



Labor, people of color, and feminists seek to create a party of their own

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A pox on patriarchal family values, says columnist Clara Fraser

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The Freedom Socialist

Voice of Revolutionary Feminism

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Bill Clinton can't fix the broken system

BY LINDA AVERILL

Election '92 was the year U.S. voters revolted. Chilled by an economy in deep freeze, they overwhelmingly cast their ballots for change.

Not since the Great Depression has the majority so strongly registered its animosity toward the status quo. Rejecting the bleak Reagan-Bush austerity menu of poverty, repression, and war, the masses chose Democrat Bill Clinton for president, hoping for a new deal.

But this isn't the 1930s, and Bill Clinton is no Franklin D. Roosevelt. The capitalist sun is setting, and the only cure for what is now Permanent Depression is a socialist economic system governed by workers.

The silver-tongued Arkansas hustler won by promising voters health-care reform, jobs, peace, and prosperity. He can't deliver the goods. Clinton wasted no time in making his pitch for "a new partnership for a new America," but that proposition — to serve both big business and working people — is impossible.

Here's a glimpse of what's really in store.

Clinton: wolf in sheep's clothing. *The urban crisis:* Seconds after Clinton's victory, liberal Democrats in Seattle, Washington vowed to resurrect a "kinder, gentler" version of Weed and Seed, the draconian law-and-order counter-insurgency program that was Bush's answer to the desperate plight of U.S. inner cities.

Peace: The day after his election, Clinton reassured big business that his control of the country will be firm, and warned Iraq to expect more of the George Bush school of diplomacy. Given the Democrats' penchant for starting wars, things look gloomy on this front.

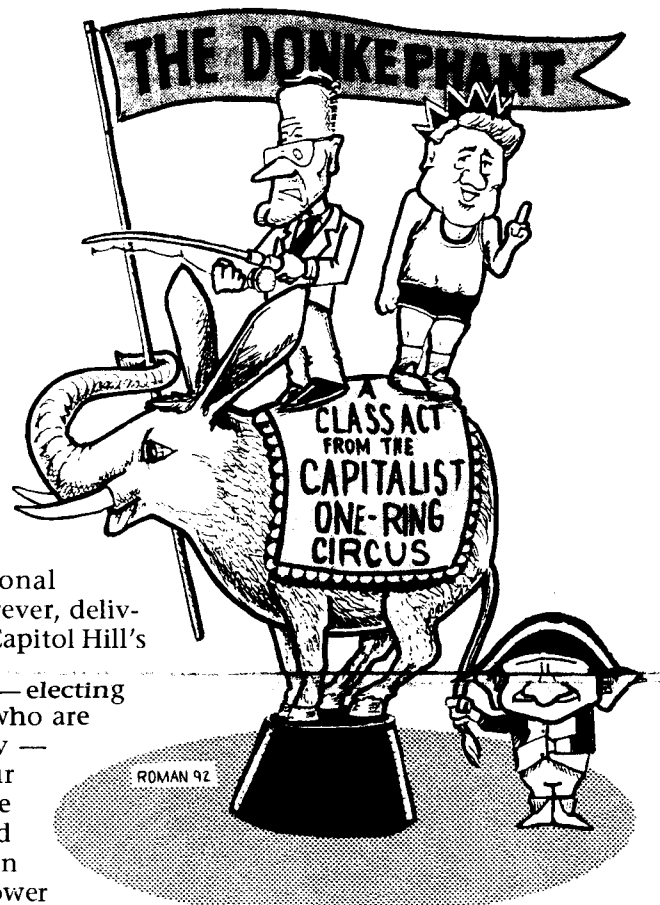
Prosperity: The forecast here is also grim. GM recently announced plans to shut many U.S. plants and furlough 75,000 jobs. Will Clinton, the former governor of a right-to-work state and supporter of fast-track approval for the North American Free Trade Agreement politely ask GM to stop their headlong flight after ever-cheaper labor?

Vindication for Anita Hill! The elections on November 3

proved that women, people of color, and lesbians and gay men have emerged as the powerful new force in the fight for change. They broke congressional race and sex barriers forever, delivering a mortal blow to Capitol Hill's old boys' club.

But cosmetic change — electing twin-party candidates who are female, of color, or gay — can not safeguard our rights, or even guarantee our survival. But the good news is that this election proved we have the power and numbers to forge a party in our own interest.

It's time to kiss the era of lesser-evil politics goodbye. Perot's presidential adventure showed that people are ready to bolt from the twin parties, and that if the left doesn't offer an alternative, the right wing will. As the euphoria surrounding Bill Clinton in-



evitably fades, now is the time to build a feminist and rainbow labor party where all who are used up and sold out by this system can work together to attain true enfranchisement. (Please see page 5.)

Election '92 was a revolt. Now we need a revolution! □



BY ANDREA BAUER

If you believe Western politicians, the civil war in former Yugoslavia is caused by a specter of "ancient ethnic strife" that haunts the Balkans. Nonsense. The bloodshed flows from the desires of the pro-capitalist regimes in Serbia and Croatia to grab territory and wealth from the shattered country — and from the jockeying for power and profits by the big European players.

An opening for these scavengers was created by the fall of Stalinism in Yugoslavia. While this event was a necessary step on the road to workers' democracy and real socialism, it alerted the usual greedy competitors, foraging under the banner of "nationalism."

Balkan history of the last century has been dynamic, to say the least. Formerly the "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes," Yugoslavia was created in 1918 out of the re-division of the area

caused by World War I, though it took its new name only in 1929. The region is rich in minerals, industry, and farming. The current war, like past conflagrations, is fundamentally about profits.

Dependence on capitalism devastates the workers state. The capitalists were originally thrown out of Yugoslavia in one of the most luminous chapters of 20th-century revolutionary history.

During World War II, the fascists captured Yugoslavia and set up puppet governments. They were routed by the pro-communist Partisans led by Josip Broz Tito.

Under the Partisans, all nationalities were united for the first time. Defying Stalin's orders to work with the pro-monarchist, Nazi-collaborationist Chetniks, they began instituting workers' control over territory they liberated from the Axis and the homegrown fascists, the Ustashi. In 1943, the Partisans won the ensuing civil war; in 1944, the

Germans were driven out.

At the war's end, Stalin tried to divide up Yugoslavia with the imperialists, but it was too late. The national bourgeoisie knew their time was up and resigned from the coalition government; industry and banking were nationalized; and the borders of the republics were redrawn to curb Serbian supremacy. Tito became premier and Yugoslavia became a federation of six people's republics.

In 1948, Stalin's conflicts with Tito came to a head. Yugoslavia pulled away to pursue a course independent of the USSR. With help primarily from West Germany and Italy, Yugoslavia became the most industrialized country in the Balkans, but at a terrible price. Within the country, economic disparity widened as the European powers sought greater returns through investments in

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Sad to report, the battle of the sexes is still alive and well on the Left. Adrienne Weller answers the salvos tossed at feminist Clara Fraser by the Spartacist League.

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Gil Veyna reviews *American Me*, the gripping movie about prison and gangs by Chicano director and star Edward James Olmos, finding it heavy on truth but light on solutions.



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Freedom Socialist Credo

The Freedom Socialist boldly confronts and makes sense of the dizzying events shaping today's revolutionary world.

We're Marxists, Leninists, Trotskyists, feminists, humanists...we believe that all today's gigantic upheavals are links in an enormous global effort to topple the tyranny of imperialism or Stalinist bureaucratism or racist arrogance.

We hail the decisive leadership role played by people of color and by sexual and national minorities in the worldwide class struggle.

We focus on women's non-stop fight for equality which, in the final analysis, challenges every single basis on which capitalism rests.

Our goal is to inject the socialist movement with the revitalizing ideas of Trotskyism and feminism in order to prepare it for victory in this crucial decade.

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Letters

Court upholds racism on the job

Your Los Angeles rebellion coverage in last issue showed how thoroughly racist our class-based legal system is.

Another example of justice U.S.-style is the case of Wes Patton, a retired Black Seattle City Light employee, who sued the public utility for race discrimination and retaliation on the job.

Patton began working at City Light in 1973. He faced disparate treatment by management from the start. City Light's only Black Senior Accountant, he was given heavier work loads, assigned tasks outside his job category, and stripped of his supervisory powers and eventually his staff!

The final blow to Patton's dignity occurred when management created a "Resource Group" of three Black clerical employees and had them report to a white supervisor instead of Patton. While responsible for the final work product, Patton was stripped of any authority over the Group. Management tried to put him in the role of "Uncle Tom" over the field hands — a racist stereotype which for Patton harkened back to the days of slavery.

King County Superior Court

Judge Lloyd Bever ignored the reams of evidence exposing the utility and ruled against Patton. He went so far as to state that if Patton had been white, he would have been fired much earlier for complaining about his work environment and conditions!

Patton's story, like the L.A. revolt, serves as a reminder to us all to continue the struggle for justice until we prevail.

Heidi Durham
Seattle, Washington

Kudos for Canada coverage

I thought the article [editorial on racism in Canada in Vol. 13 #4], though short, was a pretty good description of the economic and social stranglehold the Canadian government continues to pursue to suffocate its indigenous people. Nice job.

Lisa Faruolo
Leonard Peltier Defense Committee
Lawrence, Kansas

Socialism yes, "free trade" no

Is there any hope for strong

socialism in this world? Is there any hope for price control, free medicine, profit control, tax the rich, better wages for unskilled and minority workers, and being treated as human, rather than as a number?

I'm against free enterprise, "free trade" with other countries, and favoring the rich capitalist. I believe in helping others. I'm unemployed, but still try to help others with their needs.

The best system is true communism.

I love Russia the way it was!
Norman Boettcher
Hayward, California

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent resource information on world and national affairs.

Correction

In "United Front Rousts the Nazis in Simi Valley" last issue, we neglected to mention two groups who were very instrumental in the success of the Ad Hoc Coalition Against White Supremacists. They are Simi Valley-Conejo NOW and L.A. Queer Nation.

Help stomp out Northwest Nazis! Send a message of resistance to bigots everywhere!

United Front Against Fascism (UFAF) has taken the offensive against Nazis in Washington state and reserved South Whidbey Park for a "Northwest Solidarity Rally Against Nazis, Bigotry, and Racist Violence," on Saturday, December 5, 1992, from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Since 1988, fascists have met at this park three times on the first weekend in December to commemorate rightwing terrorist Robert Matthews, founder of The Order. Matthews was killed on Whidbey Island in a shoot-out with the FBI in 1987.

The first year the white supremacists met on Whidbey, UFAF came together to protest the

fascists and their plans to turn the region into an Aryan stronghold. They were so successful that the next year the Nazis didn't come back, but the fascists did return in 1990. Counter-demonstrations have also continued. The annual face-off has become a symbol of both Nazi aggressiveness and determined resistance to it by radicals, labor, people of color, Jews, immigrants, women, sexual minorities, and the homeless.

All civil rights advocates welcome on December 5! Inquiries, donations, endorsements, and support statements may be sent to UFAF, 5018 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118 (telephone 206-722-2453). Make your voice heard! □

Freedom Socialist Fund Drive over the top with \$58,700 raised

BY WENDY MCPHERSON

We made it! *Thank you* to every reader who donated to the 1992 *Freedom Socialist* \$50,000 Fund Drive and helped push the "Newspaper for Optimistic Rebels" 18 percent over our goal, to a whopping total of \$58,738.82!

The fund drive achieved this tremendous success in a time of post-Reaganomic belt-tightening. Your checks for \$5, \$25, \$100, and \$1,000 streamed in despite a recession that has left all of us poorer than we were five years ago.

But why? According to a lot of liberals, mainstream commentators, and even radicals, "the people" are getting more conservative. You're not ready to break with the Democrats. You believe socialism is the same as Stalinism. You're afraid of Leninist parties. You're not willing to support the leadership of the most oppressed and controversial members of the working class and promote their issues. Revolutionary politics needs to be

watered down for "the masses." As proof, the pessimism-peddlers can point to the recent failures of several movement papers.

Well, pooh. We believe our readership decided to keep the *FS* publishing precisely because our message is fiercely partisan, explicitly anti-capitalist, unabashedly Trotskyist, and flagrantly feminist.

Consider just a few of the issues we covered during our six-month drive:

- Rather than endlessly speculate about whether Anita Hill told the truth (she did), we exposed the fatal taboo against Black women criticizing Black men and examined sexual harassment as a class issue.

- We assigned the main blame for the crack-up of the Soviet Union to the U.S. and its co-imperialists, and we continued to explain why we believe that we are seeing a *new revolutionary beginning* by Soviet workers, not a final ending.

- We took gay movement leaders who lust after respectability to task for divisive, anti-radical maneuvering in the organizing

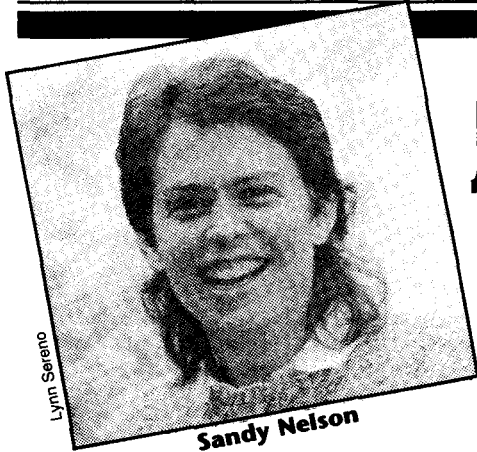
for the important 1993 Lesbian/Gay/Bi March on Washington.

- We unequivocally stood shoulder to shoulder with the Los Angeles insurgents against a violent system that dishes out nothing but racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and exploitation of labor.

We consider the \$59,000 you sent us a concrete way of saying "Right on!" to our pull-no-punches approach. Your response shows that thousands of optimistic rebels are looking for and embracing radical solutions. We're heartened, inspired, and re-energized.

The *Freedom Socialist* will repay you by continuing to report on the front-line battles and victories of the workingclass majority struggling to re-create the world from Sarajevo to Sydney and from Seattle to Santiago. ¡Adelante! □

Wendy McPherson, the Freedom Socialist Business Manager and an AFSCME union activist at Seattle Public Library, coordinated the FS Fund Drive.



Lynn Sereno

Sandy Nelson

BY MEEGHAN TRUELOVE

Journalist Sandy Nelson gains ACLU backing in gag-rule case

Sandy Nelson, activist extraordinaire and award-winning journalist jilted by management, has won the backing of the Washington State American Civil Liberties Union for a lawsuit she is about to file against Tacoma's *Morning News Tribune*. Two prominent area lawyers, Bill Bender and Jim Lobsenz, will represent her. Both are veteran defenders of civil liberties who bring a wealth of experience to Nelson's ground-breaking employee-rights case.

Political organizing deemed verboten. In August 1990, the McClatchy chain, which owns the *MNT*, forced Nelson out of her position as education-reporter-with-a-byline into one as copy-editor-without-training, in an attempt to muzzle Nelson's political involvement and intimidate other employees. Nelson, who is the organizer for Tacoma Radical Women, was helping to lead a

campaign for a city gay rights ordinance at the time.

In the absence of an ethics code in the union contract, management claimed that Nelson's activism violated lofty "journalistic standards" when it transferred her. Papers use ethics codes to bar reporters from espousing personal politics in their off-duty lives, supposedly to avoid tainting the paper's appearance of objectivity. After buying *MNT* in 1986, McClatchy had stonewalled contract negotiations with Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild Local 86 until they could decertify the union in a narrow vote in 1991. The *MNT* is now drafting an ethics code.

Workers have organized to impact the code and made recommendations under which a journalist in Nelson's situation wouldn't be reassigned. And the Guild maintains strong support for Nelson's struggle to return to reporting.

The original course taken by Nelson and her former union to get back her beat dead-ended when the pro-management National Labor Relations Board refused to take her case.

Constitutional rights clash moves to court. If workers in Nelson's

situation do not fight back, they are in jeopardy of having their freedoms held hostage by their corporate employers. Yet navigating these battles through the capitalist courts takes vast amounts of expertise and money, and this is why the October 1992 decision by the state ACLU Board of Directors to sponsor Nelson's case is so important.

This undertaking represents a new area for the ACLU. In the past, the organization has defended the First Amendment rights of newspapers and those of reporters to withhold sources. Now the Seattle chapter's Legal Committee and Executive Board has decided that it should also defend freedom of speech and the public's right to know by seeking protection for the constitutional and contractual rights of newspaper employees.

ACLU member Jim Lobsenz was key in securing ACLU agreement to take the case. Lobsenz is the lawyer for Steven Farmer, the gay prisoner tested against his will for HIV. And Lobsenz was the principal legal advocate for Perry Watkins, the Black gay sergeant who won a 10-year-long discrimination suit against the U.S. Army.

Attorney Bill Bender, a cooperating attorney with the Center for Constitutional

Rights and the ACLU, represented the Everett Feminist Women's Health Clinic after it was targeted for annihilation by ultra-right anti-abortionists.

The court case provides new opportunities for Nelson's supporters — who include the National Lawyers Guild, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, and Ms. editor Robin Morgan — to lend aid. Concerned parties may submit friend-of-the-court briefs. If your organization is interested, please write to the Sandy Nelson Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5847, Tacoma, WA 98405. Funds for publicity are also needed; make checks out to the defense committee.

MNT has bullied and beaten its employees into dispersal and disenfranchisement, but not into submission or retreat. While de-unionized employees refuse to surrender, and while Nelson's case gathers momentum, the final chapter in this dynamic struggle has yet to be written. □

Meeghan Truelove, a recent graduate of Williams College in Massachusetts, is a graphic artist, writer, and sometime waitress about to embark on a tour of Asia.

...Yugoslavia at war

from the cover

the already more advanced north, where the banks of Slovenia and Croatia became repositories for 75 percent of all foreign trade earnings. With growing inequality among the republics came a resurgence of nationalism, seen particularly in Serbian oppression of the Albanian majority in the Kosovo province.

By 1979, the country owed nearly \$20 billion, mostly to German banks. Worldwide economic crisis accelerated the process of disintegration. In 1983, debts forced acceptance of an International Monetary Fund "austerity program." In 1988, unemployment reached 12 percent; in 1989, inflation reached 2,500 percent.

By the end of the '80s, the social transformation launched by communist and internationalist aspirations had been under siege for many years. Yugoslavia was burdened by Tito's version of Stalinist bureaucracy and, even more fundamentally, by a steady diet of poisonous capitalist "help."

"Ethnic cleansing" supports land grab. Repression and economic chaos produced resistance from intellectuals and workers. Between 1980 and 1985, the number of yearly strikes doubled. In 1988, Slovenia took the lead in legalizing opposition to the ruling League of Communists; in 1990, multi-party elections were held throughout Yugoslavia.

The pro-capitalist governments of Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in 1991. This double secession was bitterly opposed by Serbia because, as a landlocked, less prosperous republic with weaker ties to big Capital, Serbia's strength rests on federation.

Serbian president and super-chauvinist Slobodan Milosevic did *not* oppose secession in order to protect the workers state, the embodiment of the gains of the socialist revolution. Milosevic is a "market economy" advocate who selected businessman Milan Panic, a U.S. millionaire, as Serbia's prime minister.

Serbia attacked Slovenia to halt its secession, but withdrew after a week, hampered in part because of troop defections: hundreds of soldiers deserted when they discovered that instead of defending Yu-

goslavia from invasion by NATO troops, as they had been told they were to do, they were actually there to fight Slovenians. The primary battleground shifted then to Croatia and next to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

For generations, Bosnians of different religions and national backgrounds had lived next door to each other, worked side by side, and intermarried. This harmony was ruptured when Serbian forces calling



The white area is Yugoslavia before the crackup—the republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia with its provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Today it is only the area in the bold outline.

themselves Chetniks began their campaign of "ethnic cleansing," claiming they were protecting the "self-determination rights" of those Serbs who make up almost a third of the Bosnian population.

Serbia and Croatia held negotiations to carve up Bosnia between them, but a mutually satisfactory deal couldn't be made — even with *no* separate territory planned for the Muslims, Bosnia's largest group.

Thus, war erupted. The Western press highlights Serbia's aggression, concentration camps, and slaughter of civilians, but Croatia's intentions are no less expansionist and inhumane. Croatia, headed by far-right anti-Semite Franjo Tudjman, is also supported by Germany, which took the lead in pushing for European Community recognition of Croatian and Slovenian independence. Germany has armed Zagreb with cannons and tanks.

Europe and U.S. out! The European and U.S. ruling classes play a heinous role in the conflict.

Embargoes and sanctions against what is left of united Yugoslavia have devastated Serbia and Montenegro. With lack of material shutting down industry, unemployment may reach 80 percent.

Meanwhile, all the Western governments are tightening their borders against refugees.

The way out of the morass will not come from the capitalist countries or from the warring regimes in ex-Yugoslavia. This is a job for the region's youth, soldiers, women, workers, and radicals.

Workers must solve the problem. Opposition to war and to nationalism is widespread.

In Belgrade, where peace demonstrations are frequent and participants have numbered up to 100,000, women are the backbone of the resistance. At Belgrade University, student strikers demand Milosevic's resignation.

In Croatia, the Antiwar Campaign has brought together peace groups from throughout ex-Yugoslavia.

In Bosnia, a 1991 "Insurrection for Peace" drew hundreds of thousands of people. Many Bosnian Serbs have helped hide their Muslim and Croat neighbors from the Serb militia.

If this organizing is to achieve peace, the various movements need to adopt a program that goes *beyond* a singular demand to stop the war and strikes at the capitalist root of the bloodbath. The peace campaign will undoubtedly take this step as discussions deepen.

The campaign will be aided in its political growth by the developing labor movement, as newly independent unions begin to flex their muscles.

Ultimately, all democratic, anti-war, and pro-labor trends could be brought together by a new, internationalist, anti-capitalist party for all the republics; a party that is able to explain the role that Stalinism played in retarding actual socialism — a Trotskyist party.

No "national" solution is possible, because the nationalities and ethnic groups of Yugoslavia are intertwined together like the arteries in one body.

"Independence" of the various republics is not possible either. The cultural and economic *interdependence* of these small entities is entrenched. Break-aways are possible only under sponsorship of a large capitalist power

avid for super-exploitation and spoils.

The vehicle that will bring peace to Yugoslavia is *class struggle*, whereby the current crop of aspiring capitalists is tossed out, direct workers' control is instituted, and re-federation is freely chosen.

As Trotsky wrote in 1940: "Planned economy on the basis of socialized property freed from national boundaries is the task of the international proletariat, above all — in Europe...For the Socialist United States of Europe!" □

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Spartacist League: consciousness so low not even Thelma and Louise could raise it!

BY ADRIENNE WELLER

The Spartacist League is having a fit.

What provoked them is a vibrant column by Clara Fraser in the Volume 13 No. 3 *Freedom Socialist*, "Thelma and Louise 'R' Us." In it, Fraser urges, "Goddammit, sisters: let's get revolutionary. Let's understand that the private profit system is at the bottom of all the horror we experience, and let's catapult ourselves onto the mainstage of history." As an example of rejecting women's back-seat role, Fraser mentions her 1967 political victory over an ex-husband and ex-comrade, the late Dick Fraser, who tried to destroy her and the newly formed Freedom Socialist Party (FSP).

The image of gun-toting Thelma and Louise challenging women's bottom-of-the-barrel-treatment terrified and incensed the white male upper crust of the bourgeois media. The Spartacists had the same frenzied response to Clara Fraser and Marxist feminism in the July 24 and September 18, 1992 issues of *Workers Vanguard*.

Fraser's feisty refusal to back down to bosses, city fathers, domestic tyrants, or left sexists, including Dick Fraser, inspires exultation in feminists. But you have to rejoice in women demanding justice — on every front — in order to be delighted by Clara Fraser or by Thelma and Louise.

Spats rewrite history to defend sexism. The Spartacist League is not delighted. Instead, they are outraged at Fraser's "unfair" characterization of Dick Fraser as an abuser and political traitor.

When Dick refused to accept Clara's decision to separate by flying into alcoholic rages and rejecting friendly mediation over money and child custody, Clara was forced into the capitalist divorce courts. Dick then scabbed on the socialist feminist principles he supposedly held —

and on the socialist feminist party he helped found — by appealing to the system's anti-Marxist and anti-feminist biases to vilify Clara as an unfit, adulterous, neglectful political-activist mother.

Dick's ire at Clara was not just personal, but political. The FSP was constituted explicitly as a vanguard Leninist party, one devoted to recognizing the centrality of female issues and female leadership to revolutionary struggle — but Dick was having second thoughts. He and a few backers began trying to push the party in a looser, less Bolshevik direction, which Clara opposed. The party finally ordered Dick to cease and desist his vendetta against Clara, and expelled him when he wouldn't. A minority of FSP members were unable to live up to their commitment to feminism and democratic centralism (unity in action and majority rule based on democratic discussion and decision-making). They took Dick's side and left the party.

The Spartacists deny or distort this history in trying to rehabilitate Dick, with whom they identify because of his incurable hostility toward women's leadership.

Their diatribes against Clara and the FSP portray Clara as a subjective harpy who mercilessly and unreasonably maligns Dick even beyond his death. They assert the complete falsehood that Clara is determined to deprive Dick of credit for his profound contributions to a theoretical understanding of Black liberation.

Calling Clara "Ms. Seattle Six-Gun," they accuse her of being a "guru" who has "based her entire political career on her divorce."

Hardly. Their sexism blinds them to Clara's enormous achievement in building an international party that recruits and trains Trotskyist feminist leaders.

And it consigns them to a well-earned place on the class-struggle sidelines.



Clara Fraser takes aim at sexism on the Left.

Feminism and Marxism are inseparable. The theories Clara Fraser and the FSP are known for are *socialist feminism*, originated by Clara and the FSP founders, and *revolutionary integration*, the thesis on the Black struggle pioneered by Dick Fraser, developed by a multiracial group of co-thinkers, and co-authored by Dick and Clara.

These two concepts are parts of a unified theory that identifies and promotes the leadership of the most oppressed workers as key to the success of socialist revolution — because *sexism* and *racism*, created and used by the profit system, are the main causes of workingclass disunity.

But the Spartacist League thinks that straight white men, whom they call "the working class," will lead the revolution. To the Spartacists, class unity is like marriage, where the husband and wife are one — and that one is the husband.

This nightmare is a product of *male*

chauvinist subjectivity. Revolutionary integration and socialist feminism are *objective* positions based on material reality.

The logic of women's role as revolutionary leaders is simple. The capitalist system depends totally on super-profits ripped off from low-paid labor and justified by sexism and racism. These prejudices are not a side result but a *permanent, intrinsic feature* of the ownership of the means of production by a few for individual gain. This modus operandi creates special groups of super-exploited and discriminated-against workers predisposed to militancy and class solidarity.

Audacious, furious women, the first class to be dispossessed by private property and half of every other oppressed group, are destined to be "the most active, the most revolutionary and the most initiative section of the working class," in Trotsky's words — especially women of color, triply oppressed and triply determined to make change.

Women workers, whose hands are placed on the computer keyboards of every capitalist bank and nerve center, will smash this sick system to bits. Their strength will inspire male workers to join them. The future of humanity features *women* in leading roles.

But the Spartacists just don't get it. They don't get feminism, and so they don't get Marxism, and so they attack the outstanding representative of socialist feminism, Clara Fraser.

To paraphrase Lenin's defense of Rosa Luxemburg, the Spartacists are like barnyard chickens cackling at an eagle soaring in the sky. □

Adrienne Weller, Portland Radical Women Organizer and anti-Nazi activist, believes in self-defense for women — by any means necessary.

...Aboriginal land rights

from page 8

jurisdiction in this area, neatly ignoring battles and massacres and reinforcing the racist myth that "settlement" was passively accepted by the existing nations of Australia.

Traditional title not destroyed by invasion. The new verdict states that the traditional title of the indigenous inhabitants was not automatically extinguished by the European occupation. It holds that native title was extinguished

where the Crown granted title to others for purposes not compatible with Aboriginal land use, such as urban development. But it stipulates that the granting of such things as mining leases or the acquisition of land for national parks did *not* deprive the indigenous people of legal title.

The court acknowledged the spiritual nature of the people's relationship with the land, ruling that traditional title can be recognized even when native occupation has not been continuous.

In the last century, massive areas of the continent were simply seized, without title being granted by the Crown. The June decision means the big rural estate owners whose possession of land is not officially sanctioned — the "squattocracy" — may be open to eviction claims by the original populations.

In the *Aboriginal Law Bulletin* of June 1992, civil liberties lawyer Brian Keon-Cohen aptly summarizes the decision: "[T]he High Court has...entirely rewritten the common law on the effect of colonisation upon native communities; has set a new agenda for black-white relations; has presented [Australian] governments with an awesome challenge which they will avoid at their peril; and has provided some dignity, a measure of justice, real legal clout and renewed hope for indigenous people."

Aboriginal leader Galarrwuy Yunupingu called the decision "a turning point in the history of this country."

This is certainly a stunning victory, the ramifications of which have only just begun to become evident.

Yet the fight for sovereignty for those who have been stewards of this land for at least two thousand generations cannot be finally won in the courts. Australian capitalism cannot even give its people work, let alone cede immense tracts of territory to their rightful custodians!

In the end, the restoration of the rights of the indigenous peoples of Australia requires the liberation of *all* the country's people from capitalism, the tyrannical system that holds human rights hostage to private property. □

...500 years

from page 8

Explosions against the anniversary celebrations. Opposition to the quinquennial hoopla is renewing Indian pride and political aggressiveness.

On Columbus Day, October 12, and the days leading up to it, the Western Hemisphere was ablaze with protest: mass demonstrations in Bolivia; a hunger strike in Argentina; bombings of a Spanish embassy in Chile and a Spanish bank in Peru; a meeting of native peoples from Alaska and Peru at the Aztec Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon near Mexico City; clashes between Mapuche Indians and police in Santiago and elsewhere in Chile; a 60-mile march organized by labor leaders in the Dominican Republic; the blocking of the Pan American Highway in Ecuador by Indians who used tree trunks, rocks, and sit-ins; a verdict of "guilty" from an indigenous people's tribunal judging the U.S. government.

In the months leading up to Columbus Day, transcontinental conferences forged and strengthened alliances of native people from South America, Central America, the Caribbean and North America. Organiza-

tions like the Continental Campaign of 500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance in the Americas rang out the demand for self-determination throughout the world.

Communalism and egalitarianism will rise again. Full recognition of native sovereignty includes an appreciation of the traditional tribal cultures. These were living examples of communalism — democratic, egalitarian, and respectful of women, youth, and elders, with each person contributing to society for the well-being of all and serving as a responsible steward of the earth.

The socialism advocated by Marx and Frederick Engels and their co-thinkers and successors is nothing more or less than "a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient matriarchal clans," as the trailblazing anthropologist Lewis Morgan wrote in *Ancient Society* in 1877.

International revolution and the building of global socialism will make these incandescent values real for the entire human race. □

Alaskan Native Debra O'Gara, a resident of Seattle, Washington, is a tribal attorney and leader in Radical Women.

Radical Women

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Check us out!

BY LINDA AVERILL

Democrats finally captured the White House. Great! Now they will have the opportunity to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that only a *workingclass third party* can deliver the change U.S. voters said they needed when they cast their November 3 ballots in record numbers for "outsiders."

There is no better time than now, as Clinton begins to retract his promises of peace and prosperity, to step up our efforts to create a labor party.

Several current third-party initiatives shed light on some roadblocks we'll need to overcome along the way.

Feminist honchos: waiting for the 21st century. In 1989, the National Organization for Women membership overwhelmingly passed a resolution mandating their leadership to explore formation of a third party. Three years later, in August 1992, NOW bigwigs held a highly orchestrated, poorly publicized founding convention of the **21st Century Party**, with Dolores Huerta and Eleanor Smeal at the helm.

The party's platform includes many radical planks. But when Radical Women members and others motivated adding things like an anti-capitalist economic analysis and support for undocumented workers, their proposals were squelched by conveners, several times through bureaucratic use of parliamentary procedure.

This party doesn't plan to run candidates in the foreseeable future. By refusing to give women a concrete alternative, the message it sends is "Vote Democrat."

Labor: ranks are restless, leaders lag behind.

Anthony Mazzocchi, former secretary-treasurer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union (OCAW), is the driving force behind **Labor Party Advocates**, whose literature boldly proclaims: "The bosses have two parties, working people need at least one."

But LPA's immediate aims are discouragingly modest. It conducts polls, educates about labor parties, and publishes a newsletter. It plans to defer any actual electoral campaigns until it recruits 100,000 dues-paying members and 1,000 national steering committee officials.

Lest there be any doubt, OCAW President Robert Wages states that LPA "...is not a third party... We will settle for two real parties... We are not going to start a labor party tomorrow... [maybe] not even this decade."

Third-party organizing by NOW and LPA is hung up because the reformist leaderships of both groups believe women and workers can find a voice and improve their lot *within the capitalist system*. They deliberately put feminist/labor-party sentiment on a leash, using it to supposedly "push" the Democrats.

These misleaders are part of what Leon Trotsky called the *middle caste*, a layer of movement heavies who sound militant but actually pacify revolutionary instincts, blur class lines, and channel workingclass energy *away from* a direct struggle for power with the ruling class.

Despite the middle caste applying the brakes, sentiment for a truly independent party is accelerating, especially in unions, an arena where Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) and Radical Women (RW) members have long lobbied for passage of labor party resolutions.

At the 1992 Washington State Labor Council Convention, support for a labor party was "more vocal than ever," according to Vikki Goodman, president of Wash-



ington Federation of State Employees Local 435. Twenty-five percent of the convention delegates voted for her union's resolution after ground-breaking floor debate.

The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); whose predominantly female, racially diverse membership is one of the fastest-growing in the country, showed unprecedented support for a labor party at its 1992 convention. With 6,000 members and guests present, four locals from different states submitted resolutions, forcing debate to the floor, although bureaucrats limited the discussion.

AFSCME is living proof that women and people of color — labor's most vibrant sectors — are increasingly receptive to the reality of a workers' party.

Daniels effort needs backbone. Another independent-party movement, Campaign for a New Tomorrow, is the creation primarily of presidential aspirant Ron

Daniels, a Black former organizer for the Rainbow Coalition. While Daniels' 1992 candidacy was strongly pro-workingclass, the FSP supported him only critically because he would not officially declare his program anti-capitalist, for fear of "turning people off."

Campaign for a New Tomorrow sponsored a People's Progressive Convention in August 1992, drawing 350 activists eager to construct a third-party vehicle. But following Daniels' direction, participants laid plans for a loose network, instead of hammering out an electoral program that could be used as the basis for fielding specific candidates. The convention didn't even endorse Daniels' campaign.

Daniels shares a common fear that people in this country are not ready for candidates who offer an openly anti-capitalist alternative to the boss parties. This fear is unfounded. The FSP campaigns of Merle Woo for governor of California in 1990 and Yolanda Alaniz and Heidi Durham for Seattle City Council in 1991 attracted enormous enthusiasm and tens of thousands of votes precisely *because* they offered sensible *socialist* solutions.

Demoralized leftists think that their belief that workers and the oppressed aren't ready to hear an honest Left message takes the responsibility for *delivering* that message off their shoulders. But leaders *do* lead — and if they don't lead people forward, then they hold them back.

Yet another embryonic workers' party is being held in stasis by the San Francisco Bay Area Labor Party Forum. This group is spearheaded by socialists who lack faith in the working class because they are firmly oriented to the white male aristocracy of labor instead of its most advanced ranks — women, people of color, and lesbians and gay men. In July 1992, the Forum held a national conference at which they decided to form — you guessed it — a network.

Getting the genuine article off the ground.

Top-level stalling will not retard formation of a feminist, multi-racial workers' party for long. People need it too desperately. If movement brass don't get with the program, they will be replaced by new leaders who will.

What should the labor party agenda encompass? Here's a good beginning:

- Tax the rich and corporate profits, not the poor. Fund cities by dismantling the Pentagon. Provide decent housing, education, health care, and social services for all. Public ownership of utilities and major industries under workers' control. Protect a healthy environment.

- Full employment; reduce the work week for existing jobs without cutting wages. Organize the unorganized into unions. Mandate job safety.

- Total equality, civil rights, constitutional rights, and protection from neo-fascist and domestic violence for women, people of color, Jews, sexual minorities, immigrants, elders, youth, the disabled, and radicals. Respect native sovereignty.

- Solidarity with workers of all countries to fight exploitation and raise wages and standards *worldwide*.

U.S. workers have made it clear that they want release from the Democrats and Republicans. Now it's up to *serious* activists to develop a basic program and build a genuinely alternative anti-capitalist party. □

—with reporting by Stephen Durham and Marian Larkin/New York, Mary Ann Curtis/Los Angeles, Nell Wong/San Francisco, and Fred Hyde/Seattle

Ex-CPers tilt their Committees of Correspondence regroupment effort towards reformism

BY LINDA AVERILL



Political revolution in the Soviet Union has led the U.S. Left, like the Left worldwide, to an historic crossroads.

The tumble of Stalinists from power in the USSR triggered glasnost in the Communist Party USA, climaxing at the party's 25th national convention, where 900 members presented a declaration demanding internal democracy. Stonewalled by the Gus Hall regime, many members eventually resigned or were expelled.

Now, many have regrouped into the Committees of Correspondence (CofC) and invited the Left to join in exploring a new political agenda for post-Stalinist times.

Their first conference, "Perspectives for Democracy and Socialism in the '90s," drew 1,400 activists to Berkeley, California in July 1992.

The high point of this conference was the thirst for ideas, debate, and action that permeated the air. The glaring void was its avoidance of the fundamental question which *forged* the Committees of Correspondence: why did the Soviet workers state, and the communist parties under its sway, degenerate?

In the end, this heterogeneous conference adopted a contradictory "socialist and pluralist" statement of principles. This paradoxical position reflects the conflicting forces within the Committees of Correspondence: while most of its ex-Communist-Party leaders are moving rightward into the camp of social democracy and "peaceful reform" of capitalism, many in the ranks want to

revitalize their revolutionary politics.

Social democrats for Democrats. This debate emerged in plenary discussion about how the Left should intervene in the U.S. elections.

Speaker Manning Marable, a guiding spirit at this conference, advocated an "inside/outside" strategy of voting for Democrats while simultaneously building a labor party movement, as did conference organizers Carl Bloice and Charlene Mitchell and other ex-CP leaders.

But dialog in conference hallways and workshops showed that a strong minority of participants believed the Left should *break* with the Democrats and actually build an independent workingclass party, not just talk about it.

False dichotomy between democracy and vanguard party. Conference speakers refused to talk about what is wrong with the class-collaborationist Stalinist *program*, steering clear of an exploration of the differences between Stalinism on the one hand and Leninism and its continuation, Trotskyism, on the other. Instead, they elevated un-analytical discussion of bad Stalinist *practices* — sectarianism, anti-democracy — to center stage. Leslie Cagan of the Cuba Information Project, for example, blamed Left elitism and bureaucratism on "vanguardism."

Leon Trotsky addressed this debate more than a half-century ago. In *Their Morals and Ours — Marxist vs. Liberal Views of Morality*, he wrote that "to invest the mass with traits of sanctity and to reduce one's program

to amorphous 'democracy,' is to dissolve oneself in the class as it is, to turn from a vanguard into a rearguard, and by this very thing, to renounce revolutionary tasks."

Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) members who defended Lenin's concept of a vanguard party received support, primarily from people of color and unaffiliated activists, showing that this subject is far from closed.

Minnesota CofC members who urged the group to adopt an explicitly Marxist perspective were thwarted from presenting their viewpoint by conference organizers. But the Minnesotans intend to carry this fight forward in upcoming discussion bulletins.

The CofC conference attracted not only leftists searching for solutions to real problems, but also fainthearted and upwardly mobile radicals looking for a road out of revolutionary politics — and high-sounding cover for their defection. An example of the latter was the clique of former FSP leaders from the San Francisco Bay Area who quit the party in 1991. (Please see page six.) Not surprisingly, they used this conference to make their first political statement renouncing the vanguard party and echoing the vague call for more democracy.

But the historic conjuncture of upheaval in the Soviet Union, widening war, and global economic depression has inescapably put the question of revolution on the order of the day. And the dialog among those who attended the conference out of a desire to *take leadership* in providing a workingclass answer to capitalism's crisis will be spurred forward in the coming years by the development of the crisis itself. □

—with reporting by Doug Barnes/Seattle

Editorials

Russia 1917: the revolution that couldn't happen

NOBODY THOUGHT THE WORKERS were ready to take power. Conventional revolutionary wisdom said: Russia is too backward; its proletariat is too small and inexperienced; a prolonged phase of capitalist development is mandatory; and socialist insurrection will occur first in an advanced country.

This assessment prevailed even after February 1917, when, as Trotsky described it, workers and soldiers "overthrew the monarchy without anyone's permission." In April, Lenin managed to return to Russia and drop his bombshell on the Bolshevik party. It is *you* who are not ready, he said; the whole logic of the situation *compels* the workers to take power.

At first, Lenin's comrades thought he was crazy. But the *worker-Bolsheviks* agreed with him, as did Trotsky, whose theory of permanent revolution had foretold the possibility of skipping stages in revolutionary development. Events between February and Soviet victory in October confirmed this view.

In May, Lenin described the workers and peasants as "a hundred times" farther to the left than the Bolsheviks, even though the masses still supported compromise with the bourgeois party. Lenin realized that the people's intransigent demands for peace, bread, and land *could not be met* unless the workers seized state power in their own name.

The party, he said, must catch up to the *objective position* of the masses and "patiently explain" the need for socialist revolution, making *conscious* what was as yet unconscious.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER the revolution, many leftists have bought the current line that the Soviet dream is dead.

But the surface of things often conceals more than it reveals. The revolt in the USSR was against *Stalinism* and the *sellout* of the 1917 revolution's massive gains at home and its unprecedented inspiration to toilers worldwide. The Soviet workers' hunger for democracy cannot be satisfied by restoring capitalism. They are *continuing* the revolution, not rejecting it — even if this is not clear at the moment *even to them*.

Just as Lenin and Trotsky did 75 years ago, radicals today must show how the seeds of October — of workingclass uprising and triumph — are present in the contradictory and confusing years and months that come before. Let's give *our* revolutionary heirs something to celebrate 75 years from *now*. □

Far-right OCA beaten, but Oregon remains a battlefield

IN OREGON, THE GOOD GUYS WON against the forces of evil.

In one skirmish, a front man for the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA), a reactionary group with a broad turn-back-the-clock list, launched a legal attack on numerous organizations and individuals supporting lesbian and gay rights, including Portland Radical Women.

Though the case was ridiculous, victory was not a foregone conclusion. On top of a serious legal defense, civil rights activists organized public protest across the Northwest, culminating in a packed courtroom.

The OCA SLAPP suit (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) was kicked out of court.

LIKEWISE, OCA'S NOTORIOUS ASSAULT on the constitutional rights of sexual minorities through the infamous Measure 9 was decisively repudiated at the ballot box.

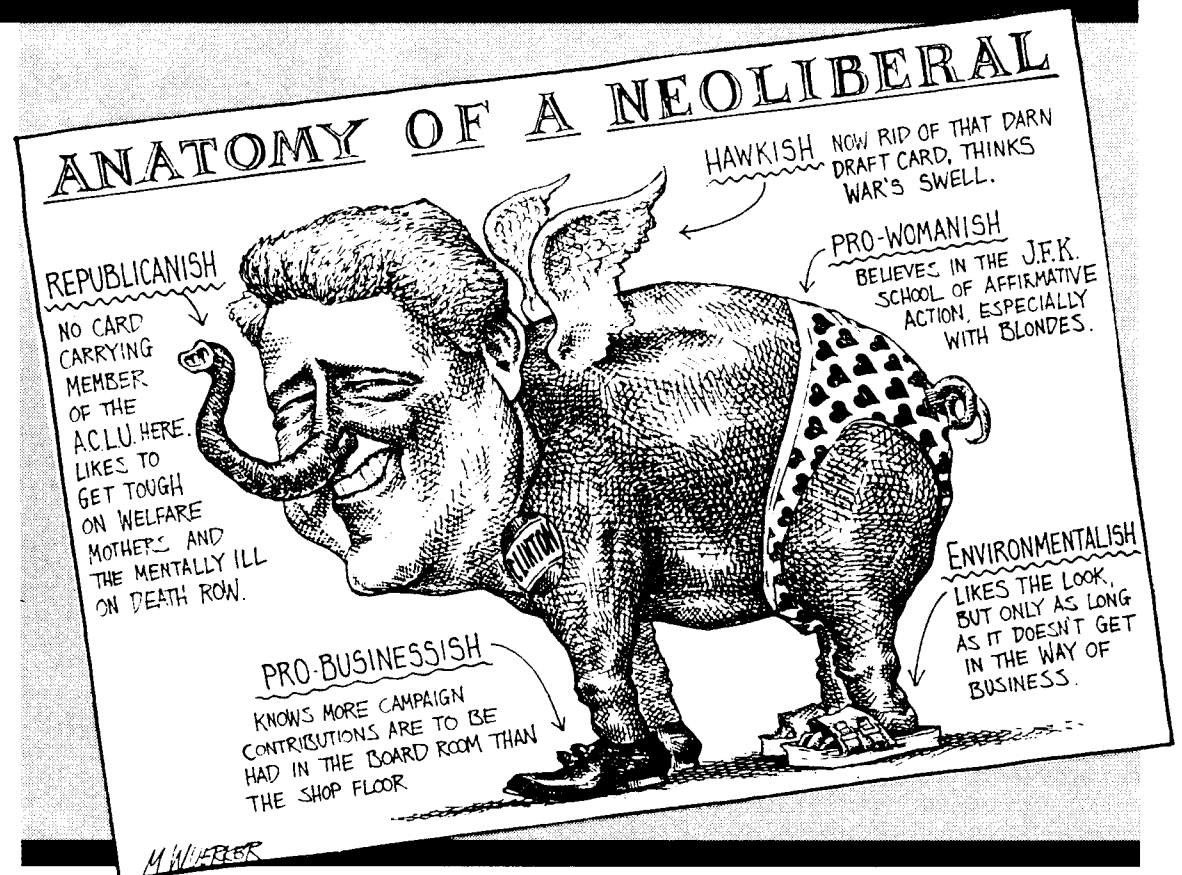
The OCA were not coy about what they wanted to achieve with this initiative: an entire group of people ("abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse") were to be corralled and removed from society. Despite the take-no-prisoners nature of this assault, there were those in the gay movement leadership whose main concern in fighting back was projecting a Donna Reed image of the gay community.

BUT MILITANT GRASSROOTS organizing chipped the OCA's thin veneer of respectability, publicizing their ties to white supremacist groups and connecting their propaganda to the murders of a lesbian and a gay man.

The fascist OCA were defeated because working people understood that the OCA were trying to make *scapegoats* of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgenders, as if a return to homophobic "family values" could fill people's bellies; get them jobs, education, and housing; or solve any of capitalism's other devastating problems.

Measure 9 is defeated, but the OCA have not shut up shop. We cannot do so either. The triumph over the OCA may be short-lived if we don't educate and turn around the 43 percent of voters who *approved* Measure 9.

A section of the established leadership is saying this is the time for "healing" between gays and the OCA, but this is demented and suicidal. The OCA have demonstrated that they will use any means to destroy gays. We must be just as determined, just as combative, and just as bold as they are — and a little bit more. □



On the lam from Leninism

The *Freedom Socialist* received two letters in October from ex-members of the *Freedom Socialist Party* (FSP) and its sister organization, *Radical Women* (RW). Three of these ex-members — Tom Boot, Roanne Hindin, and Constance Scott — were veteran leaders of the San Francisco Bay Area FSP; Hindin and Scott were also leaders of National RW. They left FSP in late 1991, using sudden charges of Stalinism and racism to excuse an exit actually caused by a burning desire to get off the political front lines.

The letters respond to an article last issue by FSP National Secretary Guerry Hoddersen called "FSP Dropout Clique Excuses Self-Exile with Anti-Party Hysteria." Excerpts:

Your tirade veers wildly from the issues: your sectarianism, lack of democracy, and obsession with controlling membership and squelching independent thinking...

Get your heads out of the sand. The organized left all over the world is seriously re-examining bureaucratic methods, cultishness and dogmatism. A revitalized, revolutionary left where multiple tendencies work together democratically will be decisive to making radical change... Hiding behind your increasingly stale, insular, bureaucratic "traditions" with the claim that this constitutes real Trotskyism and Leninism, while you resort to crass Stalinist tactics of lies and harassment to attempt to discredit your critics exposes your political bankruptcy...

FSP's dishonesty and slander — as well as its undemocratic expulsion of three of us from Radical Women — look suspiciously like desperate scrambling to keep your tiny group intact and shielded from the new challenges the socialist movement faces today. **Tom Boot, Roanne Hindin, Constance Scott, & six others**

Your characterization of Tom Boot, one-time leading Black comrade of the Bay Area branch...as a "politically dependent man of color" is not only fallacious, it is blatantly racist. Tom gave 18 years of his life to the FSP... When he ex-

pressed disagreements...he was immediately labeled part of a clique... This...exposes FSP as the bureaucratic, centralism-happy organization that it has sadly become...

Anyone who expresses disagreements...is immediately labeled a saboteur, even a racist, because they dare to disagree with the comrades of color... I spoke up against the characterization of Tom and was immediately pounced on and told that I was being a liberal! **Cathe Cashman**

Editor's response

Up until they left, these letter writers believed that democratic, feminist, and anti-racist practices were the FSP norm.

Did a whole party change overnight? Or were these ex-

Every renegade who wants to justify his or her desertion needs mud to sling.

members dupes, blinded to serious problems all along?

Neither. *They* changed.

Under the pressure of "communism-is-dead" hysteria, Boot, Hindin, and Scott grew tired of living up to the demands of being serious radicals and eager to carve out a comfortable personal niche. Scott came into two inheritances that she was loathe to share with the cause to which she had supposedly committed her life.

So she left the organization, but not before she created a diversionary guerrilla war over the nature of the party, to which she recruited her buddies and a handful of members who said they didn't want to be Bolsheviks.

Every renegade who wants to justify his or her desertion needs mud to sling. The charges of near-totalitarianism inside the party by those who quit are bogus. The FSP never expelled any of them from anything; never restrained them from expressing themselves; never fired, demoted, or disciplined them.

What the FSP *did* do was

stand by our belief that a vanguard party made up of disciplined, self-sacrificing, professional revolutionaries is key to workers' revolutionary power.

However, the Boot-Hindin-Scott trio had developed a predilection for a decentralized, do-your-own-thing party in which they were not accountable to anyone. They had become permanently resistant to criticism and initiative from branch membership, made up mostly of people of color — a racist, narcissistic breach of our position supporting the leadership of the most oppressed.

To cover their escape from revolutionary politics, the FSP dropouts, who are all white except Boot, accused the National Office (N.O.) of being soft in dealing with two internal racist incidences. When the national and local Comrades of Color Caucuses of FSP and RW strongly disagreed "white liberalism"; the N.O. was supposed to be mobilizing support for the comrades of color solely on the basis of skin color.

On the contrary, the N.O. and the non-clique party membership took their stands in this fight based on *issues*, not race. In the incident Cashman cites, she was called a liberal by National Comrades of Color Caucus (NCCC) Coordinator Yolanda Alaniz because she was being one: she refused to criticize Boot, or acknowledge other white comrades' right to do so, because he is Black. But that is not the way FSP works.

The clique tried mightily to recruit all the local members of FSP and RW. They failed, and their departure cleared the way for the Bay Area comrades of color to take the branch helm.

For an in-depth discussion of the history and meaning of this fight, you can order the FSP Secretariat document "Hell-Bent for Comfort: A Me-Generation Tale of Greed and Political Betrayal" and a collection of papers written on behalf of other bodies such as the National CCC and the RW National Executive Committee. Please send \$5.00 to the FSP N.O., Bush Asia Center, 409 Maynard Ave. South, Seattle, WA 98104. □

Voices of Color

American Me: Anti-gang film pulls no punches, but lacks hope

BY GIL VEYNA

Like it or not, *American Me* carries a wallop, hitting hard at its intended audience — barrio and ghetto youth. The film is no violence-glorifying *Godfather*, but a no-holds-barred indictment of hard-core gangs as self-destructive for youths of color individually and as genocidal for La Raza as a whole.

Director Edward James Olmos plays Santana, the main character. Olmos, who won an Oscar nomination for his role in *Stand and Deliver*, feels a passionate responsibility to the Chicano community. He does with *American Me* what the rest of Hollywood refuses to do: de-glamorizes violence. The movie is a form of aversion therapy by which Olmos hopes to repel his audience away from gangs, clicas.

No scene better shows that gangs are relentlessly terminal than the death of a young man

called Little Puppet at the hands of his own brother. After leaving prison, Little Puppet renounces his affiliation with EME, the "Mexican mafia," an all-powerful clica run by Santana. Gang solidarity insists that an example must be made of Little Puppet, and his older brother is blackmailed into killing him. Little Puppet's plans for a future outside of gang life are cut short when his brother slips a rope around his neck and strangles him — all the while demanding in anguish that Little Puppet not look at him.

Meanwhile, Santana has also had a change of heart. Because he refuses to authorize the killing, he is knifed to death by fellow EME members.

Olmos effectively horrifies with one depiction after another of rape, torture, and murder. But if he wants to slam the

door on gang life, he needs to open it to something else. This is where the film falls short.

Mujeres with corazón, but no hope. What humanity this bleak movie does possess lies in the women. They are the child-rearers, homemakers, communicators, nurturers, cohesive community force, confronters of the corrosive elements of machismo, and yearners after a different tomorrow.

A Chicana single mother,

hearted message that education is a possible escape route fails to convince.

La lucha left out. *American Me* is searing and well-intentioned, but also claustrophobic. I wanted it to provide a sense of the movement, of *la lucha*, La Raza, something to counter the doom and gloom. Missing was any concrete acknowledgment of the militancy of people of color in the real fight for equality.

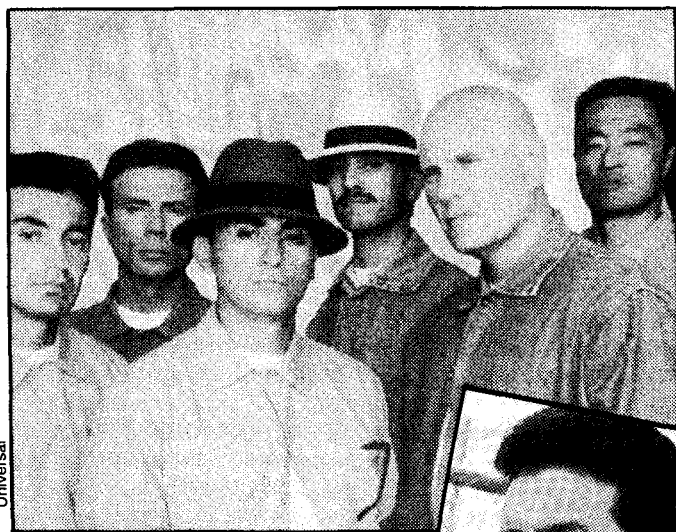
I wish the film had asked

why such deadly clicas exist and who benefits. I believe they are the excrement produced by a sick society. Young men of color are capitalism's "waste." With no jobs and no productive role, they are society's rejects. They in turn reject society, becoming parasites on their communities, where their existence is used as a pretext for a police-state presence.

Our self-worth as people of color is undermined by racism and unemployment, and all poor and working-class youth experience a sense of nihilism about the future. Gangs provide a faulty sense of empowerment which turns frustration and rage inward toward the community and makes cultural pride and male-ness synonymous with sexism, homophobia, brutality, and inter-ethnic feuding.

But we know the enemy! I wanted *American Me* to **point the finger**, to lash out at the institutions and racist cops that try to keep us in check. The only antidote to gangs is vanquishing the system that creates them. ¡*La lucha continúa!* □

Gil Veyna is a bibliophile, film aficionado, and Chicano activist in Seattle, Washington.



Right: Edward James Olmos. Above: His core cast, who spent much of their filming time on location in Folsom Prison.

Julie, becomes involved with Santana while he is between prison terms. In a super-charged scene, Julie accuses Santana of betraying La Raza and *el movimiento* by recruiting his people to a life of dead-end brutality. She refuses to accept his excuses and bluster, but she ends her appeal to him by saying, "It's hopeless."

She survives, and her enrolling in school near the movie's end is meant to be positive. But it just seems tangential to all the horror going on around her, and the struggle it takes to **get** an education — especially as a single mother — is not addressed.

There is an unbalance of too much emphasis on the futility of life for young men of color in the barrio without the sense of a world outside being conveyed, and the film's half-

ther ensure that future generations would learn Marxist methodology, he helped launch the Socialist Workers Party "Trotsky school," where comrades could devote themselves to intensive study. The Freedom Socialist Party won a compliment from Novack when he noted while in Seattle that we were the most serious students of his writings.

Novack, a Jew who joined the Trotskyist movement in its early years, helped defend Trotsky during Stalin's purge trials and was a leader in the SWP's fight against the petty-bourgeois faction led by Max Shachtman. □



Clara Fraser

Revenge of the dykes, choicers, witches, ghettoites and single/working/welfare moms

ANY TIME SOME UNCTUOUS HYPOCRITE pontificates about the absolute morality of the traditional family, reach for your pocketbook, look around for the lurking fascists in government, and cling like mad to your personal integrity.

Male politicians, dutifully echoed by wife-robots, are trying to make you, the *victims* of their horrible anarchy, into the *reason* for economic disaster and social dysfunction. How dare they!

How dare these extollers of a system that starves and exploits and crucifies untold billions blame the underpaid and the destitute for the poverty, miserable education and training, crime, dope, cynicism, domestic turmoil, and rejection of obsolete middle-class values **that the profit system itself generates?**

THE SINISTER SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS flown under the "family values" banner at the Republican convention powered a thinly veiled, proto-Nazi blitzkrieg against the way enormous numbers of people live their lives. Feminists were damned, single moms denounced, working mothers scolded, any and all abortions reviled, lesbians and gays excoriated. The problems of racial minorities were totally ignored — but every reference to welfare abusers and criminals was a coded allusion to persons with dark skin.

Nor did President-Elect Charming and the Democrat brat pack defuse the incendiary call-to-arms against us lifestyle-criminals. They knocked themselves out to parade their own mom and pop orthodoxy. The Clintons schlepped their teenaged daughter to every photo opportunity imaginable, while Gore made his accident-victim son the subject of unbearably schmaltzy oratory.

But all those macho office-holders with carefully coiffured, mostly-blond wives and beautifully garbed children cannot speak for the U.S. majority, who do not live or think like them or own checkbooks like theirs.

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY, since antiquity, when property was communal, relations between men and women democratic, and females revered and central to the matriarchy — not only as the mothers, but as chief providers of food, medicine and political decisions.

When private property landed in male hands — **accidentally**, because men controlled the herds that became the first money commodity — women lost their economic equality. Their work became **private**, no longer public. Men became a ruling **class**, and women — after centuries of resistance — became virtual slaves.

Ever since, the male unconscious has carried within it this memory of original guilt, of their world overthrow of the female sex, of a primal mea culpa, and men deny or justify this historical abomination by asserting male supremacy.

The family has no eternal or holy or cosmic values of its own. Family values reflect and express the conditions of production of a given period. A certain set of economic relations requires a certain kind of kinship structure. And the patriarchal, male-dominated, monogamous family came into being for the purpose of transmitting inheritance of property through the male line.

As with the family, so with the state, which also exists to promote the ruling class. The state ends up **decreeing** a specific type of family to perpetuate the system it guards. The capitalist state needs women to be subordinate; taken to its outer limits, this means Kinder, Kirche, Küche — a la Hitler, the Quayles, short-haired preachers, and, I fear, the muzzled Hillary.

SO ANYBODY WHO THINKS that the Democrats are going to vanquish the New Nazis is suicidally naive. The U.S. today is Weimar Germany after World War I, facing the same choice between fascism and socialism. And the U.S. today will set the pace for the rest of the world — Germany, Japan, France — in deciding what to do about Hitler's heirs. That is why militant activism by anti-fascists is vital.

Feminists, people of color, lesbians and gays, all workers: wake up! Social revolution is the only viable alternative to the concentration camps — and the only answer to vanishing jobs. With a technology geared to produce goods without producing jobs, high-tech capitalism is becoming an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. Socialism is computers plus justice.

The global order of competitive trade and multi-currencies is absurd. It cries out to be replaced with production for use, not for greed, so as to eliminate the endless wars and hatreds spawned by dwindling markets and poverty.

A rational analysis of the mess can provide a rational solution — but **never** while the reason for the worldwide crisis is massively attributed to women, gays, ethnics, and unions. The family values brouhaha is a depraved and insulting attempt to deflect our attention from the basic problems of the world economy onto the usual scapegoat suspects.

Don't let this happen! Give the looters-with-license hell. Tell 'em to take their bourgeois values and shove 'em. And once we have created a revolution in the way we deal with wealth, this proper Jewish mother promises you that family values will take care of themselves. As always. □

George Novack 1905-1992

George Novack, Marxist scholar, educator, and leading light of American Trotskyism, died July 30 in New York City at age 86.

He leaves an enormous legacy, derived from six activist decades as a gifted theoretical and practical promoter of socialism.

A prolific writer, Novack authored innumerable books, pamphlets, and articles on topics ranging from dialectical materialism to a Marxist examination of morality, thereby contributing greatly to the educational literature he felt was essential to arming the Trotskyist movement. To fur-

1492-1992: 500 years of Indian resistance

BY DEBRA O'GARA

The "conquerors" are celebrating "discovery" of a "new world"!

Adding insult to genocide, they are bombarding the Western Hemisphere with commemorations of the 500-year anniversary of Christopher Columbus stumbling on the Americas.

But there is cause for celebration: a history of five centuries of resistance, and a future that will recreate the best of the hemisphere's pre-Columbian past.

Capitalism's roots in racism. Columbus' travels, backed by Spain, were motivated by economics. In *Capital*, Karl Marx observed that capitalism relied on "the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the...conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins" to consolidate itself, brutally, as the economic system replacing feudalism.

After arriving in the Caribbean islands, Columbus carried off many of the inhabitants to use as hands on his subsequent voyages. And as the colonizers settled in, they attempted to use the Indians as forced labor. But the natives' intransigent resistance — if their attempts at revolt or escape were unsuccessful, they would often simply die — necessitated the importing of slaves from Africa.

Simultaneously, the Jews were being expelled from Spain; 300,000 are believed to have emigrated the day before Columbus embarked on his historic voyage. Jews had evolved into a far-flung people-class performing the crucial roles of merchant and lender within the feudal economy. But the rise of capitalism produced violent anti-Semitic persecutions by new gentile merchant classes developing in each country.

Indians, Africans, Jews: whole populations were vanquished, relocated, yoked, and decimated, all in

the name of the almighty gold coin and the compulsive quest to accumulate capital.

Genocide births America. The colonizers took from native cultures only those things helpful in building empires and amassing wealth. They attempted to destroy all else.

The form of U.S. democracy was stolen, uncredited, from the Iroquois Great Law of Peace. But the resulting Constitution left out women's rights — which were fundamental to the Iroquois Confederacy.

Matriarchal, communal, and ecological principles were targeted for annihilation. War, disease, Christianity, and displacement from the land were the agents of extinction.

Capitalists created Indian stereotypes to justify oppression, theft, and broken promises, just as they created Black stereotypes to justify slavery.

The "good Injun" is the noble warrior used to promote movies and sports teams and to romanticize settler/native "conflict" — that is, the extermination of Indians by the white ruling class.

The "bad Injun" is the lazy, drunken, "welfare squaw" — a deceitful portrait drawn to blame the victims, robbed of the means to be self-sufficient, for their own subjugation!

The red race lives! This slander and slaughter has been matched through the centuries by indigenous self-assertion from the Canadian arctic to Cape Horn.

In the United States, Indians continually square off against the world's mightiest ruling class, often winning victories in battles over fishing rights, land claims, and autonomy. With fortitude and determination as their weapons, the women of Big Mountain organize against relocation; activists campaign for the release of framed American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier; and red brothers and sisters struggle to preserve our languages, cultures, and religions and to end poverty, deplorable health care, and educational dep-



Indigenous fighters against genocide. Directly above: Katherine Smith, opponent of forced Diné relocation. Above right: portrayal of Aztec warrior.

rivation.

In the forefront are native women, whose strength and perseverance have kept our nations fighting, against all odds.

The battle lines are drawn: indigenous peoples versus the multinational corporations who mercilessly steal, rape, and exploit. Because of the clear-cut contradiction between Indian needs and capitalist greed, native peoples are an integral part of revolutionary movements in countries such as Guatemala, Bolivia, and Peru.

Resistance by the First Nations keeps alive the realization that capitalism is not the only form of society possible.

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Torres Strait Islanders marching in Darwin.

BY PETER MURRAY

In the current maze of anti-union writs and judicial attacks on the rights of ordinary people, it's not often that one has the occasion to not only agree with, but even welcome, the decision of one of capitalism's courts.

However, on the third of June this year, the Meriam people from the Torres Strait Islands won a ruling from the Australian High Court that lighted a beacon for the indigenous people of the entire continent.

In what is known as the Mabo case, the court toppled the legal fiction known as *terra nullius*, a central pillar of the racist oppression of the original custodians of this "great southern land." By a margin of six to one, the court ruled that the English Crown's claim to Australia and its territories on the basis that there was "no-one here" was a convenient fabrication

to justify the abhorrent dispossession of Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

The case, in which Eddie Mabo and others of the Meriam people claimed and were granted title over Murray Island, took ten years and survived enormous legal attacks. Sadly, Eddie Mabo died early this year, missing his vindication. But his victory has damaged Australian imperialism and gained a precedent which, within the limit of bourgeois law, gives indigenous people a powerful weapon in their struggle for justice.

Demolishing racist legal doctrine. The Torres Strait Islands lie in a narrow stretch of water between Papua New Guinea and the extreme north of Australia. The peoples who live there have only loose ties to the peoples of the Australian continent. Nevertheless, the Crown annexed the islands to its Australian colonies in 1879.

England dominated Australia in particularly brutal fashion after its 1788 invasion. Flooded with urban poor, and smarting from its recent loss of territories in

North America, the Crown desperately needed Australia's vast spaces and rich resources. To support its land grab, it introduced the pretense that the Black, Aboriginal peoples were not human — the same racist ideology that was used in the Americas to excuse both expropriation of the native peoples and Black slavery.

So came the genocidal policies which continue today.

In part of its judgement, the court characterised the European invasion as a "conflagration of oppression and conflict which...spread across the continent to degrade and devastate the Aboriginal peoples and leave a national legacy of unutterable shame." Strong words indeed — and every one true.

But in many places, the people who "weren't here" defended their country through guerrilla warfare. Should the court ever be asked to adjudicate the issue of whether there was a military conquest, the question of a treaty covering land rights and reparations would inevitably arise. The court ruled that it had no

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Dateline Australia

Torres Strait Islanders win far-reaching land rights victory

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