

the language federations, who answered the CLP leaders in the name of internationalism among all workers in the United States, whatever their language and national origin.

Neither the CP nor the CLP leaders posed the question correctly. Participating in the U.S. working class and labor movement, as we've seen, required a party that was multinational both in its ranks and its leadership, since immigrants and Blacks made up a large and significant portion of the working people in the United States. But to build such a party, communists needed a transitional program and method and a strategy to build a politically homogeneous, democratic, and centralized organization. On that score, both parties were wanting.

As events would demonstrate, the early U.S. communists paid a heavy price for their sectarian outlook. They were unable to act effectively in the mass movement at a time when Marxist policies could have brought significant gains. Their ill-conceived definition of reformism kept them from relating positively to large-scale strikes conducted in 1919 and to new impulses toward mass independent labor political action generated by those struggles.

For further reading . . .

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Pact freezes wages for copper workers

BY DAN FEIN

TUCSON, Az. — Meeting in Phoenix April 16, officials of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and other unions representing copper workers ratified a new contract with the Kennecott Corporation, the nation's biggest copper producer. The new agreement, which covers 8,500 Kennecott workers, calls for a three-year wage freeze.

Twenty-six unions make up the National Nonferrous Coordinated Bargaining Committee, the group of international unions led by the USWA that negotiates with the copper industry. In the past this group has tried to force the copper companies to agree to terms similar to those negotiated by the USWA in the basic steel industry.

This year it was the copper bosses who hoped to do that. On March 1 their counterparts in the steel industry imposed a takeback contract on workers in basic steel. That contract slashed wages by \$1.25 an hour and seriously weakened cost-of-living protection among other things.

Shortly after the steel contract was signed, Kennecott requested that the unions open negotiations early, some three and a half months before the copper pact was to expire. The copper bosses evidently thought that on the heels of the concessions in steel, the USWA and other unions would agree to major concessions in copper. Kennecott also wanted to avoid a strike and, in fact, this is the first time in 20 years that a settlement has been reached in the copper industry without one.

Robert Petris, USWA District 38 director and one of the leaders of the union bargaining team, said of the negotiations, "Several times we were ready to say to hell with it, let's break it off with Kennecott. But we knew there was no point in a strike. How can we strike an industry that's 50 percent shut down?"

While the copper bosses did not get everything they wanted, the new contract is certainly no step forward for copper workers. In addition to the wage freeze, it includes a number of other provisions that will be bad for workers. For instance the contract gives the employers more flexibility to combine some jobs and add new work to others.

Other provisions include elimination of medical and surgical benefits for retirees covered by Medicare and a reduction in life insurance and sickness and accident benefits for workers covered by social security.

On the positive side, the copper bosses had to back off from plans to weaken the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

One half of all U.S. copper is mined in Arizona. In December 1981 over 26,000 copper workers were on the job in this state. Today that figure is 14,000 and many of those who are not laid off are working less than 40 hours a week.

The new Kennecott contract does not provide jobs for anyone who is laid off. Instead the pact creates a new Technological Benefit Plan that will pay \$150 per week for two years (in addition to state unemployment benefits) to workers who lose their jobs due to changes in technology or work methods.

However, the thousands of workers Kennecott has already laid off do not qualify because they were laid off for other reasons.

Kennecott is traditionally one of the first companies in the industry to reach a settlement. The Kennecott contract is often used as a model for contracts with the other copper producers. Consequently some copper companies are upset that Kennecott did not squeeze more concessions from copper workers.

C.J. Hansen, president of the Arizona
Continued on Page 17



Militant
Other copper companies consider Kennecott contract a 'sore spot' because it didn't take back enough from workers.

Democratic governor cuts Wisc. unemployed benefits

BY CHRIS RAYSON

MILWAUKEE — Democratic governor Anthony Earl signed a bill into law April 15 drastically cutting unemployment benefits for Wisconsin workers.

The bill will affect about 150,000 workers here who currently receive unemployment checks, as well as hundreds of thousands likely to be laid off in the near future.

The cuts include:

- The number of weeks a worker can draw unemployment benefits will be reduced from 34 to 26.
- The number of weeks a worker must be employed before qualifying would rise from 15 to 18 in 1984 and to 19 in 1986.

- The present maximum benefit of \$196 a week will be frozen until July 1, 1986, when a new system for establishing benefits will be enacted by the legislature. Previously the maximum benefit was raised twice a year.

- Finally the "quit-to-take" provision is eliminated. Before, a worker who quit a job had to work four weeks at their new job and earn a total of \$200 to requalify for unemployment compensation if they were laid off. Now a worker must work eight weeks and earn at least 16 times the weekly benefit amount to requalify.

Despite widespread public opposition, this bill was ramrodded through a Democrat-controlled legislature in just one week, at the insistence of the "pro-union" Governor Earl.

John Schmitt, president of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, told the legislature's finance committee, "Even in my wildest dreams, I can't believe we'd get this from Democrats. If I've ever seen a recommendation that had little or no concern for workers — that's exactly what this is."

Wisconsin business enthusiastically backed the bipartisan bill despite the fact that on paper it increases their tax rate.

Unemployment taxes used to be levied on the first \$7,000 of annual earnings of each employee. Under the new bill, this will rise to \$9,700 in 1986.

But to the degree taxes are increased on business, this will be offset by millions of dollars in future savings on federal interest payments as the fund is restored to solvency on the backs of workers.

And business expects to recover the token tax increases out of workers' pockets at contract time while continuing to take millions in federal tax write-offs for their payments into the Unemployment Compensation Fund.

The labor officialdom had responded to the proposed legislation with a last-ditch lobbying effort on April 12.

About 400 unionists answered Schmitt's call for a "rally against cuts" at the State Capitol. Many were union officials already in town attending a state AFL-CIO legislative conference.

After a short pitch by Schmitt, the rally was over and those demonstrators that could crowded into a finance committee

hearing on the proposed legislation.

For Schmitt and other officials the day's activities were a plea to the legislators to consider amending the bill to soften its antilabor blows.

On that same day, a half-page ad appeared in the *Milwaukee Journal* headlined, "No Cuts in Unemployment Benefits! — An Open Letter to Governor Earl From the Milwaukee County Labor Council and Friends."

While taking a stand against cuts, the signers accept the same framework that Governor Earl and the legislature advance to justify the cuts.

The solution to the crisis in the fund, the ad contends, "is in reforming the UC tax structure." The ad explains to Earl that "many of us worked and voted for you just a few months ago." It concludes, "We urge you to reverse your course. We cannot and will not allow our benefits to be cut."

Three short days later the cuts were approved under the guise of reforming the UC tax structure.

In a statement distributed in Madison April 12 to union demonstrators, Peter Seidman, who had run against Earl in 1982 on the Socialist Workers ticket, suggested an alternative way to fight corporate attacks on working people.

"Governor Earl claims that corporations will bear 60 percent of the cost of his unemployment compensation bailout plan," the statement said. "But this 'equality of sacrifice' argument is a fraud."

"Democratic and Republican politicians alike say that these inhumane and antilabor unemployment benefit cuts are necessary because 'there is no money.' The Wisconsin unemployment compensation fund is going into debt to the federal government at an unacceptable rate, they claim."

"But the fact is that there is plenty of money to meet the needs of the unemployed."

"The Democratic and Republican parties in Washington plan to spend \$1.6 trillion on war in the next five years. This money is used to finance dictators in countries like El Salvador, who offer slave-labor paradises to U.S. corporations while brutally repressing union efforts to win better working conditions."

Seidman called for extending unemployment benefits at union scale to all the unemployed for as long as they are out of work. He coupled this with a call for a massive public works program to create jobs.

"Labor can never effectively defend its interests while supporting labor-hating Democrats like Anthony Earl as an alternative to the Republican Party," he explained.

Seidman proposed that "working people need a party of our own, a labor party that would represent our own interests in the political arena."

"We have a ready-made base for such a party in our unions. The problem is that today these vast union resources are wasted on the likes of Anthony Earl."

Steel union holds anti-import picket

BY MALIK MIAH

CHICAGO — On May 2, 150 steelworkers and local union presidents picketed a meeting of U.S. Steel's stockholders at the Westin Hotel. They protested U.S. Steel's decision to import steel slabs from the British Steel Corp.

The picket was initiated by several local United Steel Workers of America (USWA) presidents, mainly in the Chicago-Gary region, and by presidents of U.S. Steel union locals in other parts of the country. Endorsers included Joe Samargia, president of Local 1938 on the Iron Ore Range in Minnesota; Dave Sullivan, president of Local 6787 in Burns Harbor, Indiana; Ron Weisen, president of Local 1397 in Homestead, Pennsylvania; and James Balanoff, former director of District 31.

A few days prior to the picket, Jack Parton, the current director of District 31, also endorsed the picket and urged members to attend. In a statement to steelworkers, Parton explained the purpose of the demonstration and why he was going to the stockholders meeting:

"Today, we will be appealing to U.S. Steel's stockholders to reject the company's plan to import millions of tons of British steel slabs. As a means of drawing attention to our concern for the tens of thousands of American jobs that will be lost, with the likelihood of the numbers climbing into the hundreds of thousands, we will be giving each stockholder a tea bag and telling them our motto: 'Tea Yes, Imported Steel No!'"

According to union officials at the picket, U.S. Steel's joint venture with the British Steel Corp. would end production of raw steel at U.S. Steel's Fairless Works near Philadelphia, resulting in the loss of some 2,000 jobs.

That fact, coming after the steel bosses imposed a concession contract on workers in basic steel earlier in the year, is why USWA President Lloyd McBride, Parton, and most steelworkers are so upset. "We negotiated steelworker wage and benefit concessions for industry modernization and jobs — not for importing steel," Parton explained. "U.S. Steel's proposal to import steel slabs double deals American steelworkers, who for years were told to 'Buy American.'"

The signs carried by the demonstrators

reflected the union leadership's argument that imports are the reason for high unemployment in steel: "Tea yes, steel no," "U.S. Steel exporting our jobs for foreign steel," and "Treason."

Joe Samargia told the *Militant* that the "main issue facing steelworkers is jobs." On the Iron Range, he said, 70 percent of steelworkers are laid off. "That's why I favor protests like this one."

Samargia said he and other presidents plan to push the international to do more around this question.

Phil Cyprian, president of U.S. Steel's Gary Works Local 1014, said that workers should push for passage of a "Buy American" bill now in Congress.

Marie Head, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Gary, Indiana, and a laid-off steelworker from Local 1014, was also on the picket line. She offered an alternative perspective:

"The way to fight for jobs is to mobilize the membership and entire union movement against the austerity policies of the employers and their government. We must demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay and a massive public works program. The government could pay for it all by eliminating the huge war budget used to prop up juntas like the one in El Salvador."

"Unfortunately, those of us unemployed who came here today to protest the anti-worker policies of U.S. Steel not only got a cold hearing from them, but also received a phony bill of goods from our top union leaders."

The anti-import campaign, she said, lets the U.S. steel companies and the government off the hook. "It's companies like U.S. Steel who are taking our jobs," she said; "not foreign steelworkers. Those workers are our allies and they face the same enemy we do — employers who are determined to increase their profits at our expense. When they can't make a profit, they close down the plant and throw us out on the street."

"Instead of using union resources to mount a campaign against imports — which won't save jobs — we should mobilize union power against the companies laying us off and cutting our standard of living, and against the U.S. government, which is spending billions of dollars for war that could create jobs instead."

Challenges facing auto workers' convention

Continued from Page 20

that concessions to the bosses bring gains for us. All these examples point in the direction of the union putting an end to the policy of collaboration with the bosses.

The challenge that is posed to the UAW convention is how can we mobilize the membership of our union in action against the employers and a government which backs their anti-working class policies.

One opportunity to begin this process is the August 27 march on Washington for jobs, peace, and freedom. The UAW is already an endorser of this demonstration, and the union should actively organize to turn our membership out for it. The central demands of the march — for jobs, against war, and for equal rights — are major issues for our union.

Joining actions like August 27 is part of our union's hammering out a program for jobs.

We can start with a proposal that has been put forward by the UAW on paper for many years. That is the idea of shortening the workweek with no cut in take-home pay. We should also end forced overtime.

These steps would compel the employers to spread the available work around, rather than forcing our working members to take 9 or 10 hour shifts and six-day weeks.

As more robots and other automation are introduced, the number of hours and workers it takes to produce a car are reduced. Auto workers have to win the shorter workweek to stop the employers from using technology to steal more of our jobs.

In addition, the union can propose that the government immediately start up a massive program of public works to provide jobs.

We will have to answer the question of where the money to fund this should come from. It should be taken from the military budget. The billions that are now being spent to finance a new Vietnam in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and a bigger U.S. nuclear arsenal, should be used instead for building mass transit, decent housing, new school buildings and the many other things that are sorely needed.

Union should lead antiwar fight

The military budget and the escalating U.S. military intervention in Central America are aimed at the same thing as the employers' takeback demands at home: protecting their profits. The UAW should be in the forefront of fighting against a new Vietnam, before auto workers and the sons and daughters of auto workers find themselves on the front line of a shooting war against our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The UAW is in a good position to help lead this antiwar fight. The union's International Executive Board spoke out in March against more U.S. military aid to El Salvador. Our union's stand against military aid is important. We should put it into action by mobilizing the UAW membership in direct protest against the war.

Affirmative action

There is another aspect of the fight for jobs that requires union attention. Although the entire union has been hurt by the massive layoffs in the auto industry, a quick look at the work force at most auto plants today makes it plain that the employers' attacks have not come down equally. Our Black, Latino, and women members have been the hardest hit because many of us were among the last hired.

The demand for affirmative action during hiring, and separate seniority lists during layoffs, must be part of our jobs program. We must defend the rights of those union brothers and sisters who continue to suffer from the racism and sexual discrimination of the auto makers, so we can preserve the strength and solidarity of the entire union.

The fightback that many auto workers are anxious to begin will require that we seek out allies among other unions and all working people. Here we can take a lesson from the organizers of the August 27 action.

Although it has been called by civil rights leaders, the initiators of August 27 immediately appealed to unions, farmers, women's organizations, and others. In this

sense its aims are similar to the giant Solidarity Day demonstration on September 19, 1981. Part of the power of that impressive march was that it brought together all victims of the government's attacks on working people.

But we also need to use some lessons from Solidarity Day. That march was an inspiring example of the power of the union movement when it is mobilized in action in the interests of the working class. But to meet the offensive of the auto makers, the rest of the employing class, and their government, that power must be wielded in the political arena as well.

When we saw nearly half a million workers and our allies mobilized on Solidarity Day to protest bipartisan attacks on the working class, it became obvious that the next step was for unions to lead the way in independent political action. It was time for unions to begin forming an independent labor party.

This was not done after Solidarity Day. Instead, the UAW leadership, and other top AFL-CIO officials, proposed that the labor movement work for the election of "anti-Reaganomics" Democrats in 1982. They tried to make this old "lesser-evil" approach appear militant by tagging it with the label "Solidarity Day II."

But "Solidarity Day II" pointed in an opposite direction from the positive features of the Solidarity Day march.

We need to reject the view expressed in a recent UAW *Washington Report* that says, "Why don't you Americans have a labor party? That's a question we often get asked. Our answer is that we have a labor party inside the Democratic Party. There's about 50 1000-percent friends of labor who call themselves Democrats inside the Congress."

Where are these "friends of labor" when the UAW goes on strike like we did against Chrysler or Caterpillar? Where are they now that GM is threatening to bust the union at Fremont? Why have they done nothing to get us a jobs bill? Why do they

Caterpillar strike settled

BY MEG HAYES

CHICAGO — The longest strike in United Auto Workers (UAW) history against a major corporation ended April 23, when UAW members in six states voted 10,703 to 5,144 to accept a 37-month contract with Caterpillar Tractor Co.

The new agreement eliminates the annual 3 percent wage increase, while retaining the cost-of-living clause. Although the company was able to impose a three-year wage freeze, it was unable to force more severe takebacks.

Many Cat workers said the 205-day strike was really a lockout by the company, since it was forced on them by Cat.

Prior to the strike, which began October 1, Caterpillar prepared by working people up to 16 hours a day, driving up production, and shipping out an extra \$300 million in parts to dealers under a delayed payment plan. Cat built up months of inventory in graders and other equipment, and had laid off 15,000 out of 36,000 workers by the time the strike started.

The company rejected out of hand the union's offer to continue the old contract, which contained annual 3 percent wage increases. Caterpillar also demanded an end to the COLA clause, attendance bonus, and holidays, and wanted other givebacks on seniority and work rules.

Unionists interviewed by the *Militant* during the strike told us they were in no mood for concessions. They didn't think concessions would bring any laid-off UAW members back to work; they pointed to concessions made by auto workers, noting that no jobs had been saved.

They felt prepared for a long fight, which they expected. Their strike fund totaled \$470 million.

But the strike took a bitter turn as it entered its sixth month. Cat, noting dwindling inventories, loss of sales contracts, and lower credit ratings by bankers, began to fear serious financial harm for the first time.

Cat announced what it called a "settlement offer." The UAW magazine *Solidar-*

stand up and applaud when Reagan tells Congress about the government's war aims in Central America?

Labor party and UAW

The UAW's Political Action Committee needs to use the millions of dollars it gets from the membership to fight for our interests. We should take steps to move in the direction of launching a labor party by running independent labor candidates as the UAW did in Michigan 40 years ago.

Of course many auto workers know that the current leadership of the UAW (both Douglas Fraser's "old guard" and Owen Bieber's new one) is not about to adopt this kind of change in political perspective.

To change the political direction of the union and to mobilize the UAW's power in a day-to-day fight for workers' rights, on and off the job, requires full rank-and-file democracy in the union.

One proposal that has been raised is to change the method of selecting the top leadership. Some union members propose

Fremont fight for union

Continued from Page 20

Local 1364. However, it was coupled with a denial that the subcommittees had included the recall of 1364's members as an issue in the strike vote.

The Fraser-Bieber leadership urged the strike votes on local issues to pressure GM and Toyota on hiring at Fremont, but holds that striking GM over Fremont is "illegal" — it's not in the contract.

Many Fremont workers figure that GM-Toyota's goal is to bust the union and run the plant without it.

At the least, the companies want to sharply curtail the union's ability to protect its members, and to accomplish what they have been attempting in other U.S. auto plants for some time:

that top officials be selected by a referendum vote of the entire membership.

Another suggestion is that the contract ratification process should be more like that of the United Mine Workers union. In the UMW, workers receive a complete copy of the contract and have two days to discuss it informally and at local meetings before the vote is taken.

Ultimately, the fight for rank-and-file control of our union is tied to the struggle for a new political course for the UAW. At the same time that union militants seek to change some of the constitutional provisions of the UAW, we must seek to find every possible way to urge the union into immediate action that is needed to defend our membership.

The place to begin is with the example of the Canadian Chrysler workers, the Caterpillar strikers, and of actions like Solidarity Day 1981 and the upcoming August 27 march on Washington.

Elizabeth Ziers is a laid-off member of UAW Local 600 in Detroit.

- Erode local work rules, which determine line speeds and workloads;

- Increase penalties for absenteeism, and give companies the right to determine what absences are "excused";

- Curtail the use of seniority as a basis for job assignments, thus gaining "flexibility."

Toyota officials, the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "want a considerably reduced role for union officials at the [Fremont] plant." They are also "known to want to avoid hiring a contingent of former union activists."

GM has its own desires for a reduced role for the union; Local 1364 has had many battles with the giant corporation over the years.

One example of this was a weeklong strike in 1977 after a foreman assaulted the shop committee chairman. GM fired the whole committee.

Many Fremont workers are also concerned that the top UAW leadership may be willing to negotiate a substandard contract with GM-Toyota.

The demonstrated willingness of the international leadership to make concessions to the auto industry, Nano said, "will make it harder for us when the plant reopens."

GM, meanwhile, is attempting to force 250 workers from Fremont and 400 from the South Gate plant in Los Angeles to transfer to the company's assembly plant in Oklahoma City or lose unemployment benefits due them under the 1983 UAW contract.

GM is choosing who is to go, without regard to seniority, and strictly on its own criteria: work records. It has ignored offers by volunteers to transfer.

Ralph Soto, an 18-year veteran at the Fremont plant, is one of those picked by GM for the transfer who doesn't want to go. "Instead of my work record being a plus, it looks like a minus," Soto told the *Fremont Argus*.

Soto, like others, would be paid \$2,000 in moving expenses — after he gets to Oklahoma City. But moving would cost \$4,500, he estimated.

Further, Soto and other transferred Fremont workers would lose their seniority, which means they could be fired by GM within a 90-day probationary period with no reason given.

Soto, like many others here, understandably wants to return to the Fremont plant when it reopens.

Because of workers' opposition to the transfers, protests by the International, and a lawsuit by UAW Local 216 at South Gate, GM has backed off a little, and has delayed some transfers for hardship reasons.

Workers at Van Nuys, the only operational GM assembly plant in California, are also upset at GM. In March, more than 400 workers at the plant braved the worst storm of the year to attend a rally protesting a possible shutdown of the plant.

The local plans another demonstration May 14 to protest continued threats that the plant will be closed for good.

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

He's catching on — When ghost writers were drafting his April 27 Central American war speech, Reagan told them, "I



Harry Ring

don't want a heavily anti-Soviet speech because people will turn off their TV sets and say, 'There he goes again.'

Catch 22 — A Dallas welfare mother of four won a boat on a radio drawing worth \$2,300. Welfare said she had to sell it but could keep the first \$1,000 of the sale. She got but \$1,000 for it. She used the money to buy some food and clothing and pay some bills. Meanwhile, welfare decided she had failed to sell the boat for its fair market value and will be deducting the \$1,000 from her checks.

J. McCarthy Kirkpatrick — "There are people in the U.S. Congress who do not approve of our efforts to consolidate the constitutional government of El Sal-

vador and who would actually like to see Marxists take power in that country. I don't think there are many . . . but there are some. This, of course, in general terms." — Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. ambassador to the UN.

Not enough 'disappeareds'? — Kirkpatrick told a Buenos Aires daily that Argentina should have a legitimate government, "like that of El Salvador."

And all of them permanent press — We're reconsidering our antinecktie position. "For the man

who feels no need to compromise," there's the Countess Mara line of cravats. From \$21.50 to \$5,000.

A growth field — At the American Psychiatric Ass'n convention, one drug company booth featured short films of disasters — the Air Florida crash; the Kansas City hotel collapse, etc. They were offering an antianxiety pill. They also had a computerized program on Disaster Psychiatry: An Exciting New Field In Mental Health.

Obviously not truly needy — "U.S. acts to cut benefits to dying

in hospice care" — News headline.

A good landlord — President Reagan asked Congress for \$141,000 to patch and paint the front of the house provided by taxpayers for Vice-president Bush.

Nutrition pays — Responding to growing consciousness about nutrition, vending machine dealers are peddling what they assert are more nutritious items. The *Vending Times* reports this has boosted sales, plus "companies are becoming convinced that healthy employees are more productive."

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

In Pursuit of Refuge. A slide show and presentation. Speakers: Representative of Committee of Central American Refugees — Santana Chirina Amaya; Pat Nixon, speaking on the Héctor Marroquín case. Sat., May 14, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. (nr. Vermont). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Diego

Fund Raising Dinner for the Families of Imprisoned Electrical Workers in El Salvador. Speaker: Alejandro Molina Lara, organizational secretary of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers' Unions (FENASTRAS). Sat., May 14. Dinner, 5 p.m.; presentation, 7 p.m. Wesley Methodist Church, 54th St. and El Cajon Blvd. Ausp: San Diego Committee in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador and Committee in Solidarity With Nicaragua. For more information call (619) 584-8074.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Struggle in Chile Today. Speaker: Representative of Chile en Lucha. Translation into Spanish. Sat., May 14, 7:30 p.m. 555 W Adams. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 559-9046.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Agent Orange and Vietnam — Dioxin's Original Victims. A panel discussion. Speakers: Peter Ashton, scientist from Harvard and Arnold Arboretum, recently toured Vietnam; Walter Norton, Vietnam veteran and victim of Agent Orange; others. Sun., May 15, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The Fight To Save Little Earth. Speaker: Ron Leith, American Indian Movement. Sun., May 22, 4 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Virginia

How Working People Fought the Great Depression: Lessons for Today. Film showing and discussion: *Labor's Turning Point — The Minneapolis Teamsters Strike of 1934*. Fri., May 20, 7 p.m. 112 Chestnut St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (218) 749-6327.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

South Africa: The Struggle Against Apartheid. Speakers: Representatives of National Black United Front, Kansas City chapter; others. Sun., May 22, 8 p.m. 4715 Troost. Do-

nation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

NEW YORK

Schenectady

Is Unemployment Built Into Our Economy? Walt Snyder, member, Public Employees Federation. Sat., May 14, 8 p.m. 323 State St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (518) 374-1494.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Lessons of the Civil Rights Movement. Speakers: Osborne Martin, representative of Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., May 14, 7 p.m. 1400 Glenwood Ave. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

OREGON

Portland

Stop the Frame-up of AIM Activists! Speaker: Bob Robideau, member of American Indian Movement and consultant for book on Leonard Peltier, *Spirit of Crazy Horse*. Sun., May 22, 7:30 p.m. 711 NW Everett. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Bookstore Forum. For more information call (503) 222-7225.

TEXAS

San Antonio

Violence Against Women: Where It Comes

From and How We Can Stop It. Speakers: Graciela Sánchez, Chicana activist; Judith Sanders Castro, legal worker; Socialist Workers Party representative. Fri., May 20, 8 p.m. For more information call (512) 736-9218.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Struggle For Freedom A film and presentation on Malcolm X. Fri., May 20, 7:30 p.m. 677 S 700 E. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

VIRGINIA

Newport News

Stop the Deportations — Defend Héctor Marroquín! Speakers: Representative of the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF); Kevin Jones, activist in Tidewater National Black Independent Political Party; others to be announced. Sat., May 14, 7:30 p.m. 5412 Jefferson Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: PRDF. For more information call (804) 380-0133.

Celebrate Fourth Year of United Steelworkers Local 8888 Victory. A panel discussion with film showing of *8888 Close the Gate*. Sun., May 22, 7:30 p.m. 5412 Jefferson Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (804) 380-0133.

Chicago socialist candidate urges independent road

Continued from front page

ades that a top union official would run for Congress. The UFCW is the largest union affiliated to the AFL-CIO.

Hayes told the *Defender* he's running "because it is time for a trade unionist to run for the post.

"It will be best for the district because we, as poor people, are the real victims of Reaganomics. I would be the voice of the working people, as Harold [Washington] has been."

However, in his first actions as mayor, Washington has made it clear he intends to continue the antilabor program of austerity carried out by the previous Democratic administration.

In Washington's inauguration speech on April 29 he outlined a program of layoffs, wage freezes, and higher taxes for working people.

He said that the city faced a deficit of \$150 million, and other shortages in the education and transit systems. To get the money, he said he would "freeze all city hiring and raises." In addition, he said, "there was no alternative to higher state income taxes."

In an attempt to convince his supporters, especially workers in the Black community that he was still "their" candidate despite these moves, Washington offered "equality of sacrifice" by announcing, a few days later, a 20 percent pay cut for himself and his top city executives.

And to make it appear that his austerity measures were only aimed at the hated patronage system of the old Democratic machine, Washington said he would fire the "several hundred new city employees who were added because of political considerations (referring to the last minute hiring done by out-going mayor Jane Byrne). He also said "unnecessary city programs will have to be ended and fat will have to

be removed from all city departments."

At the same time Washington is moving ahead in protecting the interests of the bankers and big corporations in Chicago, the old machine that ran the city for 50 years is still not pleased with the new team in office. It is not that they disagree with the austerity plan, but only how it affects their base of power in the city.

Washington is trying to place his supporters in high places and remove figures in the machine who opposed his campaign for mayor.

This factional division in the Democratic Party continues to dominate the city's politics, and is being talked about and watched by working people.

For example, on May 2, Washington and his chief opponent from the old machine, City Councilman Edward Vrdolyak, who is also head of the Cook County Democratic Party, drew swords over whose faction would control the council. Vrdolyak had 29 aldermen to Washington's 21. However, Washington sought to prevent Vrdolyak from imposing his decisions by adjourning the first meeting by voice vote. This led to Washington's supporters walking out and Vrdolyak's team ramming through their rules. This public faction fight has heightened discussions in the city over the divisions in the Democratic Party. And workers are beginning more and more to discuss their own interests as they discuss the meaning of this fight between Washington and Vrdolyak.

Lu Palmer and other Black leaders, reflecting the increased confidence in the Black community to fight for more political influence in the city, called for picket lines outside the homes of aldermen who voted against Washington. The day after the first council meeting, Washington supporters picketed the home of Alderman Miguel Santiago.

At his press conference Warren observed that "this move by Vrdolyak in the city council is an attempt to undemocratically frustrate the will of the electorate that voted to make Washington mayor. It is an attempt to raise once again the racist banner in this city to bring further pressure against any possible moves by the new administration to carry out the Washington campaign's pledges on social reforms in education, housing, and hiring.

"That's why I solidarize with those Chicago citizens — my supporters among them — who are demonstrating to protest the city council takeover by racist Vrdolyak forces."

Warren explained that at the same time, "all factions in the Democratic Party are seeking to force working people to pay for the employers' economic crisis through cuts in social services and jobs."

In fact, the big business media is coming

behind Washington in the city council fight, even if cautiously.

The *Chicago Tribune* in its editorial after the City Council struggle, wrote: "Mayor Washington wants austerity so that he can put the city's finances right. He will need 26 votes in order to get what he wants, and for this reason alone it is essential he prevail."

It is these discussions and debates over political action that the Warren campaign for Congress is participating in and offering a socialist perspective on. That's why his campaign is so important. His voice and that of his party is the only one reflecting the need for Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and unionists to break with the Democratic and Republican parties. It is the only campaign that points to the potential to build a mass independent Black party, whose impact on unionists would be to move them toward forming an independent labor party.

Copper workers' pact freezes wages

Continued from Page 15

Mining Association, told the media here that other copper producers consider the Kennecott contract "a sore spot" because they consider too much of it to be an extension of the old contract and especially because it retains the cost-of-living clause.

"Other owners may not make the same deal," said Hansen.

"We will have to wait and see what the other owners do before I am willing to say we will avoid a strike this year."

Hansen also explained, "We're learning to work a little smarter with fewer employees."

This should be a warning signal to cop-

per workers. Local issues at various Kennecott mines are still being negotiated. These local issue negotiations may be a further opportunity for Kennecott to impose the kind of changes in work rules that Hansen is talking about. Such changes, which often eliminate more jobs and further weaken union protection on the job have become a bigger and bigger feature of the employers' demands in many industries. Local unions are already faced with the threat of a new and stricter absentee policy being introduced at some mines.

Dan Fein is a member of USWA Local 7508 on layoff from the Duval Mining Corp.

Court strikes blow at Teamsters

A federal judge forced Roy Lee Williams to resign his post as president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters last month. The alternative for the ailing Williams was jail while his bribery conviction is appealed.

Some Teamster members were probably happy to see this corrupt, overpaid union executive go.

But this was no victory for the Teamsters union or its membership. It was another example of court interference in the affairs of an organization the government has no business sticking its nose into. The government decided for the Teamsters who its president could and could not be.

The union's executive board then elected his replacement, Jackie Presser, head of the Ohio Teamsters. Presser is known to many as the "senior labor adviser" on Reagan's transition team.

Presser is currently under federal investigation for signing paychecks for "ghost employees" in his Teamsters Local 507 in Ohio.

Why the government concern over corruption in a union whose officials have tried so hard to serve the ruling powers in this country?

The wiretapping that led to Williams' conviction for trying to bribe a U.S. senator cost the Justice Department \$1,004,110 and was the most extensive telephone surveillance in history!

In sentencing Williams to 55 years, U.S. District Judge Prentice Marshall pontificated, "Mr. Williams, you sold the workingman out!"

The big-business *Washington Post* urged stiffer legislation against labor "racketeering" to prevent union officials like Williams from continuing "to betray their membership and to damage the reputation of the labor movement."

Perhaps the hardest to swallow came from Sen. Orrin Hatch, head of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Hatch said Williams had brought "disgrace and shame" on the labor movement.

Hatch was the one who, on the eve of the United Mine Workers elections last fall when a reform slate was gaining support, announced that his committee was beginning an investigation into radicals in the unions, including the UMW.

Williams's conviction is supposed to spur efforts to enact the Labor-Management Racketeering Act, which would require instant removal from office of convicted union officials and impose a 10-year bar on their resuming office. Currently, the law has a five-year bar effective only when all appeals are exhausted.

None of this has anything to do with guarding the good name of labor or protecting union ranks from corrupt officials.

It's exactly the opposite.

The point is to drag the name of labor through enough

mud in hopes that some workers will dismiss unions as a bunch of crooks.

It's to intimidate top union bureaucrats and make them even more beholden to the government and corporations.

And, most importantly, it's aimed at the ranks of labor and their present and future challenges to the pro-capitalist, procompany policies of the union bureaucracy. Just think about a possible scenario: the leader of a strike is arrested on some trumped-up charge, speedily convicted, and, Bam!, he's removed from his union office.

It should be recalled that proposals to investigate labor "racketeering" first came from Sen. Joseph McCarthy and led to the antilabor McClellan hearings in 1957, with the Teamsters as the main target.

These hearings laid the groundwork for the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffith Act in 1959. This law made Labor Department interference into internal union affairs permanent, including "supervision" over finances, elections, and membership lists.

Just as George Meany, then head of the AFL-CIO, cooperated with the antilabor McClellan drive and kicked the Teamsters out of the labor federation, today AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland offers support to the tougher labor "racketeering" law.

If Kirkland really had the interests of the union movement at heart, he would be protesting the forced resignation of Williams as an attack on all labor.

The Teamsters are under intense employer-government attack.

Last year, the Master Freight Agreement — long a sign of the Teamsters strength — was signed with major givebacks included.

Even so, hundreds of companies refused to sign the agreement.

The MFA employers now want to reopen the three-year contract to win even more takebacks.

Deregulation, opposed by the union, has opened the way to widespread nonunion operations.

The union has gone from 2.3 million members a few years ago to around 1.6 million today, according to the union.

The Teamster officialdom's policy of collaborating with the employers, subordinating the needs of the membership to the profits of the bosses, made these severe blows to the union possible. Class collaboration, like corruption, is consciously fostered by the companies to weaken the labor movement.

The court-FBI attack on the Teamsters is aimed at preparing to strike further blows at the union and at militants seeking to build a union free of corruption and sweetheart deals. The fight against this government intervention is part and parcel of the struggle to transform the Teamsters into a fighting instrument to defend the membership's interests against the employers and their government.

1954 Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation

May 17 marks the 19th anniversary of the Supreme Court ruling against segregated schools. The following are excerpts from a June 8, 1979 *Militant* article on the meaning of that decision and the desegregation struggle today.

BY AUGUST NIMTZ

In 1954 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racially segregated schools were inherently unequal and a violation of the constitutional rights of Black Americans. The ruling in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*, marked the formal recognition by the highest judicial body that Blacks had a right to equal educational opportunities.

Until then, schools — and many other public facilities — had been segregated by law in much of the South, and by racist custom in much of the rest of the country. Until 1954, courts upheld this on the grounds that such facilities were "separate but equal." Of course, the jus-

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

tices knew this was a legal fraud, since segregation was forced on Blacks after the Civil War precisely to relegate them to inferior education, jobs, and social status. The miserable conditions imposed on Blacks were then used to pull down the conditions of all working people, and to ensure their division in the face of the capitalist exploiters.

The Court reversed this stand in 1954 because changed world conditions made direct federal support to Jim Crow segregation increasingly counterproductive for the ruling class. Blacks were beginning to assert their right to equality and Africans, Asians, and other colonial peoples were winning independence.

Jim Crow was damaging imperialism's image abroad.

Even after the *Brown* decision, the federal government was in no hurry to put an end to Jim Crow in education. It took struggles by Black communities in places like Clinton, Tennessee, and Little Rock, Arkansas — and the world attention these battles received — to get the U.S. government to enforce school desegregation.

As a result of these struggles, Black people, while still subject to racist discrimination from cradle to grave, greatly improved their chances of getting a decent education and the improved job opportunities that come with it. Ultimately, it opened the college gates to unprecedented numbers of Blacks through struggles for affirmative action and open admissions. It also improved the educational opportunities for other oppressed minorities, women, and the working class as a whole.

A year after the 1954 decision, a Black woman named Rosa Parks refused to take a seat in the back of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus as city ordinances then required Blacks to do. Her action sparked a bus boycott, the opening of the civil rights movement.

The sit-ins and mass demonstrations of the next decade led to the downfall of legal Jim Crow segregation in the South, won southern Blacks the right to vote (formally guaranteed in the Constitution since 1870), and dealt a severe blow to the legitimacy of racism.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Black people led the way in improving the conditions of all working people.

But these gains didn't win the battle for equality. They only began it. And when the capitalist rulers of this country found themselves in an economic squeeze in the 1970s, they decided on an offensive to roll back the gains of working people.

Since equal educational opportunity is so basic to full equality for Blacks, it isn't surprising that the racist offensive fired some of its first salvos at the progress that was being made in school desegregation.

A 1974 Supreme Court decision barred busing across school district lines, legitimizing the de facto segregation that characterizes most metropolitan areas. A few months later in Boston, racist mobs attacked Black children in an effort to block busing. And they won public expressions of sympathy from capitalist politicians ranging from Boston Mayor Kevin White to President Gerald Ford.

The Supreme Court now says that Blacks have to prove not only that schools are segregated, but that school boards intentionally practice segregation.

To support such rulings, the rulers are trying to sell the myth that enough — perhaps too much — has been done to remedy the history of segregated schools. In fact, true integration has yet to be achieved.

The attack on school integration and Black job rights is aimed at every worker. It is part and parcel of the sweeping attacks on wages, working conditions, and public services now being carried on by the ruling class.

That is also why class-conscious union members need to bring the power of labor into play behind the fight for Black equality, including the fight to resume our march toward desegregated, truly equal educational opportunity.

Mideast peace plan poses more war

Continued from front page

tacts" with Israeli military personnel. Its "antiterrorist operations" — that is, its mission to smash all attempts by the working class and its allies to fight for their rights, and especially for their liberation from imperialist domination and national oppression — will be directed by Maj. Saad Haddad, who has been the chief of an Israeli puppet army in Lebanon for the past seven years.

Furthermore, Israeli intelligence agents will be allowed to operate freely in southern Lebanon, and Israeli troops will take part in armed patrols in the region. The process by which Israel has been extending its economic domination of southern Lebanon would also be perpetuated by the agreement.

Any big uprising by the workers and peasants in southern Lebanon attempting to throw off the Israeli yoke — and such uprisings are inevitable — would quickly pose the issue of a new Israeli invasion and a broader war in the region.

The editors of the *New York Times* spelled out their expectations May 10, saying that the Shultz deal "would come close to ending in a Greater Israel. A pro-American coalition of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon would then acquiesce in the destruction of the P.L.O. and Israel's absorption of the West Bank and Golan Heights."

Although news reports were intentionally vague, it appears as if the Shultz deal may also include new secret agreements between Washington and Tel Aviv that could further involve the United States in any hostilities in the region. *New York Times* reporter David Shipler referred to "unspecified commitments to Israel by the United States."

Along with his announcement of the agreement with Israel, Shultz said that Washington would proceed with the delivery of 75 F-16 fighter planes to Israel. Reagan had said last year that delivery of the planes, which is scheduled for 1985, would be held up until Israeli troops were out of Lebanon. The message conveyed by the promise of more F-16s was certainly not missed in Syria.

In February, after the Soviet government had installed SA-5 antiaircraft missiles on Syrian territory, at the request of the Syrian government, Shultz called the presence of these defensive weapons "a sobering, destabilizing event." Pentagon chief Caspar Weinberger declared that Syria "is just another outpost of the Soviet empire."

"It is strange," Syria's *Al-Baath* newspaper commented, "that no one is asking the American administration, which arms Israel to the teeth, why Syria's possession of defensive weapons should pose a threat to Israel's security while the presence of the Israeli army in Lebanon and the American Sixth Fleet in Lebanese waters should not pose a threat to Syria's security."

Israeli armored brigades in Lebanon are poised about 20 miles west of the Syrian capital of Damascus, Israeli warplanes have been repeatedly flying over Syrian positions, and Israeli units in the occupied Golan Heights have carried out threatening maneuvers. Drew Middleton, meanwhile, reported in the April 25 *New York Times*:

"All intelligence reports indicate that the Israeli Army has strengthened its position in Lebanon to the point where the Israeli sector could be used as a staging area for offensive operations. . . .

"The main road toward the Syrian positions just north of Khirbet Ruba has been widened to accommodate Israeli tanks. . . .

"A major logistics base including helicopter pads and major radar communications systems has been constructed outside Merj 'Uyun. . . .

"In Arkuf and the lower Bekaa, intelligence sources reported, the Israelis have built a series of elaborate strongpoints, some of them protected by walls 20 feet high."

Middleton also noted that the Israelis have constructed another major base near Sidon and a military airfield south of Beirut.

This is the real face of Reagan's "path to peace" in the Middle East.

Waitresses take on government tax vultures

BY JULIE SMITH

BIRMINGHAM — Under a recent federal law, people who wait tables or tend bar for a living have income tax withheld — not only on our wages, but also on 8 percent of the total sales of the product we sell.

Here's an example of how it works. If I sell \$500 worth of food one night, I am taxed as if I made \$40 in

AS I SEE IT

tips (8 percent of \$500) — even if I got less. I'm taxed on the boss's income, not on what I actually make.

As a result of this law, we are getting drastically smaller paychecks. Some waitresses here in Alabama, as elsewhere, have received checks with zero coming to them. There are reports of waitresses being told they owe money at the end of the week!

I see this law as a grossly unfair attack on a sector of the population that has precious little to begin with. Waiting tables is low-paid work done mostly by women. Many are single mothers trying to support a family on this meager income.

A fight is growing among the victims of this law to demand our rights and get the law repealed. Already a petition is being circulated nationwide. We hope to gather more than 5 million signatures. There will also be demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and in major cities around the country on May 16.

I am working with a group of waitresses here in Birmingham, many of whom have been waitresses all their working lives. Most have never been activists over any issue before. But the fight over the 8 percent law is politicizing many of them for the first time.

When a few waitresses called the first meeting, more than 100 people attended. Most heard about it through word of mouth. Some talked about becoming unionized — only two hotel-restaurants here are union.

A local representative of the National Labor Relations Board who was at the meeting cautioned against joining a union until they heard both pros and cons. But as one waitress told me later, "Why not join the union? At this

point we have absolutely nothing to lose by it." And she's right.

Some people may not understand why we are so angry, because they think we are paid at least minimum wage and that our tips are tax-free. In reality we are paid \$2.01 an hour, which is also taxed. We have no insurance, no retirement benefits, no paid vacations. When we miss a day of work because of illness we lose a day's pay. Holidays usually mean longer hours and extra shifts, not time off. When we work overtime it's still just a lousy \$3.00 an hour.

Perhaps most outrageous of all is that if we lose our jobs and file for unemployment, our benefits will be what someone making minimum wage would get — regardless of how much income we report under the new tax law.

Taxing us on 8 percent of sales is supposedly based on the tips reported on credit cards. But people who buy meals on credit cards are often paying out of expense accounts, and at any rate are generally wealthier than most. Any waitress will tell you that credit card tips are proportionally higher than cash tips. Even though 15 percent is the standard for tipping, most people don't abide by it.

Efforts to unionize waiters and waitresses will not be helped by the fact that the 8 percent law is a "compromise" accepted by top officials of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union. A law had been proposed to eliminate the "three-martini lunch" tax deduction for businessmen. Instead, Congress decided to make waiters and waitresses pay the tax.

The union officials agreed to this, claiming that 10,000 jobs would be lost if businessmen weren't allowed to deduct their martini lunches. I personally don't believe businessmen would stop eating lunch for that reason.

With the new law, the government says it's just collecting from a group of people who have always cheated on taxes before. The real tax cheats are the wealthy with their expense account deductions! Why should they get a tax break for trying to woo a potential client by getting him drunk?

And talk about abuse! I cannot count the times when these same businessmen have asked me (with a wink) for several blank receipts, or want expense account receipts when it's obvious they are dining with family or friends.



Birmingham waitresses are organizing against new tax law

Let them pay more in taxes, not some waiter or waitress who doesn't make even \$10,000 a year.

No doubt the government tax vultures figured waiters and waitresses were a vulnerable target because we are poor and unorganized. But the current protests may be just the thing we've needed. We are realizing that with numbers and unity, we aren't helpless to the whims of the bosses, locally or federally.

The government may end up with more of our money in its coffers, but the organizing skills and political experience gained by this much-ignored sector of the working class will in the long run cost Uncle Sam more than he ever bargained for.

Julie Smith is a waitress in Birmingham, Alabama.

LETTERS

Three Mile Island

An editing error appeared in the April 29 issue of the *Militant* in the article, "New coverup of safety violations exposed at TMI."

On the large-scale modifications that have been required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and agreed to by General Public Utilities (GPU), the owners of Three Mile Island, the article states that GPU "doesn't intend to make the changes until after Unit 1 is restarted — and then only if they're 'feasible.'"

In fact, GPU has made a number of changes, but for several critical modifications, including high point vents on reactor coolant piping, the emergency feedwater system, and radiation shielding, the *Militant* statement is correct.

In addition, both GPU and the NRC staff intend to run the plant even if half the modified and new equipment doesn't work.

Further, the Union of Concerned Scientists points out that the NRC requirements for the modifications are much too lax.

Katherine Sojourner
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

'Daily World' on Ireland

I've just read the March 17 issue of the *Daily World*, which reflects the views of the U.S. Communist Party. It has an article on Ireland which really angered me.

While coming across as quite militant-sounding, the article manages to avoid calling for a united Ireland — quite a feat, since this has been the central issue in Irish politics for the last 60 years! While there is a lot about imperialism in the article, it remains very abstract if you ignore the main means imperialism has used to keep Ireland in chains. The closest they get to it is to say that "the British government [should] . . . create conditions for the Irish people — North and South — to decide democratically the structures on which there could function an all-Ireland, neutral, secular, democratic state."

Leaving aside even the fact that the British government has no right whatsoever to "create condi-

tions" for the Irish people, a united Ireland is made very specifically dependent on the decisions of the "North and South," i.e. the Protestants and the Catholics. In other words, the Irish can only reunite their country if the pro-British, Loyalist, phony majority in the North agrees. That is about as meaningless as calling for the dismantling of the State of Israel so long as it's okay with the Israelis, or the end of apartheid so long as it's okay with white South Africans.

The *Daily World* editors even seem nervous about calling for immediate withdrawal of British troops. They demand the "British government declare its intention to withdraw from all interference in Irish affairs."

They outline the main tasks for the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland as "to rid the country of British domination, to withdraw both parts of the country from the EEC, and to end foreign monopoly penetration and control of the economies."

I hope the *Militant* will consider answering this article.
Maureen McDougall
Denver, Colorado

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.

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MARYLAND: Baltimore: SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: SWP, YSA, 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Zip: 02215. Tel: (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN: Detroit: SWP, YSA, 6404 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-5322.

MINNESOTA: Mesabi Iron Range: SWP, YSA, 112 Chestnut St., Virginia, Minn. 55792. Send mail to P.O. Box 1287. Zip: 55792. Tel: (218) 749-6327. Twin Cities: SWP, YSA, 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4715A Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 3109 S. Grand, #22. Zip: 63116. Tel: (314) 772-4410.

NEBRASKA: Lincoln: YSA, P.O. Box 80238. Zip: 68501. Tel: (402) 475-8933.

NEW JERSEY: Newark: SWP, YSA, 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW MEXICO: Albuquerque: SWP, YSA, 1417 Central Ave. NE. Zip: 87106. Tel: (505) 842-0954.

NEW YORK: Capital District (Schenectady): SWP, YSA, 323 State St. Zip: 12305. Tel: (518) 374-1494. New York, Brooklyn: SWP, YSA, 335 Atlantic Ave. Zip: 11201. Tel: (212) 852-7922. New York, Manhattan: SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 226-8445. New York: City-wide SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 925-1668.

NORTH CAROLINA: Piedmont: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 1026, 1400 Glenwood Ave., Greensboro. Zip: 27403. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO: Cincinnati: SWP, YSA, 4945 Pad-dock Rd. Zip: 45237. Tel: (513) 242-7161. Cleveland: SWP, YSA, 2230 Superior. Zip: 44114. Tel: (216) 579-9369. Toledo: SWP, YSA, 2120 Dorris St. Zip: 43607. Tel: (419) 536-0383.

OREGON: Portland: SWP, YSA, 711 NW Everett. Zip: 97209. Tel: (503) 222-7225.

PENNSYLVANIA: Edinboro: YSA, Edinboro State College. Zip: 16444. Tel: (814) 734-4415. Harrisburg: SWP, YSA, 803 N. 2nd St. Zip: 17102. Tel: (717) 234-5052. Philadelphia: SWP, YSA, 5811 N. Broad St. Zip: 19141. Tel: (215) 927-4747 or 927-4748. Pittsburgh: SWP, YSA, 141 S. Highland Ave. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 362-6767. State College: YSA, P.O. Box 464, Bellefonte. Zip: 16823.

Tel: (814) 238-3296.

RHODE ISLAND: Providence: YSA, P.O. Box 261, Annex Station. Zip: 02901.

TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. Dallas: SWP, YSA, 2817 Live Oak. Zip: 75204. Tel: (214) 826-4711. Houston: SWP, YSA, 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054. San Antonio: SWP, YSA, 337 W. Josephine. Zip: 78212. Tel: (512) 736-9218.

UTAH: Price: SWP, YSA, 23 S. Carbon Ave., Suite 19, P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. Salt Lake City: SWP, YSA, 677 S. 7th East, 2nd Floor. Zip: 84102. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

VIRGINIA: Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, 5412 Jefferson Ave., Zip 23605. Tel: (804) 380-0133.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699. Baltimore-Washington District: 2913 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: SWP, YSA, 4868 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston: SWP, YSA, 1584 A Washington St. East. Zip: 25311. Tel: (304) 345-3040. Morgantown: SWP, YSA, 957 S. University Ave. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN: Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

Philadelphia elections: what course for Blacks, Puerto Ricans, labor?

BY BETSY SOARES

PHILADELPHIA — On May 17 the Democratic and Republican Party primaries will select candidates for the November elections. The Socialist Workers Party has already announced its candidate, auto worker Bill Osteen.

Although the Democratic and Republican candidates will represent the interests of big business and the city's ruling rich, the primary has opened a big political discussion among Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and unionists. This discussion is partially the result of the fact that one of the candidates in the Democratic Party primary is Wilson Goode, the former city manager, who is Black. A Black has never been elected mayor of Philadelphia.

The discussion here has been intensified, as well, by the election of Democrat Harold Washington as mayor of Chicago, and the nationwide discussions about fielding a Black candidate in the 1984 Democratic Party presidential primaries.

The main Democratic opponent of Goode is Frank Rizzo, the former mayor and police commissioner who made a reputation in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a champion of law and order.

The Republican candidates are John Eagan, a prominent stockbroker; Thomas Gola, a former city controller; and Charles Dougherty, a former U.S. Congressman.

In opposition to the capitalist candidates, Bill Osteen is running on the Socialist Workers Party ticket, and is presenting a perspective in the interests of working people.

Osteen proposes that working people break with the Democratic and Republican parties, and organize themselves politically to take power out of the hands of the employers by forming a government of workers and farmers. As a step toward this he favors Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and unionists fielding their own candidates for public office against the racist, antilabor Democratic and Republican parties. He calls for a labor party that could unite Blacks, Latinos, and labor. Osteen also backs the democratic right of Blacks to win more representation in the highest levels of government, and points to the impact an independent Black party could have in this city.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Osteen discussed the impact of the country's economic crisis on Philadelphia's workers.

"Philadelphia is the fifth-largest city in the United States," Osteen explained. "Blacks are 40 percent of the city, and Puerto Ricans and other Latinos make up another 15 percent. Yet, they and other workers have no say on how the city is run. That's done by the bankers and big businessmen.

"In addition, more than 160,000 Philadelphians are unemployed. Fifty percent of the city's Black and Latino youth are jobless. Federal funds for the city's employment and training budget has been cut \$120 million in the last two years.

"More than 35,000 people in the city are homeless, forced to find shelter in subways, parks, and city streets. More than 380,000 people live on poverty incomes.

"Under Pennsylvania's 'workfare' program, 25,000 Philadelphians have been thrown off public assistance since December 1982. Throughout the city vacant plants attest to the 100,000 jobs that have left the city. In some districts in North Philadelphia, the infant mortality rate is higher than in the world's poorest countries.

"This harsh reality is what working people in Philadelphia face every day."

Osteen said, "Workers, especially Blacks and Puerto Ricans, see the possible election of a mayor who is Black as a way



Bill Osteen, auto worker and socialist candidate for mayor of Philadelphia.

to begin dealing with these social problems.

"I support this sentiment for change, but the program of Goode — like that of Rizzo — cannot bring real change."

As mayor, Osteen noted, Rizzo officially promoted racism and significantly increased the presence of the police occupation force in the Black community.

Police brutality soared during his head-breaking reign.

Rizzo and his party, backed by big business, promoted the policies that are still being implemented today by the current city mayor and administration.

"Wilson Goode," Osteen continued, "was part of that administration as city manager until he resigned in December to run for mayor.

"Like Rizzo, Goode also stands for law and order of the rich against the poor. He says he favors a more visible police department, with more police officers in the cars, 'more on horses, more on walking beats.'

"Philadelphia already has more police officers per capita than any other city except Washington, D.C. In a recent interview Goode said, 'I think that I will be so tough on crime that Frank Rizzo's going to look soft in the end.'

"Goode does not talk about unemployment, housing, education, or any of the deep problems Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other working people face in the city."

At the same time, Osteen explained, Rizzo and his cop backers are seeking to whip up racism to defeat Goode. For example, Rev. Jesse Jackson flew into town from Chicago recently to lend his support to Goode. Jackson in a speech at Temple University told the audience "the newest thing is simply to vote Black."

Rizzo's response to this was to label Jackson a "terrorist" who is aligned with "lunatics."

Goode called Rizzo's remarks "desperate."

But Goode also denounced Jackson's visit, saying that he had not invited Jackson to Philadelphia, had not talked to him, and that Jackson's support was "unsolicited, unwelcomed, and uninformed."

"The next mayor," Goode says, "must enjoy the confidence of Philadelphia's business community. He must have a close working relationship with business people. I'm confident that my record demonstrates that I do enjoy that kind of relationship with our business leaders."

Goode's biggest backers include Roger Hillas, chairman and president of the Provident National Bank; Henry Wendt, chief executive officer of SmithKline, M. Todd Cooke of the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society; John and Otto Haas of Rohm & Haas; and Harold Sorgenti of Atlantic Richfield — some of the main financial figures in the city.

In the increased discussion of politics around the capitalist primaries, the socialist campaign is getting a good response.

In April, when socialists petitioned to get Osteen on the ballot, they collected more than 10,000 signatures at unemployment centers, auto plants, garment shops, and other industrial sites.

At a garment shop, for example, they obtained 68 signatures and sold seven copies of the *Militant* in one morning. At another shop on the city's South Side, 65 garment workers signed the petition and workers bought five *Militants* and two *Perspectiva Mundials*.

Challenges facing auto workers' convention

BY ELIZABETH ZIERS

As the United Auto Workers convention opens in Dallas on May 15, the union is faced with many important challenges. The automakers have used the economic crisis and the depression in the auto industry over the past four years to drive through concession contracts aimed at attacking wages, benefits, and job conditions. At the same time that they have lowered the standard of living of working members of the UAW, they have also thrown tens of thousands of others onto the unemployment lines.

Today the capitalist business cycle has entered an upturn. Car sales are up. Some workers have been called back, and some plants are being reopened. But there is no letup in the bosses' attacks. The General Motors-Toyota plan to reopen GM's Fremont, California, plant without a union, or with a severely weakened one, is a case in point.

With the bosses' profits on the rise and

some workers going back on the job, UAW members are beginning to grapple with how we can begin to go on the offensive in fighting to defend our rights.

Over the last six months some important actions have been taken by auto workers. UAW Local 1364 at Fremont has appealed for support in its fight to stop the GM-Toyota union-busting scheme. An April meeting of GM Assembly Division locals meeting in New Orleans went on record in favor of strike action if necessary to defend the UAW at Fremont.

For six months, UAW members at Caterpillar conducted a heroic strike in an

attempt to resist the employers' takeback demands there. Last November, our Canadian brothers and sisters at Chrysler took the lead for all of us, said no to a new concession contract, and shut their plants down. Their action forced Lee Iacocca and company to agree to a wage increase for the first time since the first concessions to Chrysler in 1979.

Where to begin

Through these actions, auto workers put their own needs ahead of the profits of the employers, instead of accepting the idea

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Fremont UAW fights union-busting

BY RAÚL GONZÁLEZ

FREMONT, Calif. — Local 1364 of the United Auto Workers (UAW) is fighting to make sure that when the General Motors Assembly Division (GMAD) plant here reopens as a joint GM-Toyota operation, the local union's members will be working in it.

The local union on February 27 unanimously adopted a resolution, to be presented to the UAW's May 15 convention in Dallas. It urges that "all laid off GMAD Fremont workers be recalled to the Fremont plant in line with their plant seniority and that the UAW be given full recognition by GM-Toyota, immediately!"

The plant here has been closed since March 1982. It once employed 6,800 UAW members on two shifts and two production lines.

GM and Toyota announced in February that they would reopen the plant in 1984 or 1985 to assemble a Toyota-designed small car. Both companies have refused to commit themselves to recalling the laid-off members of Local 1364.

George Nano, who is chairman of Local 1364's shop committee, told the *Militant* that many UAW locals have endorsed 1364's resolution or sent messages of support. They have come from Wilmington, Cleveland, Flint, Kansas City, and elsewhere, he said, and from many non-UAW unions as well.

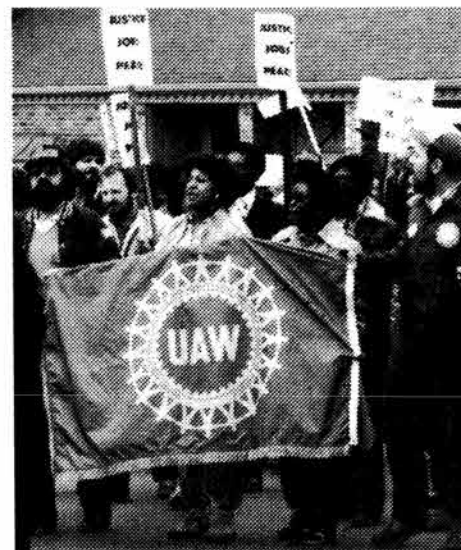
The local's resolution has also been adopted by the UAW's Region 6 (Far West) and UAW-GM Subcouncils 7A and 7B, which consist primarily of locals at GM assembly plants.

The two subcouncils also included the recall of Local 1364 members as an issue, along with local work rules, for a strike-authorization vote by UAW-GM locals.

After the subcouncils, which met in New Orleans, announced their strike-authorization votes, UAW President Douglas Fraser and Vice-president Owen Bieber pledged in a statement to "do what we must to protect the jobs of our members at the Fremont facility."

This was the strongest statement yet from the top UAW leadership supporting

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UAW members at April 4 demonstration in Anderson, Indiana, for justice, jobs, peace.