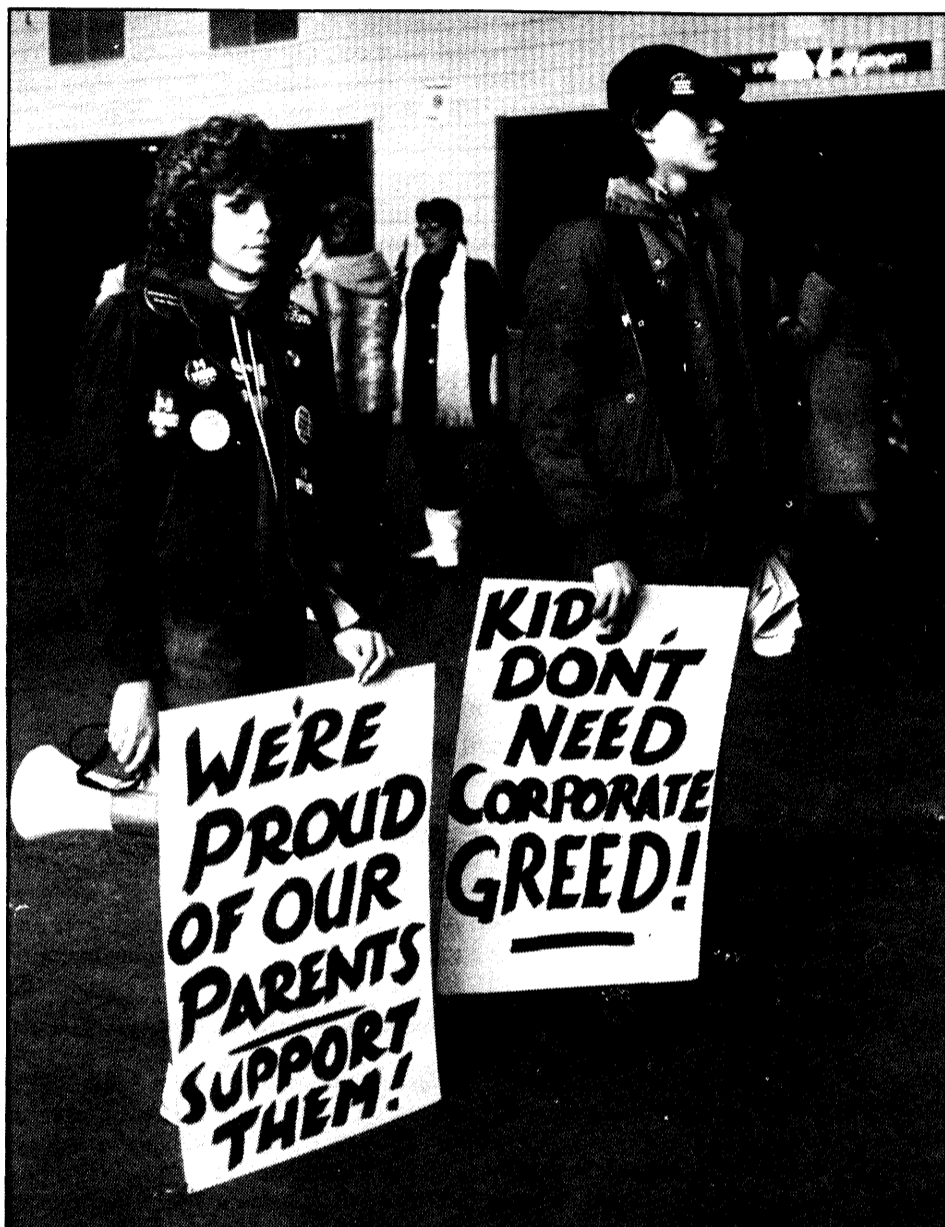


A Socialist ACTION

March 1986
50 cents
Vol. 4, No.3

Labor must support Hormel strikers!



Socialist Action/Lynn Henderson

Children of P-9 strikers at the Feb. 24 Minnesota AFL-CIO Legislative Conference in Twin Cities. Austin high-school students and P-9 strikers protested strikebreaking Gov. Rudy Perpich's address to labor gathering.

The strike of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union against the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. in Austin, Minn., is in its seventh month. Against all odds, the striking packinghouse workers have stood firm.

This issue of *Socialist Action* features a special section on the P-9 strike with a response to the slanders of the company, the media, and the UFCW international [see pp. 7-10].

Local P-9 *can* win this strike. In order to win, two things are needed: One, the solidarity of labor unions and workers must be fully mobilized. And two, production at the Austin plant must be stopped.

The Hormel bosses know that the success of the strike depends on whether or not the Austin plant is permitted to operate. That is why, as soon as they decided to re-open the plant with scab labor, they got a strict injunction against union picketing.

This injunction is an illegal, immoral, and unjust infringement on the rights of P-9 members.

The injunction abrogates P-9 members' constitutional right to picket to protect their jobs; the kind of mass picketing that forced the Hormel company to recognize unionism in the first place back in 1933.

In many cities solidarity rallies are being organized. In addition to the events listed on page 8, a rally with P-9 President Jim Guyette will take place in San Francisco on March 12, sponsored by Painters Local 4 and endorsed by UFCW Local 1100 and others. It will be held at the SEIU hall, 240 Golden Gate Ave., at 8 p.m.

The entire labor movement has a vital interest in helping P-9 workers win this strike. A P-9 victory would start to reverse the concessions tide—The Editors.



Socialist Action/Joey Ryan

All out for abortion rights!

Before safe birth control devices were available, women were—and still are in many parts of the world—virtual slaves to their reproductive systems.

Families with 10 children or more were common. Women who gave birth year after year died young. Others sought illegal abortions. Thousands lost their lives from unsanitary, botched abortions.

Those who would outlaw abortion seek to send women back to such conditions. After outlawing abortion they would outlaw birth control.

Birth control and safe legal abortion give women greater freedom and control over their lives.

National Organization for Women President Ellie Smeal told the national news media how seriously the women's movement takes the abortion issue:

"I believe that every woman and every man who cares about a quality of life worth fighting for had better stand up, while they can still stand up, and join with us in a fight to keep abortion and birth control safe and legal. That's why I am calling a mass mobilization in the spring of 1986 for abortion and birth control. I hope hundreds of thousands of people come here to Washington, but that will be only the first of many marches and many acts."

Socialist Action applauds NOW and urges all our readers to join the Marches for Women's Lives on March 9 and 16 in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles.

These actions represent the first requirement of an effective women's rights strategy—mass action. A second requirement is independence. With Congressional elections in the fall, there is enormous pressure to channel women's anger, energy, and their organizations into the electoral campaigns of those who give lip-service to women's rights issues.

Backing capitalist candidates, especially the Democratic Party "feminists," proved fatal to the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment in 1982. A burgeoning mass movement was turned into an auxiliary to the Democratic Party. The biggest challenge to the women's movement today is to avoid making that same mistake.

Keep abortion safe and legal! Abortion is a woman's right to choose!

Mass movement topples Marcos; Fight for democracy unfinished

By ROBERT CAPISTRANO

With his army slipping from control in the wake of a mutiny by Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos, Ferdinand Marcos was forced to relinquish his 20-year hold on the presidency and slink away to exile.

The end of the dictatorship came after the spontaneous mobilization of hundreds of thousands of Filipino people to defend the mutineers from an assault force of Marcos troops. This popular outburst reflected the country's pent-up rage at the overt fraud and coercion with which Marcos had stolen the Feb. 7 presidential elections from challenger Corazon Aquino.

Marcos' fall culminated a hectic series of events which, only two weeks before, saw the elite opposition in disarray and Ronald Reagan apparently accepting Marcos' reelection.

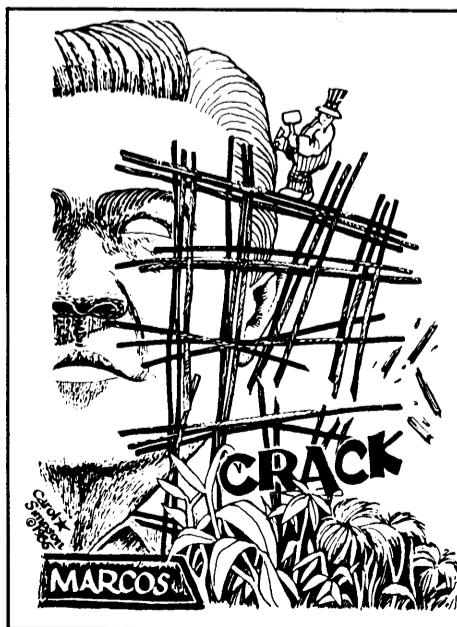
Appearances, however, were deceiving. Internal rot and the rumblings of the mass movement had already undermined the main pillars supporting the dictatorship.

But though the Filipino people have won a great victory, much remains to be done to win national and social liberation.

The makeup of the new government manifests its capitalist character. The key posts of prime minister and foreign minister are held by Aquino's running mate, Salvador Laurel, leader of the most pro-U.S. and conservative wing of the anti-Marcos opposition. The defense ministry and the Central Bank are headed by the same people as under Marcos.

As an analyst for Wells Fargo Bank pointed out, "The government [of Cory Aquino] is still made up of the traditional leading families. You don't see a transfer

(continued on page 11)



FORUM section: The fight for women's rights today, See pp. 4-5



U.S. hands off the Nicaraguan revolution!

By ALAN BENJAMIN

"Reagan persists stubbornly in his war policy." This is how Nicaragua's Acting Foreign Minister Hugo Tinoco characterized the Reagan administration's concerted effort to secure \$100 million in additional military and economic funding to the contras.

The contra funding, scheduled to go into effect March 31 if approved by Congress, is designed to press the Sandinista government into negotiations with the contras. If that fails, the money would be increased to the point of financing the direct overthrow of the Sandinistas, whom Secretary of State George P. Shultz on Feb. 27 called a "a cancer right here in our land mass."

In a highly publicized visit to Grenada on Feb. 20, President Reagan hinted that a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua could not be excluded. "I will never be sorry for ordering an invasion [of Grenada in October 1983]," Reagan said. "Today, in Nicaragua," he continued, "we

see a chain of events similar to what happened here."

And at the same time the Reagan administration is asking for money for the contras, it has cut even more funding from greatly needed social programs. The 1987 fiscal budget calls for massive cuts in student loans, food stamps, child nutrition programs, and aid to families with dependent children. "For every contra we supply with a gun," Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) told the press, "countless elderly Americans will go without meals."

But Tinoco and the leadership of the Nicaraguan FSLN have repeatedly stated they will not bow to the pressures of the imperialist colossus to the North and will not accept to sit down and negotiate with the contras. To do so, they affirm, would be to open the door to counterrevolution in Nicaragua.

Even the so-called friends of the Nicaraguan revolution in the Contadora Group of Latin American nations caved into the pressures of the U.S. government, changing their "peace proposal" to include the demand that the Sandinistas put down their arms and agree to negotiate

the future of Nicaragua with the contras. The FSLN leadership rejected these conditions.

Mass protests needed

The threats to Nicaragua have never been greater. Never has the need for a nationally coordinated response to the bipartisan U.S. war drive in Central America been more urgent. The Nicaraguan people need to know that the majority of the American people are opposed to this dirty war.

Last April 20, over 125,000 demonstrated in seven major cities in support of four demands: No U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; End U.S. support to South African Apartheid; Freeze and Reverse the Arms Race; Jobs and Justice, not War. This showed it is possible to mount powerful nationally coordinated actions against the warmakers.

Unfortunately, however, no action on this scale has been called for this spring. Yet several important protest actions are being planned.

On April 19, a demonstration against the U.S. war at home and abroad is being held in San Francisco. Called by the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice, which last year organized a march and rally of 50,000, this demonstration continues to attract broad support. Five AFL-CIO central labor councils have endorsed the action, along with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sen. Alan Cranston, Congresspersons Ron Dellums and Sala Burton, and other major community and religious figures.

Over 50,000 leaflets and thousands of posters, buttons, and T-shirts have been distributed through a network of local organizing committees functioning in several San Francisco Bay Area counties.

Anti-intervention and anti-apartheid actions will take place in several cities during March and April. Central America Week activities will be organized during March 15-24, with anti-apartheid actions occurring from March 21 to April 6.

In New York City, on March 21, the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa [see page 3], a march and rally will take place at the Federal Building against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean and against U.S. support to the apartheid regime. A main demand of the demonstration, which is being organized by a broad coalition of peace and solidarity forces, is "No U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan and Angolan contras."

These activities can be large and powerful—particularly if they relate to the growing outrage of the American people against the budget cuts and the contra aid vote. Both these issues reveal the connections between the imperialist foreign policy and the capitalist war on the home front. By stressing these connections, the anti-intervention and anti-apartheid movements can strengthen their appeal to the the overwhelming majority of Americans.

Socialist Action in action for students, P-9 strikers

Socialist Action, the organization, entered its third year with big plans and much activity.

Here are some of the activities we've been involved in:

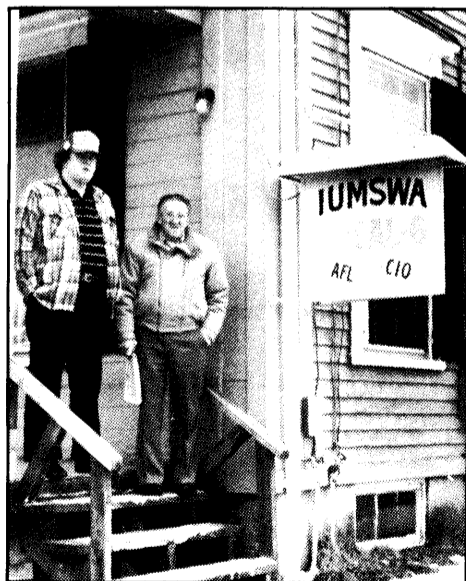
• SANTA CRUZ, Calif.—On Feb. 14, Students for Socialist Action at the University of California held a "Tribute to Malcolm X" in honor of Black History Month with a presentation by Kwame M.A. Somburu.

Forty-five students attended the forum, including 15 members of one class on a "political field trip," reports Adam Wood. One student asked to join Students for Socialist Action.

• CINCINNATI—Students at three area campuses are involved in Students for Socialist Action. "The fight against apartheid is at the forefront of coalition building," reports Carol Lippman, a student at University of Cincinnati.

Mark Allen, a student at Xavier, a private Catholic college, told *Socialist Action* that "even business majors are moved by events in South Africa and Latin America."

Students for Socialist Action chapters are



S.A. members Jake Cooper and Art LeClair in Bath, Maine

being organized at both these campuses. At U.C. the socialists have weekly literature tables and are planning forums, films, and study groups of "Marxist classics."

• BOSTON—Socialist Action members were active supporters of the recent hotel and restaurant workers' mobilizations and are now busy gathering support for the Hormel strike through the Greater Boston Hormel/Local P-9 Support Committee.

Over 40 people, including several autoworkers, attended a Socialist Action forum Feb. 9 titled "Labor's Fight Against Concessions: Then & Now." Jake Cooper, a veteran of the 1934 Teamster strike and a

leader of the Twin Cities Support Committee for the Hormel strike was the speaker.

• BATH, Maine—Readers of *Socialist Action* helped their union local, Shipbuilders (IUMSWA) Local 6, build a large public meeting Feb. 10 on labor history. Speakers were Darrell Becker president of Shipbuilders Local 61 in Pittsburgh, Pa., and Jake Cooper.

Socialist Action branches and members have built and spoken at several public forums. These include forums on the crisis in the Philippines in both Los Angeles and San Francisco; a forum with Jake Cooper in Chicago and a talk by Cooper sponsored by the Students for Socialist Action at U. of Illinois/Chicago; a Discussion Group forum on women's rights in Grand Rapids, Mich.; and a forum on "The Politics of Bilingual Education" by parents and teachers in the Oakland, Calif., schools.

Socialist Action study groups are also underway in New York, Boston, and Chicago.

And the national office of Socialist Action has been keeping busy too. This issue of the paper contains the second special supplement on the Hormel strike.

A separate run of 3000 copies of the first supplement was printed, and 2000 were distributed in Austin and the Twin Cities. Some P-9 strikers have already sent in for subscriptions.

We've printed an additional 4000 copies of the second supplement. The center-spread article by Lynn Henderson, which answers the UFCW international leadership's charges against P-9 in detail, is proving especially valuable for building labor solidarity for P-9. The recent issue of *The Unionist*, P-9's newspaper, reprinted Henderson's article.

Our new pamphlets, one on South Africa and one on the antiwar movement, are also out. You can order individual or multiple copies at a discount.

We have also launched a spring subscription drive. Until June 15, you can receive six months of *Socialist Action* for only \$2. A one-year subscription is only \$5. If you don't have a subscription, make sure to send in for one now!

Socialist ACTION

Closing date: Feb. 28, 1986

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Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$6 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Rates: 12 issues for \$6.00; Canada and Mexico \$12.50; \$30.00 airmail for all other countries; \$14.00 surface mail for all other countries.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialist Action*. These are expressed in editorials.

Death toll mounts in South Africa

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

March 21 marks the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. On that day in 1960, South African police opened fire on a peaceful demonstration of thousands of Black people protesting against the pass laws. At least 69 people were killed, and hundreds were wounded.

On the 25th anniversary of Sharpeville, last year, police trained their automatic weapons on a group of funeral marchers in Langa township, in the Eastern Cape. At least 43 people died in the massacre that followed.

Since that time, violence in South Africa has almost disappeared from the news headlines. But there is no let-up in police repression. About 25,000 people were arrested last year on charges related to political unrest, according to the Parents Support Committee, a civil rights group. Close to 1200 have been killed in the last 18 months and as many as 200 since the beginning of 1986.

Last month was one of the bloodiest on record. Protests spread throughout the country to Black communities that had been untouched by previous demonstrations against the apartheid laws. The police responded with force, using armored cars and helicopters. Not even little children escaped their savagery.

The unrest centered on Alexandra, a Black township abutting Johannesburg's affluent white northern suburbs. Riot police attacked residents on Feb. 15 after a mass funeral for two members of the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO). Young people battled the police from barricades constructed of burning cars and delivery trucks.

After three days, as fighting continued, army troops threw a cordon around the township. Anti-apartheid organizations in Alexandra have claimed that the death toll may reach 100, with hundreds more



wounded. In an unprecedented move, on Feb. 23, the government confiscated the medical records of the wounded in hospitals.

Government officials refused Black demands to withdraw the police from Alexandra and release the hundreds of people who had been hauled from their homes in the middle of the night. On Feb. 21, a meeting of 40,000 angry residents jeered Bishop Desmond Tutu after he reported to them that he was unable to obtain concessions from government authorities.

Instead, the government is confronting the Black townships with plans to virtually double the size of the police force. "We are absolutely determined to destroy the forces of violence and anarchy," proclaimed Law and Order Minister Louis LeGrange. "The government will not hesitate to tackle any situation with even greater forces than have been used in the past."

LeGrange's saber-rattling gives the lie to claims by President P.W. Botha that apartheid is being "dismantled." In his Jan.

31 speech to the opening session of parliament, Botha had said that the government would replace some of the restrictions against Blacks by measures that are less "costly to enforce."

Botha proposed a council open to various Black leaders as well as government representatives that would "advise on matters of common concern." To Botha's dismay, however, even the normally compliant KwaZulu "Chief Minister" Gatsha Buthelezi refused to go along with the scheme—which would perpetuate rule by the white minority.

But while losing friends at home, the apartheid regime found a helping hand once again on the international scene. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker has been dickering with South African officials over the fate of Namibia, a South African colony. The United States agrees with South Africa that its withdrawal from Namibia must be linked to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

In the meantime, Washington will join Pretoria in sending aid to Jonas Savimbi's

terrorist UNITA troops in Angola. The Reagan administration has authorized \$15 million from CIA funding to provide Savimbi's forces with arms—including anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles.

Anti-apartheid and antiwar activists in the United States must redouble our efforts.

In New York City, on March 21, the American Committee on Africa is joining other peace and solidarity organizations to commemorate the Sharpeville massacre and to demand an end to U.S. support to the South African regime. This is the beginning of the National South Africa Weeks.

The activities of the Northeast Ohio Anti-Apartheid Committee, detailed in an article below, are a model of how to involve the broad forces of American society—particularly the trade unions—in a mass movement against the U.S. role in South Africa.

These demonstrations will be followed by the April 19 mobilization in San Francisco, which lists "End U.S. support to South African apartheid" among its demands. ■

Union support builds for Shell Oil boycott

By ANTONIO DELEON and KATE CURRY

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The United Food and Commercial Workers hosted a labor speakout against apartheid here on Feb. 2. Nomonde Ngubo, an exiled South African trade unionist, informed the crowd of 150 of conditions facing Black workers in her country. Nomonde Ngubo helped found the South African National Union of Mineworkers and is now on staff for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), heading up their campaign for a free South Africa.

Louisville Central Labor Council Vice President Ron Harch chaired the meeting, which brought the area's Black and labor movements together for the first time in a long time. The city of Louisville welcomed Ms. Ngubo with honorary citizenship. In accepting, she noted that these were the first citizenship papers she had ever received, because South African citizenship is denied to Blacks.

Ngubo called on those who oppose the apartheid system to boycott Shell Oil, the world's second-largest petroleum corporation. Shell has extensive interests in coal mines and steel plants in South Africa. In addition, Shell supplies oil and other energy needs to the South African government.

The international boycott of Shell coincides with the UMW fight against the Shell-owned A. T. Massey Coal Co.

The February issue of the *UMW Journal*

states: "Profits made in South Africa can finance corporate attacks on UMW miners. One reason that a company like Royal Dutch/Shell, co-owner of A. T. Massey Coal Co., can afford to put UMW members on strike and out of work for a year and a half is the high profits it makes from its oil, coal and chemical operations in South Africa."

In 1984 only two Massey operations

signed the national Bituminous Coal Wage Agreement. On Dec. 19, 1985, after 16 months of "selective strike," Massey admitted that its operations in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky constitute one "common employer." As such, Massey is legally bound to honor the national contract at all its mines.

UMW President Richard Trumka ended the strike. It is unlikely, however, that Massey will honor the contract without a court order. Miners have been ordered back to work to await news from the union's lawyers.

Trumka and United Auto Workers President Owen Bieber will co-chair the National Labor Committee on South Africa and coordinate the boycott. The boycott

was first called by the South African National Union of Mineworkers and the AFL-CIO. Other labor support has come from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; National Education Association; and the Bricklayers union.

Also boycotting Shell are the National Organization for Women; the World Council of Churches; Trans-Africa; and the Free South Africa Movement, of which Ms. Ngubo is a leader.

The Louisville audience honored Ms. Ngubo with a standing ovation when she ended her speech by quoting Martin Luther King: "An idea whose time has come cannot be stopped, it is time for freedom in South Africa and the time is now!" ■

Cleve. to hold April 5 anti-apartheid protest

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

CLEVELAND—Following last year's successful October 11 anti-apartheid rally here, members of labor, Black, women's, religious, and community organizations met to form the Northeast Ohio Anti-Apartheid Committee (NOAC).

NOAC's coordinating committee includes representatives from the United Auto Workers (UAW); American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Newspaper Guild; Painters; Postal Workers; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Urban League; Coalition of Black Trade Unionists

(CBTU); A. Philip Randolph Institute; Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW); and National Organization for Women (NOW).

On Saturday, April 5, NOAC is sponsoring a demonstration demanding that all U.S. ties to apartheid be broken. Protestors will assemble at noon on the campus of Cleveland State University, march down Euclid Avenue—the main shopping and business district—and conclude with a downtown rally at Public Square.

Featured speakers will be Bill Lucy, president of the CBTU and international secretary-treasurer of AFSCME; John Sweeney, president of SEIU; and Shuping

Coapoge, member of the African National Congress United Nations mission.

Working closely with NOAC, the Labor Committee Against Apartheid has arranged for Jay Naidoo, secretary general of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the newly formed union of half-a-million South African workers, to come to Cleveland March 12 to 19. His tour will conclude with a talk before the March meeting of the Cleveland Federation of Labor.

At its February meeting, the Cleveland Federation of Labor voted to endorse the April 5 demonstration and the Shell boycott. NOAC, working with the local Shell Boycott Committee, added "Boycott Shell" as one of the demands of the April 5 demonstration.

Numerous local schools, churches, and community organizations have arranged for a NOAC speaker. Youth United to Oppose Apartheid, a group of high school students, is distributing 10,000 newspapers urging young people to participate in the April 5 demonstration. ■



This month's FORUM is devoted to a discussion on differing strategies for the women's rights movement today.

Our goal in the FORUM section is to promote a wide-ranging discussion on those subjects of interest to activists in the labor, antiwar, Black, women's, and other social movements.

Michelle Koopmans: 'We must stand up and be counted'

The following are excerpts from a presentation by Michelle Koopmans to the Feb. 15, 1986, Grand Rapids, Mich., Discussion Group on "Women: Which Way in the '80s?" Koopmans is the president of the Grand Rapids chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the chairperson of NOW's Michigan state task force on reproductive rights.

NOW's statement of purpose in 1966 was written as follows: "The purpose of the National Organization for Women is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men."

In 1986 this statement of purpose reads exactly the same. It hasn't changed a bit.

Today NOW is working toward a time where indeed we will have equal part-

nership. When I say equal partnership, I don't mean one on one or pairing off. I mean partnership in society as a whole, where we have equal access and equal opportunities.

To be a little more specific, our NOW chapter is still working on issues like the Equal Rights Amendment. Some people say the ERA is dead and gone. It's not. Women in the United States still do not have equal citizenship under the constitution. We are still not equal legal persons.

Until we have equal citizenship, any other rights that we gain will continue to be eroded, and we'll go back and forth and play the games with comparable worth, equal opportunity, and abortion rights from now until doomsday.

NOW is bringing this issue back out into the forefront. We're going to do just what they did with the vote: We're going to take it back to the states and start over.

The issue I work most closely on—the one we're in the most danger of losing—is reproductive rights. When I talk about reproductive rights I don't just mean abortion. I mean the right to choose things like birth control.

The far right would like to take even this basic right away from us. But without the right to decide if and when we are going to become parents, access to education and employment are meaningless. We can't go forth and plan education, employment, family lives and individual lives without the right to control our reproductive lives.

I don't think people realize how much our reproductive rights are being threatened. The Supreme Court right now has agreed to hear two cases. They are similar to cases they've already heard concerning abortion and states' rights. So it is very possible the Court will go ahead and limit our rights. It could say we have to have spousal consent or parental consent for an abortion, or that we have to have 24 hours of counseling before we have a procedure. No medical procedure in the country has that requirement.

So reproductive rights is one issue we can come out and fight for right now by contacting our representatives. We have to go through the legal systems. We have to go out to march, too, to let those legal systems know we exist. But we have to go through our legislature and legal systems—at least to begin with—and we need to let those people know that we're out there. The best thing we can do for reproductive rights is stand up and be counted. ■

(continued on page 5)

The following interview with Judy Rebick was submitted to Socialist Action by Anne Brunelle of the Alliance for Socialist Action in Toronto. Rebick is a leader of Toronto's pro-choice movement, a spokesperson for the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, and a member of the Ontario New Democratic Party, Canada's labor party.

Judy Rebick: 'Labor party must fight for women's rights'

Anne Brunelle: What is the status of the law on abortion in Canada?

Judy Rebick: Abortion in Canada is illegal except under certain circumstances, and that is that abortions must be performed in an approved or accredited hospital and approved by a therapeutic abortion committee made up of three doctors who determine whether a woman's life or health is in danger.

But only 30 percent of hospitals have therapeutic abortion committees. And those that have these committees usually have quotas. So access to abortion is extremely limited—especially in rural areas. And even in the big cities, because of the bureaucratic character of the therapeutic abortion committees, there's an average of a six-week delay between the time a woman finds out she's pregnant and the time she actually gets the procedure.

Brunelle: Are clinics legal in Canada?

Rebick: Clinics are illegal in Canada. But in Quebec, due to the struggle of the women's movement there and of Dr. Morgenthaler, who opened a clinic in Quebec in the early '70s, there are clinics. Morgenthaler opened the clinic because the hospitals in Quebec were primarily Catholic hospitals and were refusing to set up therapeutic abortion committees under the 1969 law. So he set up a clinic there illegally and did thousands of abortions before he was finally arrested.

Then Morgenthaler waged a 10-year struggle through the courts, where he was acquitted by three juries. Finally the Quebec government, the Parti Quebecois government, which was a nationalist government, decided not to prosecute any doctor who performed abortions in safe medical conditions. As a result, today there are more than 15 government clinics in Quebec providing abortions even though it's technically illegal to do so.

There's also now, due to a struggle that's been taking place in Ontario over the last

three years, a clinic in Toronto. A group of women's health workers in Toronto decided to ask Dr. Morgenthaler to open a clinic here because access to abortion was deteriorating.

Again Dr. Morgenthaler was arrested and acquitted of charges of performing an illegal abortion. That case is now going to the Supreme Court of Canada. In the meantime, the government has decided not to prosecute further. So the clinic remains open. It's been open for more than a year.

Brunelle: Why that particular kind of challenge?

Rebick: The women's movement never found the '69 law acceptable even though it did tremendously open up access to legal abortions. But what started happening a number of years ago was that, because of hospital cutbacks and the pressure of the anti-choice groups, access to abortion was deteriorating.

These women's health organizations had been lobbying the government for some sort of clinic system for many years and hadn't gotten anywhere. They decided the only way to bring the public's attention to the deteriorating access to abortion—and to get clinics—was to actually challenge the law the way Morgenthaler did in Quebec 10 years before.

Brunelle: Have you been able to mobilize around the clinic?

Rebick: Oh yes. There has been a tremendous and sustained mobilization around the clinic in Toronto. I think it has been the most significant mobilization of the women's movement in the history of English Canada.

When the clinic opened in July of 1983 it was immediately raided. The doctors were arrested. Equipment was seized, and there were large demonstrations of around 5000 people protesting this.

Then there was a bit of lull and then finally the case went to trial. The doctors

were acquitted and the clinic opened again in December of 1984. And again the clinic was raided. This time though, they didn't do a heavy police raid like they did the first time—which really outraged people—because there were patients in the clinic. This time they quietly arrested the doctor.

Nevertheless there was a response. But finally the biggest mobilization came in February 1985 because the Catholic Church tried to pull out all its troops and openly, from its pulpits, organize a demonstration against the clinic.

We called a counter demonstration and had 10,000 people in the streets supporting the clinic. And that was the turning point in the struggle. It was after that that the government decided it couldn't close down the clinic and therefore had to basically wait for the thing to go through the courts.

Brunelle: Has the trade-union movement been active in this movement?

Rebick: Yes. We've had tremendous support from the trade-union movement

National MARCH for Women's Lives

March 9: Washington, DC

Assemble: Mall at 10 a.m.
March to Lincoln Memorial
Rally: Lincoln Memorial,
12 noon.

March 16: Los Angeles

Assemble: Century Park
at 10 a.m.
Rally: 12 noon, Cheviot
Hills/Rancho Park.



'We need independent mov't in the streets'

The following are excerpts from the presentation by Tina Beacock to the Feb. 15, 1986, Discussion Group on "Women: Which Way in the '80s" held in Grand Rapids, Mich. Beacock is a member of Socialist Action in Chicago.

One has only to remember the old images of women to realize what changes in consciousness the women's movement has achieved since the late '60s, both here and internationally. It put to rest the myth of women's inferiority.

The women's movement raised a myriad of demands, from legal and economic equality, to the right to abortion and reproductive rights, child care and control over our sexuality—including lesbian and gay rights.

Further, while it included many different interpretations, the women's movement made a far-reaching critique of women's oppression, the roots of that oppression, and the institutions which preserved it—establishing the social and non-biological basis for that oppression.

But the status of women today is not good. Women's basic condition remains unchanged, and every legal and economic right which was gained is under attack. Although more women than ever work for wages, we still earn 59 cents on the dollar. Of thousands of occupations, women predominate in 20—the lowest paying ones. And women have been thrown back out of jobs where layoffs have hit. Affirmative action is eroded daily.

Statistics establish the feminization of poverty. Women are hit hard by the continuously shrinking federal budget. One of the more chilling statistics shows the connection between the cuts in the WIC [Women, Infant, Children] program and the largest rise in 18 years of the national infant mortality rate. This is occurring while Congress debates whether there's a \$100 million for the contras in Nicaragua.

One of the most dramatic assaults on women's rights is against abortion rights. This issue is fundamental for women to be able to control their own lives. Reagan, who is all for 'life' as long as its not women's lives or the lives of Salvadoran peasants, annually addresses the semi-official rally against the Supreme Court decision of 1973 that legalized abortion.

There have been cuts in Medicaid funding for abortion and health insurance coverage. In addition there have been 50 bombing or arson incidents against clinics which perform abortions in the last two years.

And the last time I checked the TV, the most serious fight for women's rights, I

was told, was the fight to be bosses—the struggle of women executives!

What happened? Is it really true, as Betty Friedan said, that we asked for too much? That we weren't concerned enough about the family?

Paying the cost of the crisis

Not at all. Women, along with all working people, and oppressed nationalities in particular, are being made to pay the costs of capitalism's crisis. From the members of Local P-9 in Austin, Minn., to the working women being told that they're depriving their children by not being home, we are being asked to pay the cost of the crisis of the corporations and their system.

No matter how many times we fight for and get our rights, this system cannot guarantee women's rights because it is based on inequality. It depends in so many ways on the oppression of women.

Not just direct profits—the 59 cents—made from wage discrimination, but through maintaining women as the ones primarily responsible for all the social tasks—domestic work, childrearing within

the family as "private" work.

Sexism, like racism, also performs another function in dividing up the working class: Capital seeks workers' compliance in their own exploitation, seeking to buy men's collaboration with the small coin of their domination over "their" women. The only real winners in such a system, of course, are the tiny minority of rulers.

The only lasting break with this cycle is the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of socialism. This entails the reorganization of society from bottom to top to produce for human needs, not for profits. It means the socialization of the means of production and with that the socialization of all those tasks now consigned to individual women. In this manner, society as a whole takes on the collective responsibility for childrearing, housekeeping, cooking, and cleaning. This would lay the basis for eliminating the oppression of women.

The Russian Revolution started on this course by providing legal equality for women, eliminating the status of 'illegitimate' children, and liberalizing divorce. It provided the right to abortion, to a job, and to education. It was only with the degeneration of the revolution, and the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, that the travesties

arose—like the recriminalization of abortion and medals for motherhood. This happened the very year Stalin announced the arrival of the "era of socialism."

So is there nothing to do but wait for the glorious era of socialism, when women's oppression will be automatically abolished? Not at all. The defense of women's rights today demands the continued organization of women, independently, to fight for our own interests, to organize and develop our confidence in our own forces. And it demands that we seek allies among the working class and the oppressed, who are also struggling for their rights against the same enemies.

But in this fight for day-to-day demands, we must not rely on the capitalist politicians—Democrats or Republicans, women or men—to give us our rightful due. They have never given us anything without a fight. The right to abortion, for example, was won in the streets from the Supreme Court during the Nixon administration. And the ERA lost to Democratic Party controlled legislatures.

Women are organizing—for clinic defense, against the military (like at Seneca Falls), for comparable worth. And on March 9, women are organizing to march in Washington to defend the right to abortion. I urge everyone to go. ■

Ann Michelini:

'Rights are destroyed by Cinci. bombings'

The following are excerpts of an interview with Ann Michelini, Ohio secretary of NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) and chair of the Reproductive Rights Committee of Cincinnati NOW. The interview was conducted for Socialist Action on Feb. 15, 1986, by Kate Curry.

Socialist Action: What is the situation of the pro-choice movement in Cincinnati?

Ann Michelini: Here in Cincinnati we are dealing with a conservative community with many Catholics. In addition, we happen to have the national leader of the right-to-life movement living in our community. This has made Cincinnati a target.

We have been subjected to legal harassment and the bombing of abortion clinics. And we have had big and increasingly loud fanatical demonstrations

in front of the clinics each Saturday.

Partly as a response to this, two clinics decided to stop doing Saturday procedures, which was perceived as a victory by the so called right-to-life anti-abortion forces. These people stated they intend to make Cincinnati an "abortion free zone."

So the sequence of legal pincers, intimidation, threats, harassment, and bombings all work together. That's what we've seen here in the last few months.

S.A.: Reagan, in his state of the union speech, called for cuts in healthcare services and also a ban on abortions.

Michelini: Well, what can we say about such an administration and such a politician? Reagan wants to destroy the federal government's role as a provider of any services whatsoever. It should operate, according to his view, only as a purveyor of defense and weaponry. And that increasingly is what he has succeeded in doing to us.

Politically he states he is opposed to the interference of government in the private lives of individuals. But what he means is he is opposed to interference by the government in the economic lives of wealthy individuals. He is strongly in favor of the interference of government into the private lives of others.

S.A.: How can the majority of people who are pro-choice respond to this type of attack?

Michelini: That would be two-pronged. In Cincinnati we are going to try to get these rascals out of the City Council. On Jan. 25, following the bombings, we held a rally at a local church at which rabbis and ministers spoke. This rally was heavily attended. We had upwards of 400 people present. I have never seen more political energy in one place at one time. People were excited. They were eager to do something about it.

In the last election we lost representation on the City Council from two female representatives who had been strongly pro-choice. So at the local level that's what you do. You get into local politics and you realize that this issue, which many people thought was a peripheral issue, is at the core of human rights issues and is at the core of the women's revolution. If women can be forced to undergo pregnancy against their will, then they have no other human

instrument in the electoral arena of working people. And I think it's very important to make the NDP represent working people and women.

We in the pro-choice movement have seen NDP support as essential in our struggle. And we have fought very hard inside the party to get the party to support the clinic and to support and defend Dr. Morgenthaler. And the women in the party, of whom I am one, won that fight two years ago after quite a long struggle.

I'm running for president not only because of that experience, but because a number of us in the women's movement, in the international solidarity movements, the peace movement and the labor movement, feel that the NDP is not doing what it could be doing in order to support our struggles.

So we're organizing a campaign inside the party to change the party to be much less like the other two parties and much more an activist party which gets politically involved in the various campaigns and social struggles that take place—not only speaking as their voice in Parliament but also being involved with them in the streets.

... Rebick

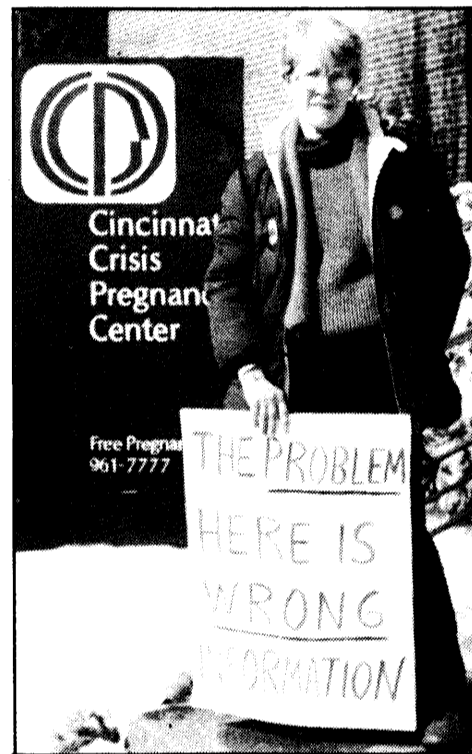
(continued from page 4)

from the beginning—from the Ontario Federation of Labor. The reason for this is that we, in the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, have had a very strong orientation toward the labor movement and have tried to win support from it. In Ontario there is a very strong feminist influence in the labor movement.

Labor women have fought very hard in the movement for choice. And it's an ongoing struggle, as it is everywhere, because anti-choice people are always organizing against us.

Brunelle: You are running for president of the Ontario New Democratic Party. Can you tell me a bit about the party and why you are running in this campaign?

Rebick: The party is basically a labor party. It's different than any of the parties in the United States in the sense that it has a structured relationship to the labor movement. It's basic support comes from labor and working people. It doesn't get any money from corporations. And in this sense, I see it personally as a potential



Ann Michelini picketing right-wing clinic

rights. That is a simple fact.

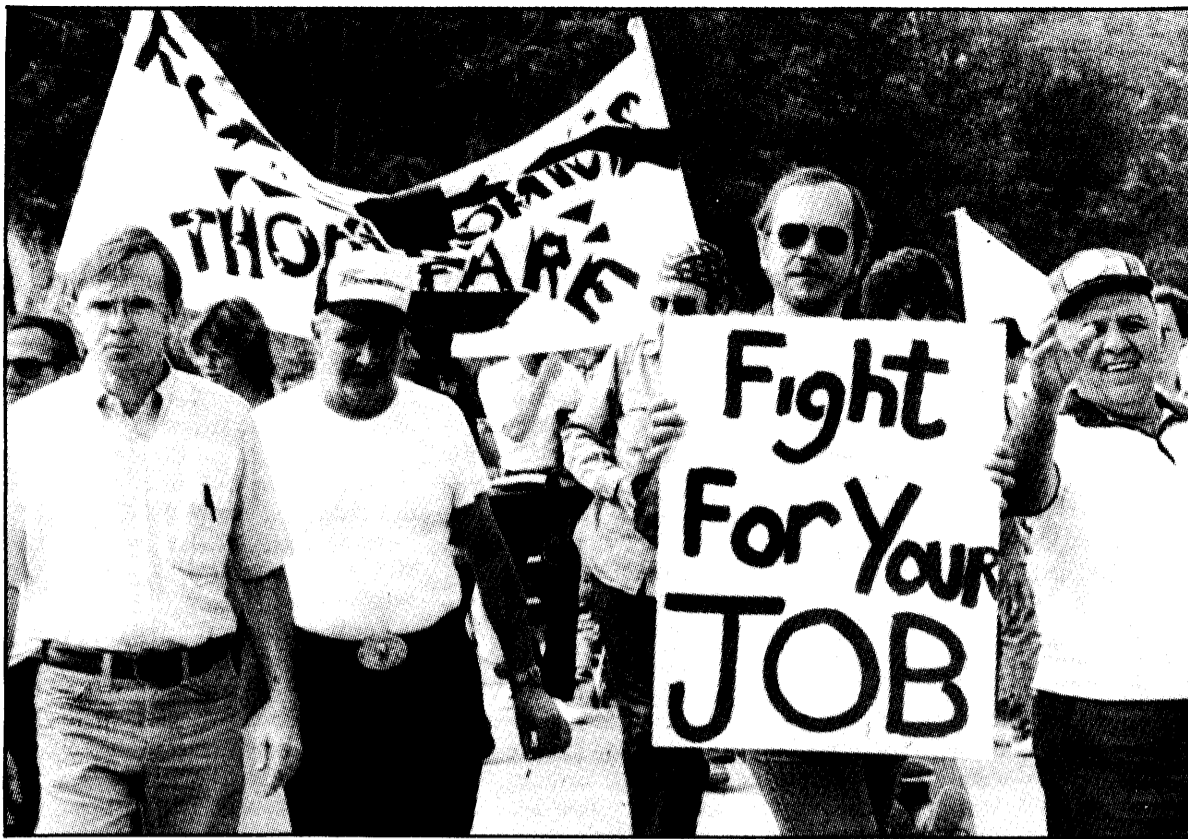
Now on the national level we have got to get rid of Reagan. But the American people still like this man. The polls indicate, however, that they don't agree with any of his policies. So, it is to be hoped that once they are through with their love affair with Ronnie, we may get somebody a little better. I feel very discouraged, I'll admit.

S.A.: What is being done to build the national demonstration for abortion rights and how is that coming along in Cincinnati? Are there any new people who hadn't really been around NOW or other organizations that are being brought in?

Michelini: Yes. Other political groups with a broader political base have gotten involved. And a lot of private individuals are calling the clinics to tell them of their concern and their eagerness to get involved.

The problem about the pro-choice issue—and we should never blame ourselves for this—is that we are passive, while they are active. They actively attempt to destroy peoples' human rights. We passively attempt to keep them from destroying human rights. So, many people have felt lulled into a sense of security by the fact that human rights are guaranteed by the constitution and presumably women have the right to choose in this country.

But in this city people are beginning to realize how this can be taken away. Step by step this is occurring with the use of tactics which, to my mind, resemble precisely those of the Ku Klux Klan in the old South. ■



Legal Activities

Key negotiations begin in basic steel industry

By MARIE WEIGAND

Last fall steelworkers came to the defense of the locked-out Wheeling-Pittsburgh steelworkers. They organized rallies around the country, chartered buses for demonstrations in Steubenville, Ohio; Monessen, Pa.; and Pittsburgh. And they contributed money. Most steelworkers viewed the bosses' attacks on Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers as a test run for the 1986 basic steel negotiations.

Top executives from U.S. Steel Corp., the nation's largest steel company, said they were watching these negotiations closely and would demand whatever concessions the union gave Wheeling-Pittsburgh. But United Steelworkers of America (USWA) officials tried to reassure steelworkers that Wheeling-Pittsburgh was a special case. They said that serious concessions were necessary to keep Wheeling-Pittsburgh operating, but that similar concessions would not be given to other steel companies.

In preparation for this year's negotiations, the USWA commissioned Locker/Abrecht Associates to do a study on the steel industry. The results, "Confronting the Crisis: The Challenge for Labor," were released Dec. 16, 1985. The report draws three basic conclusions:

- "First, the industry is in deep trouble and things are not going to get better on their own. Import and mini-mill competition have captured a good part of the market and the Reagan administration's policies have severely damaged the industry.

- "Second, some major companies face an immediate crisis as a result of large losses sustained over the last four years. Unless they receive relief in the near future from all parties, there is a real possibility they will face bankruptcy and possible liquidation.

- "Third, the longer-term prospects for recovery are dim, especially if desperately needed government support is not forthcoming under the Reagan administration."

LTV, Bethlehem, and National Steel approached the USWA asking for early negotiations for a new contract to replace the current agreement, which is due to expire Aug. 1. Despite their earlier assurances to the membership, the USWA agreed.

Top LTV executives began their presentation to local union presidents by declaring they could be forced into bankruptcy proceedings if they paid the wage increases still due under the current agreement. They asked for an immediate freeze on the 45-cents-per-hour raise and 5-cents-cost-of-living payment due Feb. 1. The company also demanded a \$5-per-hour reduction in wages and benefits in the new contract.

The Locker/Abrecht report suggested that no concessions be granted unless a company opens its books for the union. After LTV agreed to an independent audit, top union officials agreed that the company's financial woes merited a suspension of the raises mandated in the last contract.

On Jan. 31, an interim agreement between the USWA and LTV was signed. Only seven local union presidents voted against this agreement, which provided that the raises due the next day be placed on hold until April 1. In the event a new agreement is not reached by that date, the raises will be paid retroactively.

Although Bethlehem also asked for a suspension of the Feb. 1 raise, local union presidents turned down the request. LTV steelworkers thus joined Wheeling-Pittsburgh steelworkers as the only workers in basic steel not receiving this raise, which would have returned their hourly earnings to the January 1983 level.

Membership's right to vote

In January 1986, presidents from all basic steel locals in the United States met and decided that this year's contracts will be put to a vote of the membership. Previously, only local union presidents voted on the contracts.

Rank-and-file ratification of contracts has been a traditional rallying point for oppositionists in the union. It was one of the main issues in Ed Sadlowski's unsuccessful 1977 campaign for USWA international president.

But many steelworkers view the international's sudden support for their democratic rights with suspicion. They expect that a concessions contract could be rammed down their throats as the international officers piously declare that they're only abiding by the democratic choice of the

membership.

The USWA International began the process of selling concessions to the membership by holding meetings for local union officers in Cleveland, East Chicago, Canton, and Pittsburgh. Notices for these unprecedented meetings promised a thorough review of the Locker/Abrecht study, confidential information on the company's finances, and an update on negotiations.

Jim Smith, assistant to USWA International President Lynn Williams, urged local officers to be "responsible" and try to explain LTV's serious financial problems to the membership. But local officers were not so easily convinced that their interests coincided with those of the company. Questions pointed to LTV's mismanagement and the need for a government policy to rebuild decaying roads and bridges. Smith tried to duck all such questions by attacking the Reagan administration.

During the Cleveland officers' meeting, as the company's concessions demands were listed, shouts of "Shut 'em down" came from parts of the hall.

A losing philosophy

A Jan. 29 meeting between LTV and the USWA shows the losing philosophy behind these negotiations. The meeting concluded: "LTV Steel and the United Steelworkers of America recognize that it is important to the viability of the Company and the well-being of its employees that they promptly address the need to assure the public that continuity of the Company's steel operations is their mutual goal for 1986 and beyond."

LTV and the union agreed to joint lobbying efforts for import restrictions and a weaker dollar to give domestic steel a price break.

The company doesn't even pretend that its concessions demands will prevent plant closings and job combinations. Steelworkers at LTV's Warren, Ohio, works were recently hit with an ultimatum: Either offer a proposal to eliminate 400 jobs or have the plant shut down.

Like other workers, steelworkers will not be able to stem the concessions tide and fight back against the constant attacks on their standard of living until they realize that their interests are opposed to those of the bosses.

What's good for LTV Steel is to work the fewest possible number of workers under the least safe working conditions for the lowest possible wages and benefits. Workers must learn that only their collective power can prevent this and turn around the bosses' concessions drive.

If top USWA officials succeed in convincing LTV steelworkers that further concessions are necessary to save "their" company, this will strengthen the hand of the other steel barons in this year's contract negotiations and set off another round of concession bargaining in other industries.

Rather than using its resources to promote concessions to steel companies, the USWA should use them to prepare the membership for a fight for an improved contract. Such a campaign would speak to the real needs of steelworkers and—as the struggles of the Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers and the Hormel packinghouse workers show—win support from other working people.



Legal Activities

By PAUL GESHOS

Bosses pit worker against worker at Toledo's AMC Jeep plant

TOLEDO, Ohio—It's called divide-and-conquer and it is happening at American Motors Co. (AMC). The company has been using laid-off workers from its Alliance plant in Kenosha, Wis., as pawns in a maneuver designed to pit United Auto Workers locals in Kenosha and in Toledo against each other in a scramble for jobs.

Approximately 500 workers from Kenosha, some with up to 13-years seniority, have taken jobs offered at the Toledo Jeep plant. They were given the understanding that after one year of work they would be eligible for an additional three years "corporate seniority" at the Toledo plant.

The Jeep plant here in Toledo has already been hard hit by a decision to end production of the classic "CJ" Jeep vehicle,

which has meant the loss of 1000 jobs. In this context, the latest management maneuver has bred hostility between Local 12 in Toledo and Local 72 in Kenosha.

This situation, where many Local 12 members in Toledo have received their pink slips while workers from Kenosha hold onto jobs, led to an eruption of anti-Kenosha hysteria that reached citywide proportions. In one case, a lunch-time demonstration of Toledo employees attracted several hundred people, complete with banners and anti-Kenosha T-shirts.

Many of the workers from Kenosha who work at Jeep are likewise bitter. The company had initially told them that they

could accumulate seniority rights in both plants simultaneously. Now the workers are being forced to sign a statement that gives them two hard choices. They can keep their three-year corporate and Jeep seniority and renounce all of their Kenosha seniority. Or they can renounce their corporate seniority and return to the unemployment lines in Wisconsin.

Many think that the company is pressuring the workers from Kenosha to stay in Toledo so that new people can be hired in Kenosha under a lower-wage, two-tier agreement.

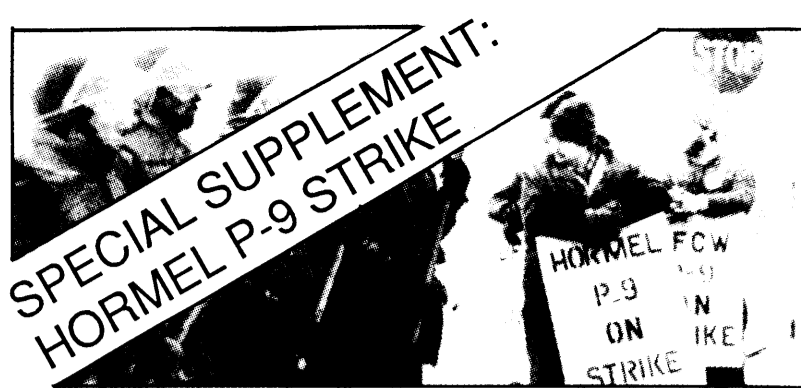
The company has also announced that it will seek wage and benefit cuts from its

employees. In March it plans to unilaterally reopen the Jeep contract, despite the fact that the present three-year agreement is only a year old. Also on the agenda in March is the so-called Employee Investment Plan (EIP), which expropriated some \$40 million from Jeep workers alone from 1982 to 1985. The company had promised to begin repaying this money last year, but now refuses to do so.

It is a bad situation at the AMC Jeep plant, with union members fighting each other for jobs. So far, AMC has been able to turn up the heat without facing the fire.

Unfortunately, the union leadership appears confused, disorganized, and overly preoccupied with legalities, lawsuits, and arbitration procedures—instead of a mass-action approach that could unify employed and unemployed workers in a common fight to defend jobs and union contracts. ■

A Socialist ACTION



Local P-9 strike can win! Mass labor support vital

"We believe that this rank-and-file is the litmus test for all of organized labor," said Henry Nichols, president of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, to over 4000 Local P-9 strikers and their supporters on Feb. 16 in Austin, Minn.

Nichols is dead right. The six-month strike of 1500 packinghouse workers in United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local P-9 has sharply posed the question: "Which side are you on?"

In the P-9 strike, there can be no neutral stance. The employer, Geo. A. Hormel & Co., has set out to cut wages, gut the seniority system, introduce a two-tier system for new hires, and increase speedup on the job with no concern for safety. It has forced 1500 packinghouse workers, who had already given up concessions in 16 out of the last 23 years, to be out on strike since last Aug. 17.

But the Hormel company didn't stop there. After the P-9 strikers refused to bend to the employers' attacks and the court's illegal injunction, the Hormel company called on strikebreaking Gov. Rudy Perpich to bring out the National Guard to escort scabs through the picket lines.

More recently, the courts have further come to the company's aid. P-9 leaders have jail sentences hanging over their heads if they dare to even appear near the Hormel plant.

Nichols and the other prominent labor officials who spoke at the Austin rally on Feb. 16 [see story next page] took a firm stand in support of P-9 and against the employers' continued takeback demands. They were expressing the sentiment of hundreds of thousands of workers across the country who have already demonstrated their solidarity with the P-9 strikers.

Bob Brown, international vice president of the United Electrical Workers union, pledged his full support at the Austin rally for whatever action was necessary to win the strike. "If we have to come back six times," he said, "we'll all go to jail."

P-9 challenges Wynn's strategy

But this spirit is, unfortunately, not shared by all in the labor movement. UFCW International President William Wynn has put P-9's parent union on the side of the Hormel bosses. Echoing company slanders against the P-9 leadership, he has worked tirelessly to



Socialist Action/Carl Finamore

sabotage labor solidarity. He has gone so far as to campaign against sending financial aid to P-9's Emergency Hardship Fund, charging falsely that the funds were being misused. [See article pp. 2-3.]

The stakes in the Hormel strike are high. A Feb. 15 *New York Times* article titled, "Local and National Union Clash Over Tactics in Hormel Strike," reveals the intense interest of the U.S. employing class in the outcome of the P-9 strike.

Accurately reflecting the negative role of the UFCW international leadership toward Local P-9 and the strike, the *Times* article states:

"Jay Foreman, the parent union's senior vice president and executive assistant to Mr. Wynn, said it might be necessary at some point to lift the union's strike sanction and place the local in receivership, so the strike could formally be ended.

"Some labor authorities said a key to the bitterness that exists is that the strikers' strategy of confrontation would, if

successful, demonstrate that the parent union's tactics, of accepting concessions regarded as necessary and of maintaining essentially cooperative relationships with companies, are incorrect.

"These are the tactics of most American unions, and a rank-and-file victory in Austin, this argument holds, would demonstrate tactics at other unions are wrong too."

Now, Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO, has come out on the side of the unholy alliance between the UFCW bureaucrats and the greedy Hormel bosses. Kirkland, presiding over the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Bal Harbor, Fla., termed the UFCW bureaucrats' backstabbing policy "wise and sound."

In Minnesota Dan Gustaffson, president of the state AFL-CIO, has invited Gov. Rudy Perpich to address a statewide Legislative Conference on Feb. 24. Gustaffson has pointedly kept silent, failing to denounce the governor's use of the National Guard to break the P-9 strike. Worse still, Perpich remains an honored guest of the labor federation, despite overwhelming opposition to his use of the Guard in Minnesota polls.

Minnesota trade unionists should go to the Legislative Conference on Feb. 24 to lobby and protest against the presence of this strikebreaking governor.

But despite the array of hostile forces, Local P-9 can still win. A groundswell of support has been developing among rank-and-file workers nationwide, who have been inspired by the valiant fightback example provided by the Hormel workers.

Reflecting this, a significant minority of union leaders—including some in the UFCW—have taken a stand behind P-9 and for resolute action to beat back the strikebreakers at Hormel. Clearly, had

UFCW President Wynn put the international behind P-9, the strike would have been won long ago.

Picket lines inspire support

When P-9 pickets faced down the National Guard, forcing Gov. Perpich to order the plant closed on the first day of the Guard's deployment, it showed the great potential power of determined action. Why? The governor was unwilling to risk the consequences of a direct confrontation with the mobilized strikers. To suppress P-9 that day would have had too high a cost in terms of human lives and consequent national outrage.

Perpich knows that the American people will not take kindly to such violations of the basic freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Especially when working people show their capacity to mobilize in their class interests. Brutal repression, the rulers know, can spark mass indignation and an outpouring of thousands—not hundreds—on the Hormel picket lines.

And when 500 pickets and supporters stopped scabs cold on Jan. 31, Local P-9 proved the strike could be won.

These examples of determined and effective strike action by the Austin strikers triggered the solidarity action of Hormel workers in Ottumwa, Iowa, and other plants around the country. It inspired workers all over the country. The injustices suffered by P-9 workers are an all-too-familiar tragedy. It is their militant response, however, that has begun to stir tens of thousands of workers to action.

P-9, of course, cannot win alone. It needs the support of hundreds more on the picket lines and hundreds of thousands across the land. P-9's militant example points the way to bring tens of thousands into active support and victory—The Editors.

What you can do to help:

1. Union members and other friends can send delegations of unemployed sisters and brothers, as well as those able to take a day off from work, to help picket or do whatever the striking union requires.
2. Pass resolutions in your organization expressing full support for P-9 strikers and their constitutionally guaranteed right to strike and picket effectively. Protest the strikebreaking activities of Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich. Send telegrams to him at the State Capitol, St. Paul, Minn. 55155. Demand he withdraw the National Guard from Austin. Send copies to Local P-9, Austin, Minn. 55912.
3. Organize support committees broadly-based on the unions and community organizations in your city. Organize a speaking tour for a representative from Local P-9 in your city, culminating, if practical, in a mass public rally.
4. Collect money to help sustain P-9 members and their families. Every local union should pledge regular weekly contributions for the duration of the strike. Send the money to United Support Group, P-9 Emergency Hardship Fund, 316 Fourth Ave., NE, Austin, Minn. 55912. Or better still, bring it in person!

By LYNN HENDERSON

MINNEAPOLIS—The strike of Local P-9 members against Geo. A. Hormel & Co. is widely recognized as a strike involving much more than only the fate of 1500 packinghouse workers in the small town of Austin, Minn.

The strike of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union is seen throughout the Hormel system and nationally throughout the labor movement as a dramatic challenge to the headlong drive for more and more concessions from labor.

The Austin workers themselves have made major concessions in 16 of the last 23 years. In October 1984, the company unilaterally imposed a 23-percent wage cut. All of this, despite the fact that Hormel has among the highest profits in the industry and chalked up a 31-percent increase in profits last year alone.

At the same time P-9 members were subjected to the 23-percent wage cut, Hormel chairman Richard Knowlton saw fit to increase his own salary by \$231,000 to \$570,000 a year.

In response to P-9's stand against further concessions, Hormel began a massive propaganda and slander campaign against the local and its leadership. To carry out this campaign, they hired not one—but two union-busting consulting firms.

They flooded a cooperating news media with charges that P-9 was unreasonable, inflexible, and engaging in "all-or-nothing" bargaining. They said the Austin union was violent and attempting to impose "mob rule" on the town. They characterized the leadership of P-9 as irresponsible and explained membership rejection of contract offers by claiming that P-9 President Jim Guyette and labor consultant Ray Rogers had manipulated and intimidated the Austin work force.

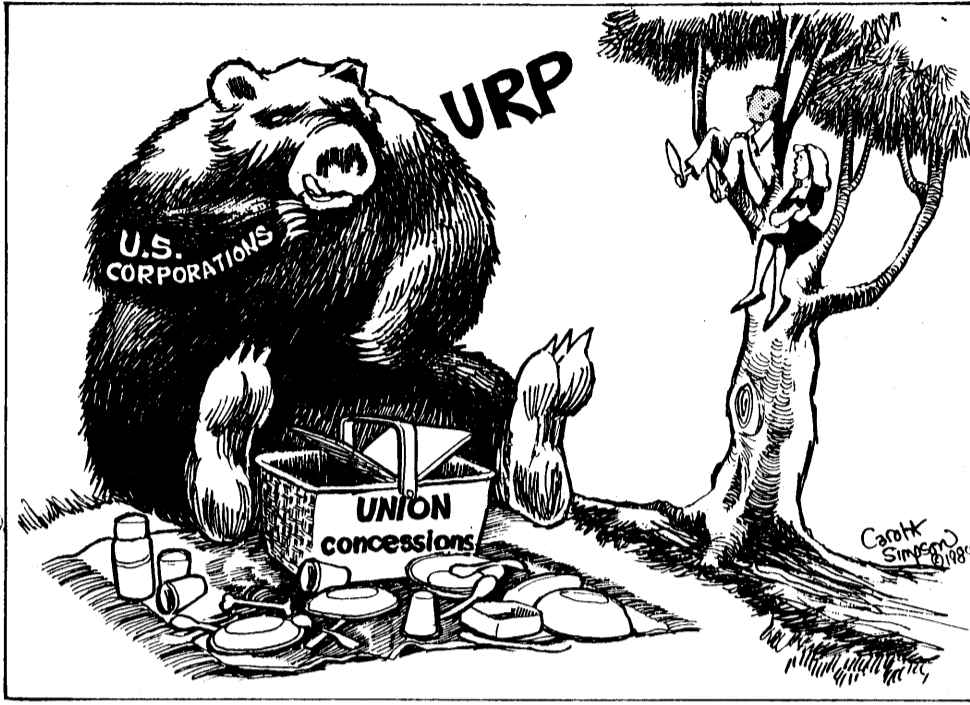
The wholehearted cooperation of the news media in this campaign should come as no surprise. Likewise, the collaboration of Democratic and Republican politicians, including Democratic Gov. Rudy Perpich, who called in the National Guard to escort scabs into the struck plant, should hardly come as a surprise. However, the role of UFCW international officers—International President William Wynn and International Vice-President Lewie Anderson—is another matter.

Locks arms with company

From the beginning of the struggle the top UFCW international officers have echoed and endorsed virtually every charge the Hormel company and its union-busting consulting firms have come up with in their slander campaign against P-9.

This process reached a dangerous new stage with the publication and national

P-9 responds to slander by bosses, bureaucrats



"Who said feed 'em a few scraps and they'll leave you alone?"

distribution by the UFCW international of a booklet entitled "Fact Book on Local P-9/Hormel, Austin, Minn."

A major charge raised in this "Fact Book" is that P-9, at a meeting of Hormel Chain Locals in 1984, "refused to support a proposed strike against Hormel," abandoned a common negotiating strategy, and irresponsibly "withdrew from chain negotiations and followed their own agenda."

This is just plain untrue. The facts are as follows: The international leadership, with the explanation that P-9 had a different contract expiration date, did not even invite P-9 to this meeting. P-9 attended anyway to see what it could do to support and solidarize with the locals whose contracts were expiring.

In mid-January, P-9 President Jim Guyette was forced to reply to UFCW President William Wynn's public use of this big lie, stating:

"As you well know, from conversations held as recently as October, Local P-9 never 'withdrew from the Hormel chain negotiations.' We were simply never invited by the international union. As our contract expired at a different date from

those at some other plants, Hormel never sent our local a notice of contract termination. P-9's executive board sought to discover what rights we had to support the locals whose contracts were expiring, such as attempting to discover whether or not we have the right to strike prior to the expiration of our contract. We did not withdraw—rather, we were convinced by the international union to stand aside and let the other unions negotiate and we were commended by the international and the locals for standing aside."

Another charge from the "Fact Book" is that P-9, "in their weekly newspaper, *The Unionist*, lambasted our brothers and sisters in the Postal Workers Union as creating excessive labor costs, trying to exclude competition, and abusing their political influence."

What are the facts? An article making such charges was clipped out of another publication to be printed in *The Unionist* with an answer from P-9 refuting such charges and defending the Postal Workers. Through an error by the printer this article was printed without the answer. In the very next issue of *The Unionist* the original answer was printed with an explanation and an apology to postal workers.

The international officials, who follow every issue of *The Unionist* closely, are deliberately distorting the facts in what can only be described as a crude hatchet job on P-9. This is typical of the methods used throughout the "Fact Book."

The "disaffiliation" slander

The "Fact Book" charges that the P-9 leadership "in the middle of a strike brought in a lawyer to address the membership on how to disaffiliate from the UFCW."

What are the real facts? President Guyette explained that they did invite lawyer David Tweedell, who is the former counsel for the UFCW international, to address a membership meeting. He was invited not to discuss disaffiliation, but to explain to members their rights in honoring other locals' picket lines, despite the existence of no-strike language in their contract.

During the question period a P-9 member from the floor, perhaps provoked by the public attack on P-9 being made by Wynn and Anderson and an indication that Hormel planned to hold a decertification vote to set up a company union, asked a question concerning decertification and disaffiliation.

Guyette further rejects the charge that the P-9 leadership is secretly preparing to disaffiliate from the international by stating: "I, as president, have not accepted

motions from our rank and file made by people with more than 30 years service with the union who felt there was clearly wrongdoing by this international and tried to get up and ask that we disaffiliate. I have not honored those motions."

A fully democratic union local

The "Fact Book," in directly repeating charges made by the Hormel company, accused the P-9 leadership of "repressive tactics against its own members," and running the local in an undemocratic way.

P-9 is probably one of the most democratic union locals in the country. During recent months not only have they been holding weekly membership meetings, which a big majority of the membership attend, but in addition, nightly strategy and support meetings, which routinely draw 300 to 400 members. At all these meetings the members freely take the floor, speak their minds, make motions, and vote the policy of P-9.

Last January, in response to the combined pressure of Hormel, Gov. Perpich, and the international, P-9 voted for a second time on Hormel's "final proposal."

William Wynn announced that P-9 could not be trusted to carry out the vote in its own union hall and publicly charged that its own members were put through a "physical and psychological gauntlet" to manipulate the vote.

P-9 responded with two actions. It announced it would hold and only be governed by its own vote. It also appointed four local clergymen to act as observers at the election.

Immediately following the vote, these clergymen released a unanimous statement that "re-examined new attempts to intimidate and coerce or influence the vote in any way. Our observance was that the voting was done very fairly and openly and the outcome expressed the feeling of the majority of the voters."

The outcome? In both P-9's vote and the Wynn-mailed ballot, the contract was again rejected by virtually identical margins.

The only thing accomplished by Wynn's actions was to publicly repeat and endorse the slanderous charges being promoted by the Hormel company.

Making the victim the criminal

Another Hormel charge repeated in the "Fact Book" is that P-9 is the party that refuses to negotiate in good faith. The "Fact Book" states that the P-9 leadership "embraces a position of 100-percent victory or 100-percent defeat."

What are the actual facts? Since the time of the last vote P-9 negotiators have made seven separate compromise offers in an attempt to reach a settlement. For its part Hormel has just refused to budge, relying instead on strikebreakers, the courts, and the National Guard.

Possibly the most astounding and certainly the most ironic charge raised in the "Fact Book" is that P-9 has "waged an unceasing hate campaign" against the UFCW international. This is a classic case



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Support for P-9 builds nationally

Support for the P-9 strike is growing nationally. The following is a list of some of the cities where supporters of P-9 are active.

• **Boston:** A mass rally in support of P-9 has been set for Sunday, March 9, at 2 p.m. at IBEW Local 103's Freeport Hall, 256 Freeport St., Dorchester, Mass. For more information contact the Greater Boston Hormel/Local P-9 Support Committee, Hotel Workers Local 26, 58 Berkeley St., Boston, Mass. 02116. Tel. 423-3463, 423-2914. Local 26 President Dominic Bozzotto has made the office and phones available for use by the P-9 Support Committee.

• **Cleveland:** An ad-hoc coalition of P-9 supporters have organized a public rally for two P-9 speakers to be held Friday, March 14, 7 p.m. at the UAW Local 217 hall, 4935 State Road, corner of State and Brookpark, next to Pick-N-Pay.

• **New York City:** Leaders of the Communication Workers of America and representatives from some 50 unions have established the Greater Metropolitan Area Labor Support Committee for Local P-9. Susan Hibert is the contact person and can

be reached at (212) 741-1766.

• **Twin-Cities:** The Metro P-9 Support Committee [157 North Dale St., St. Paul, MN. Phone (612) 228-1225] has been rallying support, food, and money since the beginning of the strike. In addition, they have organized to help picket in Austin as well as to build mass protests in St. Paul against Gov. Perpich's use of the National Guard against P-9 pickets.

• **Los Angeles:** A committee including Shipbuilders Local 9 is working in support of P-9. Call (213) 835-0229 for information on activities.

• **Cincinnati:** Supporters in this city provide a model for what can be done to help P-9 strikers. From March 4 to March 13, a former president of P-9, Floyd Lench, will be addressing several union and campus meetings and will be a guest on call-in talk shows.

• **Detroit:** A rally will be held on March 1 at UAW Local 600's hall. The rally will feature Tom Turner, president of the Metro Detroit Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO; the president of UFCW Local 26; and a representative of P-9. The rally is broadly sponsored by the city's labor movement. ■

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Laura Hall

of making the victim the criminal. In point of fact, the P-9 leadership has shown remarkable restraint in not publicly answering Wynn and Anderson in kind.

P-9 challenges concessions

What is necessary is not answering Wynn and Anderson in kind, but rather probing what lies behind their bizarre and destructive actions. William Wynn has been for some time a prominent proponent of concessions bargaining. Under his leadership the UFCW had forced millions of dollars in takeback contracts on locals throughout the country.

Wynn's real differences with P-9 center on P-9's decision not to accept further concessions and its determination to fight back.

Wynn and Anderson see this as the major danger they and the labor union face. This twisted view emerges in the opening pages of the "Fact Book," where they describe P-9 as "the enemy within."

In the "Fact Book" and elsewhere Wynn and Anderson make virtually no criticism of Hormel's strikebreaking policy. They make no protest of the use of the Minnesota National Guard to run scabs into the Hormel plant. They don't even protest the arrest of the P-9 leadership on the notorious union-busting charge of

"criminal syndicalism." For Wynn and Anderson these are all subordinate questions to the main danger which is the "enemy within"—P-9's challenge to the policy of further concessions bargaining.

At a recent P-9 support rally of more than 4000 workers, the president of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, Henry Nichols, expressed a different view. He pointed out that the Hormel strike posed sharply the central question posed by every strike: "Which side

are you on?"

Nichols concluded that it was necessary to come down with all your strength on the side of P-9. Wynn and Anderson, in their actions and in their twisted view of trade union realities, in effect come down on the side of Hormel, on the side of the bosses.

The question of the Hormel strike is a crucial question for the entire labor movement. The drive for continued takebacks by U.S. corporations will not abate. On the contrary, it can only

accelerate. More and more union locals will choose, and will be forced to choose, the path of P-9: to reject the bankrupt policy of concessions bargaining and organize the fightback.

As in any strike there can be no neutrals in the resulting struggles. Union officials will either have to choose the Wynn-Anderson course or the course followed by Henry Nichols. The resulting decisions will have a crucial impact on the future of the AFL-CIO. ■



Wives of Hormel workers shut down corporate headquarters

Socialist Action/Cary Anderson

Union officials pledge support for P-9 strikers

By DAVE COOPER

AUSTIN, Minn.—The events of Feb. 15 here showed that support for the Hormel strikers is widespread in the labor movement.

They called it "P-9 Day." Over 4000 strikers and their supporters, including some 500 people who came from other states, marched from the Local P-9 union hall to Austin High School. They carried their union banners. There were banners and signs from New York, Detroit, Cleveland, as well as Fremont, Neb., and Ottumwa, Iowa, where other Hormel Co. workers are facing the wrath of the nation's most profitable meatpacking company.

The parade was led by a horse-drawn buggy. Jake Cooper, a leader of the P-9 strike support committee in the Twin Cities, rode the wagon as the parade's grand marshal. As the march proceeded down Main Street, townspeople emerged from stores and homes to cheer the strikers. Only two company supporters along the way yelled, "We love Hormel." But the marchers ignored them.

The parade overflowed the school facilities. When some 75 workers from Ottumwa, Iowa UFCW Local 431 entered the auditorium, a solidarity cry "431, 431" arose from the crowd. Hormel has fired 500 workers for honoring the picket line set up by P-9 at the Ottumwa plant.

Throughout the rally, the crowd's most enthusiastic cheers came for those speakers who voiced their defiance of the Hormel company's use of the politicians and the courts to attempt to break the strike.

Henry Nichols, president of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, AFL-CIO, of New York City, told the crowd, "If there must be givebacks in this country let's start with the Pentagon...I urge you, as I know you will, to stand up and resist. And if you have to go to jail, I will be back to go with you."

This statement started the crowd

chanting, "They say give back. We say fight back!"

Nichols ended his talk quoting turn-of-the-century labor leader Mother Jones, "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living," to renewed cheers and chants from the audience.

The speeches of the afternoon were in line with P-9 President Jim Guyette's challenge—"It's time for the labor movement to start to growl instead of clucking like a chicken."

Jan Pierce, national vice president of the Communications Workers of America District 1 in New York City, said the P-9 supporters not only had a right, but an "obligation to be here."

Pierce related the story of another injunction whose intent was to bust the New York Transport Workers Union. "It was 20 years ago when a gutsy Irish labor leader by the name of Mike Quill, [who] when he was served with an injunction, raised his fist, his voice choked with emotion, 'You tell that judge to drop dead in his black robe.'" This statement hit a raw nerve in Austin and was answered with a thunderous ovation.

Pierce gave the crowd a report of the solidarity efforts on their behalf. "We had a leadership meeting in New York City made up of labor leaders, students, and elected officials. We got pledges to adopt 100 [P-9] families. By the end of February we will adopt 200 families. You will soon see the same program in Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, and many other cities."

Shirley Quill, the widow of Mike Quill, gave encouragement to the audience by describing her husband's militant action in defiance of the injunction.

Bob Brown, international vice president of the United Electrical Workers union and district president in Philadelphia and Baltimore, extended the solidarity beyond Austin. "When we say P-9 we also say 431. We are here to make a statement. And if necessary we will be back again to make

a stronger statement. If we have to come back six times, we'll all go to jail."

Brown also criticized the media for describing the strike as already over. "It isn't gonna be defeat until P-9 and 431 say it's defeat," Brown said. "Hell will freeze over before that ever happens."

Dan Barner, chief steward of UFCW Local 431 in Ottumwa reported that "500 members have been discharged for honoring P-9's picket line. We have filed 497 grievances so that our members can go back to work when the picket line is withdrawn. The company's position is that we went out on a sympathy strike. Our position is that we honored a picket line. Our contract states that this is a legitimate picket line and the company shall not discipline pickets that honor that picket line. The company agreed to this part of the contract in 1977. The company has

breached the contract—not our members."

Flo Stern of New York City's AFSCME District Council 1707 presented checks to P-9 from workers at the Metropolitan Art Museum and from the city's hospital, postal, and welfare workers. She read a telegram from British miners which promised that a collection would be taken up for them.

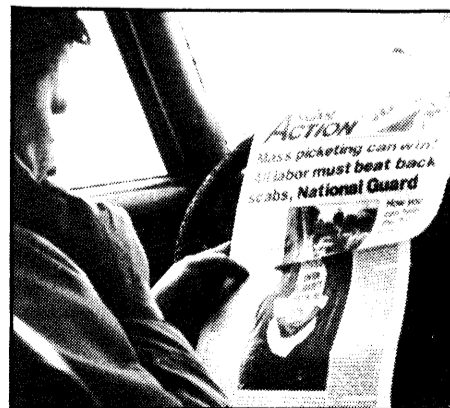
Neil Beasley, manager of the Chicago Joint Labor Board of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, brought greetings from the striking *Chicago Tribune* workers.

P-9 members won't soon forget the outpouring of support from their fellow workers around the country. The message was clear—what happens in the little town of Austin, Minn., affects all workers who strive for a decent standard of living. P-9, we won't let you down! ■

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Toledo 1934: How strikers defeated an injunction

In breaking with the pro-company policy of the UFCW international leadership, Local P-9 has made a significant contribution to the coming mass fightback of American workers. In order to find the way toward a course of action that can win, it is helpful to look back to some of the great victories of workers' struggles in history.

Last month's edition of *Socialist Action* recounted the history of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike. Below we reprint the transcription of a tape by Ted Selander—a veteran of the 1934 Toledo, Ohio, Auto-Lite strike—that hits on the lessons of that strike for today.

We believe that the Toledo Auto-Lite strike provides timely insight into the class-struggle methods that led to the construction of fighting mass industrial unions that brought America's giant corporations to their knees.

Together with the Minneapolis Teamsters and the San Francisco maritime strikes that same year, Toledo paved the way for labor victories that won all American workers big improvements in their living standards. These gains are essentially still intact despite the takeback campaign of the U.S. employing class.

But the owners of America's wealth and resources are driven by the needs of their



Mass picketing traps scabs in Toledo Auto-Lite plant

economic system to force down labor costs in order to bolster profits. Big showdown battles between capital and labor are on the horizon. The lessons of 1934 point the way to victory for P-9 workers who are now in the front ranks of labor's struggle in defense of its class interests.

The speech reprinted here was sent to the commemoration rally of the 50th anniversary of the Toledo Auto-Lite strike.

The rally took place in Toledo on June 3, 1984.

The entire speech was published in the July 1984 issue of *Socialist Action*. For this edition, Selander adds, "In writing this speech, I checked my memory against accounts of the strike written by James P. Cannon. Credit for some of the best formulations in my speech belongs to this great socialist popularizer and champion of the working class."—The Editors

By TED SELANDER

Brothers and sisters, the key to an understanding of the magnificent Auto-Lite strike in 1934 is that it was a strike won on the picket line by a community uprising. I repeat: on the picket line by a community uprising.

Toledo was in the grip of a tremendous popular upsurge of anger at the greedy bosses who hate to give their wage slaves a few cents more in their pay.

This was 1934 B.T.—B.T. meaning before television. As a matter of fact, it was before all the social gains which we fought for and won in the '30s—before unemployment pay, before food stamps, before social security, before the CIO, and before Medicare, etc.

After four years of depression, the Toledo workers were in an angry mood because of the bank failures, the idle factories, the over-stocked granaries, and the 15 million unemployed. For four years we had poverty in the midst of plenty. Even the establishment was losing confidence in themselves and their system.

Rank and file is muzzled

I don't think [as James P. Cannon pointed out] there was any real difference between the Toledo Auto-Lite strikers and the workers involved in many of the lost strikes in the United States at that time. In practically every strike, the rank and file always displayed courage. The difference was in the leadership and their strategy and tactics. In nearly every strike the militancy of the rank and file was muzzled, many times snuffed out from the top.

The leaders are tricked by the courts, the labor boards, the mediators, the government, and the media to shift the fight from the picket line to the court and conference room. But all the while, the company keeps hiring scabs to take the strikers' jobs.

In the Auto-Lite strike, the company was hiring scabs by the hundreds and claimed they now had 1800 workers. We understood what was happening. We knew that the strike was dying and doomed. Only some bold, dramatic action could revive it, and even then it would have to be followed up with plenty of action and support to give the company an all-out fight. And nothing short of an all-out fight would do.

As you probably know, we wrote a public letter to Judge Stuart telling him that we were going to violate his anti-labor

injunction and call for mass picketing. By mass picketing we didn't mean a few hundred, we meant thousands. Could we get thousands down to that picket line? Well, that was the \$64 question.

We had spent the previous year organizing what some qualified observer said was the largest and most militant unemployed organization in the country—the Lucas County Unemployed League. We had held meetings and spoken in every section of the city and in the townships; organized countless marches, demonstrations, sit-ins; stopped evictions; won cash relief with a relief strike; and had held many, many other actions.

Because of this vast experience, we felt sure that we knew the temper of the Toledo workers. We felt we had a good chance to be the fuse that could ignite a spirit of solidarity with the Auto-Lite strikers to get union recognition and perhaps even win the first union contract in the auto plants of Toledo.

Workers violate injunction

On the first day that we violated the injunction, our mass picket line consisted of four individuals. That's right—just four. We were arrested, jailed, convicted and let out on bail and warned not to return to the picket line. But we told the judge that we were going back. And we did—picking up some 50 pickets on the way.

After that, there were a series of arrests, each one with a greater amount of pickets—first 46, then 108, and in between many smaller numbers. Every time we went back from the courts and jail, the picket lines kept growing steadily until on May 23 there were 10,000 reported on the street in front of the plant.

Now when you have a mass picket line of thousands, it enables you to counter the company's offensive moves. For example, they brought out a high-pressure hose and turned a stream of water on us. But it didn't take very long for a couple of hundred pickets to take the hose away and turn the water on them.

Many times the police and deputies brutally clubbed the pickets; but before they could shove them into a patrol wagon enough pickets rushed in and grabbed the picket away and often gave them a taste of their own clubs.

You know that every good union has two educational committees: one to arrange lectures of all kinds and the other to educate scabs who won't attend classes.

Half the employees at the Auto-Lite were women who were among the very best strikers we had. A couple of days after the National Guard came in, the women grabbed a scab, took him into an alley, and stripped every bit of clothing off of him except his tie and shoes. Then they marched



National Guard, with fixed bayonets, charges Auto-Lite strikers

Letter to Judge R.R. Stuart

The following is the letter sent by the Lucas County Unemployed League referred to elsewhere on this page by Ted Selander, Selander and Sam Pollock, two of its officers, wrote Judge R.R. Stuart to inform him of their intention to violate the injunction by encouraging mass picketing. They did so. They were arrested, tried, and released after being warned to cease picketing. They went directly from court to the picket line with all their fellow unemployed league members and strikers who had been present.

May 5, 1934

His Honor Judge Stuart
County Court House
Toledo, Ohio

Honorable Judge Stuart:

On Monday morning May 7, at the Auto-Lite plant, the Lucas County Unemployed League, in protest of the injunction issued by your court, will deliberately and specifically violate the

him, naked as a jaybird, up and down the downtown streets.

Next day the papers carried a large picture of him on the front page, but they had their artist broaden and lengthen the tie to hide the family jewels. You can bet that picture discouraged a lot of scabs, but it got a big round of applause from the unionists in Ohio.

Strikers fight National Guard

The Auto-Lite strikers battled first the police, then the company guards and deputies, and finally the National Guard. The first day the Guard came in they fired without warning at the unarmed strikers, killing two and wounding 25.

After those murders, the enraged strikers fought the guard for six days and nights—returning again and again to face tear gas and vomit gas, bayonet charges, and even rifle fire.

During lulls in the battle, we stood on boxes educating the guardsmen about the issues in the strike and how they were being used against the workers. By the way, the casualties were not all one-sided. The hospitals were patching up not only strikers but police, deputies, and the National Guardsmen.

On June 4, the company surrendered and signed on the dotted line a union contract giving the strikers priority on jobs, a 5-percent wage increase, and other concessions; agreed to withdraw all court charges and to pay all court costs. The logjam in Toledo had finally been broken, and 19 auto plants were organized before the year ended. The road was cleared to make Toledo a union town.

As a participant in the Auto-Lite strike of 1934, I appreciate this opportunity to join with you in this 50th anniversary celebration. It is a credit to all of you who organized this anniversary to keep alive the memory of labor's untapped strength as demonstrated in the Auto-Lite strike and all the other battles which prove that in unions we are strong. ■

injunction enjoining us from sympathetically picketing peacefully in support of the striking Auto Workers Federal Union.

We sincerely believe that this court intervention, preventing us from picketing, is an abrogation of our democratic rights, contrary to our constitutional liberties and contravenes the spirit and the letter of Section 7a of the NRA.

Further, we believe that the spirit and intent of this arbitrary injunction is another specific example of an organized movement to curtail the rights of all workers to organize, strike and picket effectively.

Therefore, with full knowledge of the principles involved and the possible consequences, we openly and publicly violate an injunction which, in our opinion, is a suppressive and oppressive act against all workers.

Sincerely yours,

Lucas County Unemployed League
Anti-Injunction Committee
Sam Pollock Sec'y

... Ferdinand Marcos falls

(continued from page 1)

of power in the revolutionary sense. You see a transfer of power from one group of elites to another" (*San Francisco Examiner*, Feb. 26).

Marcos' rule depended on three factors: his skill in demobilizing the Filipino people (to a large degree due to the support of the Catholic Church), the support of the United States, and the loyalty of the armed forces.

Protracted dictatorship and the decline of the economy had already alienated the majority of the Filipino people by the early 1980s, setting the stage for the explosion which followed the assassination of Benigno Aquino in August 1983.

A powerful mass movement arose—crystallized in the reformist BANDILA coalition of Agapito "Butz" Aquino and the nationalist BAYAN coalition, which is influenced by the underground and Communist Party-led National Democratic Front. This movement began questioning the relationship between the United States and the Marcos dictatorship, and increasingly relied on mass mobilizations to confront the regime and its U.S. backers.

The formation of BAYAN in May 1985 was particularly significant, since that coalition called for the expulsion from the country of U.S. bases key to maintaining U.S. power in the region. BAYAN also called for genuine land reform and the overthrow of Marcos by the Filipino people by means of nationwide "people's strikes." BAYAN is a federation of labor unions, peasant organizations, slumdweller groups, and students, numbering up to 2 million people.

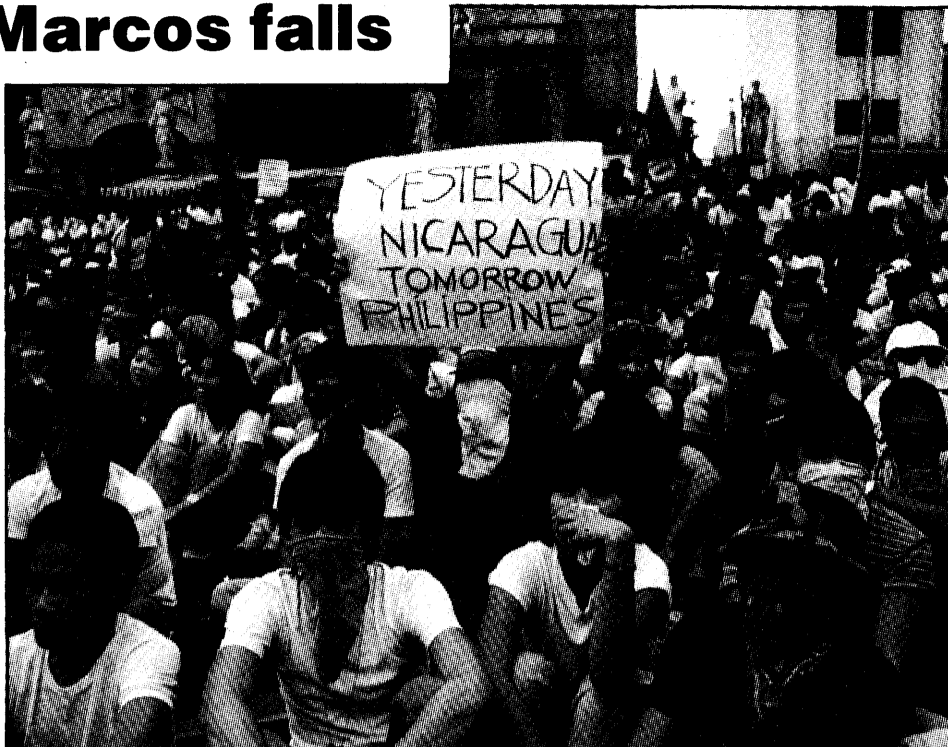
The last two Philippine elections were called by Marcos in part to deflect the independent thrust of the mass movement. BAYAN thus called a boycott of the elections to expose them as fraudulent, to combat the electoralist illusions encouraged by the elite opposition, and to signify BAYAN's opposition to the limited program of the anti-Marcos capitalist politicians.

Church hierarchy

In contrast to the action orientation of the mass coalitions, the elite capitalist opposition sought to remove Marcos via U.S.-guaranteed elections. It sought to replace the dictator with the least amount of mass involvement, so as to avoid disturbing the economic and political power of the ruling class as a whole. It saw Marcos' economic policies and "cronyism" as threatening its own political and economic interests, particularly since the regime was unable to defuse the mass movement or defeat the peasant insurrection led by the Communist Party's New People's Army.

For its part, the Catholic Church, disgruntled with Marcos for the same reasons as the elite opposition, began distancing itself from the regime. Cardinal Jaime Sin brokered the Cory Aquino-Salvador Laurel slate, and priests and nuns formed the backbone of the independent election monitors.

The mass movement did not bypass the elite opposition because of the lingering electoralist illusions of the people, coupled with the absence of a political alternative



Supporters of BAYAN rally in Manila

representing the workers and neighborhood organizations and allied to the peasant movement. Nevertheless, these illusions were dealt a sharp blow by the Feb. 7 experience, shown by the demonstration of half-a-million people within 12 hours of the announcement that Marcos had been reelected president.

Marcos' refusal to comply with Washington's demand for "credible elections," coupled with Ronald Reagan's apparent acceptance of Marcos' reelection, threw the elite opposition into confusion. They were forced to turn to that which they fear most—mass mobilizations—if they were to gain anything from the election.

With the help of the Catholic Church and its emphasis on nonviolent action within legal bounds, the elite opposition gingerly announced a program of mass demonstrations (masked as "people's prayer rallies"), economic boycotts, and a general strike (labeled a "national day of prayer and nonviolent protest"). The split in the army hierarchy and the sudden disintegration of the dictatorship forestalled the need to carry out these "dangerous" tactics.

The view from Washington

The United States had demanded "credible elections" to stabilize the regime in Manila and enable it to turn its full attention to combatting the Communist-led rural insurgency. The open theft of the election robbed Marcos of any credibility, and posed a major dilemma for the United States, leading to a vacillating policy.

For the United States as much as for the elite opposition, the mutiny of a pro-U.S. wing of the army (hardly a coincidence) was a godsend, destroying Marcos' last base of support while preserving a 250,000 strong capitalist army. This force immediately transferred its loyalties to Cory Aquino and the elite opposition. In the words of Lt. Col. Don Brown, an Asian specialist in the Pentagon, "It was the best we could have hoped for" (*San Francisco Examiner*, Feb. 25).

Aquino and the elite opposition

Cory Aquino proved the ideal candidate for the capitalist opposition. Aquino was untainted by the opportunism and sordid history of virtually all other capitalist opposition leaders. Hence, in many Filipinos' eyes, her candidacy converted the

election into a plebiscite on the regime. As a result, the anti-Marcos sentiment of the Filipino people was galvanized behind a capitalist program with few answers for the worker and peasant majority of the country.

The working people bear the brunt of the \$26-billion foreign debt, of 30-percent unemployment, of galloping inflation, of 70-percent poverty, and of rent gouging and lack of land for the poor peasants. The struggle against these conditions will deepen, particularly when present euphoria and illusions in Aquino die down.

Paralleling Haiti, the democratic struggle against the holdovers from the old regime will resurface, especially since Aquino has retained many Marcos officials, including Defense Minister Enrile, Chief of Staff

and socialism will continue, free of the constraints caused by the dictatorship's repression, and with the elite opposition unable to hide its reactionary program behind struggle against Marcos.

The election boycott

In this light, the fact that an important sector of the anti-Marcos opposition called for boycotting the February election was significant. The programmatic basis for the boycott was Aquino's failure to call for the dismantlement of the bases, genuine land reform, an unconditional amnesty, and the nationalization of basic industry (*Malaya*, Feb. 2, 1986). As Leto Villar, a labor delegate to BAYAN's executive council stated, "We want to raise the level of Philippine politics from that of personalities to basic people's issues."

Given the groundswell of support for Aquino, the boycott movement represented a groping step toward an understanding that no section of Philippine capital can truly lead a struggle for national and social liberation. Recognizing this logic, many of BAYAN's leaders, including Chairman Lorenzo Tanada, left the coalition to support Aquino. Rogaciano Mercado, a pro-BAYAN assemblyman, has joined the new Aquino cabinet as minister of public works.

Mass support for Aquino had its effect on BAYAN. As the election drew closer, the emphasis of the boycott shifted more toward exposing the probability of election fraud. It became a passive boycott, which failed to point out the omissions in Aquino's program. As a result, the influence of the boycotters was minimized, to the point that bourgeois commentators now falsely crow that the left had no part in the fall of Marcos.

Some U.S. leftists now lament that the boycotters should have endorsed Aquino so



Puppet and puppeteer. Reagan was Marcos' strongest supporter.

Ramos, and Central Bank head Jose Fernandez.

Aquino has agreed to maintain the U.S. bases until 1991. She will now have to take a stand on the presence of the bases after that time. But the masses may not be so patient because the bases are a symbol of foreign domination.

One of Aquino's close advisers, Ramon Mitra, now agriculture minister, has already explained that Aquino's vague stand during the campaign ("keeping our options open") really means holding out for better terms. As Mitra put it, "If we say now that we are for the continuation of the...bases [after 1991],...then what is there left to negotiate?" (*Philippine News*, Jan. 20, 1986)

Aquino's position on the foreign debt is to renegotiate payments. She says that "much less stringent conditions [for repayment] are imposed on countries with new and credible leaderships, as in the case of Argentina today." In Argentina, the austerity program imposed on the country as one of these "less stringent conditions" has led to the third general strike (on Jan. 24) against its "new and credible leadership."

Finally, Aquino has presented no alternative land reform plan to that introduced by Marcos years ago.

So the struggle for national liberation

as to be in a position to influence her today. But endorsement would have fed mass illusions in Aquino and her electoral road, disorienting the workers and peasants from being ready for future betrayals by the elite opposition. Anti-Marcos unity should not come at the cost of obscuring the fundamental class interests of the masses.

Indeed, if the left was isolated, it was partially due to its inability to project itself as a political alternative to both Marcos and the elite opposition. As the Aquino regime reveals its capitalist face, the workers and peasants will seek a leadership independent of the ruling class.

A new stage has opened in which the government now in power will be unable to meet the expectations of the 53 million Filipino people. The future will bring continued austerity and the dissipation of mass illusions in the elite opposition.

The long struggle to bring down Ferdinand Marcos proved that a determined people can succeed against all odds. That experience will not be forgotten. The Philippine revolution combines the struggles for political democracy, national liberation and land reform, with the class struggle of the workers and peasants against capitalism itself. The fall of Ferdinand Marcos is a tremendous step toward ultimate victory on all of these fronts. ■

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Murdoch, Thatcher target Fleet St. printers' unions



By HAYDEN PERRY

LONDON—Scarcely a year after the British miners suffered a serious defeat, printers in this country are reeling under an assault that has taken the jobs of 5500 workers and threatens thousands more. Two of Britain's most powerful unions have been rendered virtually powerless before the attack.

The embattled printers produce four of England's national newspapers: *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The News of the World*, and *The Sun*. Like so much of British industry, these papers have been taken over by an American.

Rupert Murdoch, an Australian who acquired a number of U.S. papers and became an American citizen, has moved on to new conquests on Fleet St., the center of London's newspaper business.

From his experience in the United States, Murdoch learned how to use new technology to devastate jobs and working conditions. Murdoch also learned in the United States that the printing unions—led by timid, conservative leaders and hobbled by repressive labor laws—can be shoved aside when they stand in his way.

Similar conditions in Britain make Murdoch confident he can ride roughshod over the London printers. He is not content to break their resistance to new technology. He intends to eliminate the traditional printers' unions altogether.

Assaulting the Fleet St. unions is a heavy challenge to any employer. For years, the National Graphical Association (NGA) and the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (SOGAT) stood like the Maginot Line,

resisting technological change, confident that their monopoly of labor would ensure their members' jobs for a lifetime.

Murdoch did not attempt a frontal assault on the powerful unions on Fleet St. Instead, he attacked from the rear. He built a huge \$150 million printing plant in the London District of Wapping, a short walk from the Tower of London.

Like the Tower, Murdoch's Wapping plant was built to withstand a siege. The latest security devices maintain electric surveillance inside and outside the plant. Coils of razor-sharp barbed wire are strewn about the ground to repel any assault by the enemy—organized labor.

Murdoch made it plain he would not run his plant under Fleet St. union rules. He stood adamant on three conditions: First, he demanded a no-strike pledge; second, the right to assign any worker to any task; third, an open shop—no union control over hiring or firing.

Accepting these terms would cut the heart out of the unions. Murdoch, however, does not want even a weakened NGA or SOGAT. He wants a brand new work force.

Another union, the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication, and Plumbing Union (EETPU), is supplying Murdoch with his new labor force. They are actually recruiting scabs to replace fellow unionists. Eric Hammond, the leader of EETPU, is willing to sign a single union no-strike contract. He calls this policy "new realism."

Under English law, laid-off workers are entitled to as much as several thousand pounds redundancy pay. This

could cost Murdoch an estimated 40 million pounds. But Murdoch has a way out. If workers go on strike, they lose all redundancy (severance) pay. They are said to have "broken their contract," and lose all rights to their jobs.

Unions forced to strike

Murdoch goaded SOGAT and NGA into an impasse, and they struck his Fleet St. plants. Murdoch then transferred production to his new plant and laid off 5500 workers with nothing more than their last paycheck. Their prospects of getting another printing job is almost nil.

Almost all of the journalists—except for about 20 honorable holdouts—have abandoned their brother and sister printers and disappeared behind the barbed wire at Wapping. Murdoch told his Fleet St. writers, members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), to move to Wapping or suffer the fate of NGA and SOGAT. Along with this stick, he dangled a carrot of a 2000 pounds per year raise.

Meanwhile, other Fleet St. publishers are watching Murdoch closely, preparing to make a leap into the new technology. *The Times Mirror* laid off 2100 workers last year. Others are preparing new plants and deserting Fleet St.

The unions say they do not oppose new technology. They want to ensure that it is introduced in such a way that its social benefits help the worker and society in general. Condemning thousands to permanent unemployment is not the way.

Government shackles unions

The most powerful enemy the printers face is the British government. Since coming to power in 1979, the Tories have been creating legal shackles that render strikers almost powerless.

Murdoch is using Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's anti-union arsenal in creative ways. By breaking his enterprise into several separate companies, he has made union action against them an illegal "secondary boycott." SOGAT and NGA were each fined 25,000 pounds for daring to ask workers not to distribute the scab papers.

Hemmed in by these legal barricades, the printers need the whole-hearted support of the entire British working class. Instead, they are being stabbed in the back by the EETPU. The central Trade Union Council (TUC) has the power to expel the EETPU for scabbing. But the TUC fears a split in the union movement. They let EETPU off with vague promises that have no effect on the strike.

EETPU leader Hammond justifies his union's betrayal by claiming new conciliatory tactics are needed to confront new technology. Actually, he represents a mood of pessimism following the miners' defeat and the erosion of Britain's industrial base in the face of foreign competition.

A growing army of three-and-a-half-million unemployed hangs like a cloud over the industrial scene. Thatcher says they should start their own businesses. The TUC has no better advice to offer.

Nevertheless, several mass pickets of 3000 to 5000 workers demonstrate that widespread sympathy exists for the printers. On one occasion, 400 Kent miners came to help. There have been sharp clashes with police as pickets try to stop the delivery trucks. The police have been undergoing special riot-duty training in the use of plastic bullets, armored cars, and other riot-control gear.

While mass pickets will keep Murdoch's perfidy in the headlines, the battle zone must be enlarged to encompass the government's entire drive against labor. If the TUC treats this as "just another strike," defeat is certain. Labor must deploy forces on the trade-union and political field that can match the resources commanded by the British ruling class. ■

By DAN LABOTZ

Mexican workers fight crisis, austerity

MEXICO CITY—Tens of thousands of Mexican workers have marched and demonstrated in the last month for higher wages, for union democracy, and against the government's economic policies and the austerity programs of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 workers in 100 independent unions, led by the electrical workers in the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (SME) marched to the Zocalo, the national palace, on Jan. 29. They chanted slogans critical of the government and the foreign banks.

Then, on Feb. 6, there was another demonstration—this time of some 122 organizations of workers, peasants and poor people, in which 14,000 people participated. That demonstration called for repudiation of the foreign debt.

The demonstrations may mark a resurgence of the Mexican labor movement after three years of defeat and demoralization. After a strike wave in 1982 led by the teachers, unions suffered a series of defeats and the debilitating effects of inflation.

Now, things seem to be moving again,

though there isn't a big strike wave yet. The government, the employers, and the union bureaucracy (called the "charros" here) still have the upper hand. But there are some signs that the worker militancy goes beyond the demonstrations and marches.

One of the most important movements is among the teachers in the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. The primary and secondary school teachers in Oaxaca have been on strike since Jan. 16 against the union bureaucracy and for a democratic state union convention.

Dozens have participated in a hunger strike and about 1000 marched the 555 kilometers from the state capital in Oaxaca to Mexico City. They remain camped in the patio of the national cathedral at night. During the day they go out to speak to other workers at schools, offices and factories about their fight for union

democracy and take collections for financial support.

The teachers have repeatedly marched and demonstrated in front of the union headquarters (the FNTE, National Union of Educational Workers, or Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Educacion) and in front of government offices. They are planning to bring all 34,000 teachers in Oaxaca to the capital if their demands for a democratic union convention aren't met.

They continue this fight despite the fact that some of their leaders have been assassinated, presumably by the union bureaucrats. In addition, there are several other small struggles like the long strike by the steelworkers in Chihuahua, which has been going on now for months, and small strikes by a new union of seamstresses.

One of the important tests of the labor

movement may be the electrical workers' contract which expires in early March. SME is seeking a wage increase of over 85 percent while the government and the employers and union officials have generally tried to keep wage increases to 34 percent.

Still, these small battles are only a beginning if the workers are to protect their wages and standard of living—much less change national policy and challenge the International Monetary Fund, which is, after all, to challenge the capitalist system.

The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the state unions, the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) and the Union Federation of State Employees (FSTFE), still control the labor movement. The independent unions which were able to get together for the demonstrations on Jan. 29 and Feb. 6 have not yet been able to organize a coordinated offensive against the labor bureaucracy, big business, and the government.

If the movement of the independent unions grows in militancy once again as it did in 1982, this will increase the general level of worker militancy and have a salutary effect on the Mexican class struggle as a whole. ■

Duvalier forced to flee Haiti; now cronies are under fire

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Haitian dictator "Baby Doc" Jean-Claude Duvalier fled from his presidential palace in the same way that he entered—with a little help from his friends in Washington.

Foreign aid, of which more than \$50 million was provided yearly by U.S. government grants, financed two-thirds of Haiti's \$250 million national budget. Last year, the Duvalier regime earmarked over \$30 million in its budget for undefined "special considerations," a large part of which filled the coffers of the dictator and his entourage. As little as \$1 million is reportedly left in the central bank's reserves.

When certifying foreign aid to Haiti, the U.S. State Department repeatedly dis-counted the dictatorship's record of terror. Although some 50,000 people have been killed since "Papa Doc" Francois Duvalier—"Baby Doc's" father—came to power in 1957, the State Department reported that human rights practices were "improving" in Haiti.

But the plight of Haitian "boat people," combined with a new wave of anti-Duvalier protests, placed "Baby Doc" in the world spotlight. Duvalier's blatant thievery and terror campaigns began to prove more embarrassing to Washington.

Investment by U.S. corporations had waned. "They liked Haiti," said one of the country's industrialists, "But there was always this residual fear—dictatorship, bribes." Tourism had dropped from 250,000 visitors five years ago to less than 100,000 last year.

The United States was further alarmed by the increasing fury of protests against the dictatorship. Mass mobilizations spread across the country beginning last

November when army troops attacked unemployed youths demonstrating in the city of Gonaives. By January, thousands of students had joined a school boycott.

Roadblocks were set up, and police were apprehended and disarmed. A general strike that began on Feb. 3 shut about 40 percent of assembly plants in the country and 80 percent of all businesses in Port-au-Prince, the capital of 1 million.

Early last month, the U.S. ambassador joined an emissary from Jamaica in secret talks with Duvalier and his advisers. The

United States reportedly told Duvalier that the only way he could stay in power was by means of a "bloodbath." Under the circumstances, this was unacceptable. A State Department official later pointed out, "This would brutalize the population and possibly radicalize it."

On Feb. 7, Duvalier was replaced by a ruling council that was virtually hand-picked by the dictator before he fled. The head of the council, Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, confirmed to reporters during his first news conference, "Duvalier turned to



me before he left and said, 'You're the new president.'"

Namphy's first measure was to impose a curfew on the country. Troops were dispatched to keep order. Protests have continued, however.

Thousands of Haitians have signed petitions and joined street demonstrations demanding the removal of the former dictator's cronies from the government. Schools in the capital were forced to close once again. An anti-Duvalier resistance leader in Gonaives told *The New York Times*: "The majority of people here are very skeptical....For them this means Duvalierism without Duvalier."

But the new government's promise of future elections gained an immediate nod of approval from U.S. officials. Big business is once again hopeful that foreign capital can be attracted. The Manufacturers Association of Haiti emphasizes that the country, "a two-hour flight from Miami, has a large labor pool available for \$3 a day."

Nevertheless, CBS television reports that the Pentagon has drawn up contingency plans to land troops if the ruling council is unable to maintain order. U.S. officials have expressed concern that some exiles "radicalized" during their time abroad. Washington is worried, says *The Wall Street Journal*, that the exiles "could begin vying for power" if they return.

Last month, a group of prominent Haitian political leaders exiled in France put forth a "freedom charter" for a mass "democratic front" in their country. This charter specifically rejects the U.S.-imposed transition rule.

Demands of the charter include the call for a sovereign constituent assembly; freedom to organize trade unions and political parties; the dissolution of the army, police, and all other institutions of the dictatorship; and the repudiation of all financial debts incurred under the Duvalier regime. The freedom charter specifies that the choice of new economic and political forms be left to the Haitian people themselves.

Haiti: The roots of rebellion

By KWAME M.A. SOMBURU

The Haitian revolution of 182 years ago was the only time in world history that slaves successfully defeated their slave-masters, declared complete independence, and established a government.

Five hundred years of tyranny and grinding poverty began in 1492, when Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Hayti (the aboriginal Arawak name, which referred to its many mountains).

In less than 40 years, Columbus and the Spanish conquerors virtually exterminated the Arawak native population, estimated at over 1 million. By 1550, there were only 150 left.

In 1697, Spain ceded the island to France. The French named their colony St. Domingue and developed coffee, spice, and sugar plantations with imported African slave labor. Brutal 18-hour workdays reduced the working life-span of the average slave in Haiti to only four to seven years.

Sugar soon became the colony's most valuable crop. By 1742 sugar production exceeded production in all of the British West Indies. By the 1780s the colony accounted for over one-third of French

foreign commerce and was the wealthiest European colonial possession in the Americas.

"Give them Blacks to eat"

The class struggles in France that resulted in the French Revolution were reflected in St. Domingue. Under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture—and later, Jean-Jacques Dessalines—the Haitian Revolution triumphed after more than a dozen years of brutal racial and class warfare.

After Napoleon Bonaparte became head of France in 1799, he tried to re-enslave the Africans in the colonies—who had been declared free by the revolutionary French convention of Feb. 3, 1794. Napoleon sent his brother-in-law, General LeClerc, to St. Domingue with 50,000 troops to reinstitute slavery by any means necessary.

The French purchased bloodhounds in Cuba to pursue rebels. Soldiers were instructed not to give any rations to the dogs. "Give them Blacks to eat," their officers told them.

In June 1802, the usually cautious and wily Toussaint was tricked by Napoleon, kidnapped, and sent to France, where he died in prison within a year. Dessalines was able to escape from a later attempt to capture him and he organized the final struggle for independence—which came on Jan. 1, 1804.

They renamed the former colony Haiti. The new Declaration of Independence read: "Wherever they near our shores, may the French tremble, if not from the guilt of past atrocities, then from the resolve to slaughter any person born French, whose footprint henceforth contaminates our land of liberty...."

Within the next few months, very few

French men, women, or children escaped Dessalines' wrath. All who were captured were put to death. Whites of other nationalities were generally spared.

"Haiti is a public nuisance"

This nation of former slaves represented a threat to the other European slave colonies and to the United States, which was dominated by the slave-owning oligarchy of the Southern states. The United States refused to recognize Haiti for 58 years—until after the Southern slavemasters had seceded from the union.

U.S. warships visited Haitian ports "to protect American lives and property" in 1857, '59, '68, '69, '76, '88, '89, and every year from 1902 to 1913 except 1910. In 1888 the U.S. Secretary of State referred to Haiti as "a public nuisance at our doors."

In 1914, the U.S. intervened directly to assist in the overthrow of the president of Haiti and to install a new one. A company of U.S. Marines robbed the National Bank of Haiti at gun-point, stealing \$500,000 in gold that belonged to the incumbent government. The gold was taken to the vaults of the National City Bank in New York in order to pressure the government to sign a treaty authorizing the United States to collect taxes and handle Haitian finances.

The following year, the United States invaded Haiti and took complete control of its treasury. In 1918, the U.S. government rewrote the Haitian constitution, specifically to change a section prohibiting foreigners from owning property. The U.S. occupation lasted until 1934.

U.S. aids Duvalier dictatorship

During the occupation, a young physician, Francois Duvalier, wrote articles on Haitian ethnology and became a champion of Black nationalism. "Papa Doc" skillfully used Voodoo—an agglomeration of African and Catholic elements that serves as the religion of the masses—as a political tool in his acquisition of power. The masses mistakenly identified Duvalier as a symbol of their aspirations against the domestic elite and foreign exploiters.

In 1957, Duvalier became president.

Soon afterward, he organized a terrorist police force called the Tontons Macoutes ("bogey men"). They were initially trained by a U.S. military mission in 1959.

After the death of Francois Duvalier in 1971, the United States aided Duvalier's playboy son, Jean Claude Duvalier, who inherited his father's title of "president-for-life." Today, Haiti is a source of cheap labor and raw materials for close to 300



U.S. corporations and the outlet for a U.S.-dominated tourist industry.

Poverty steadily increased during the rule of the Duvaliers—while the United States helped keep the dictators supplied with military aid and personal riches. Only 1 percent of the population owns over 45 percent of the wealth. Average per-capita income declined from \$420 a year in 1980 to \$320 last year, according to the World Bank. Unemployment is 48 percent.

In 1934, the United States ended its military occupation of Haiti in the belief that the country was at long last under perpetual U.S. domination. The recent mass uprisings in Haiti, however, forced the U.S.-backed "president for life" to flee for his life.

Haiti was the first Black republic in the world and the second independent republic in the Americas. The first Haitian Revolution—and its legendary heroes such as Toussaint L'Ouverture—inspired oppressed people around the world for generations. Now once again, the beacon of the Haitian Revolution has been ignited.

Free Frantz Nelson!

Frantz Nelson, a leader of the Haitian Liberation Party (PLH) and signer of the "Freedom Charter" (see above) returned to Haiti on Feb. 14, whereupon he was immediately arrested and sent to prison.

Telegrams demanding his immediate release should be sent to the Haitian Embassy, 2311 Mass. Ave. NW, Washington, D.C.

Some truth emerges in reporter's book on contras

By JOSEPH AUCIELLO

With the Contras: A Reporter in the Wilds of Nicaragua, by Christopher Dickey. Simon and Schuster, 327 pp., \$18.95.

Last December, Nicaraguan contra leaders published a self-flattering article in *The New York Times* Op Ed page which purported to outline their political goals.

We are for freedom, justice and democracy in Nicaragua, said the contras. Our revolution against Somoza has been kidnapped by the Sandinistas and betrayed, handed over to the Russians and Cubans, they said. And by the way, those human rights abuses that have been reported in the newspapers?—regrettable lapses only.

If such talk came only from the contras themselves, there would be little reason for alarm. But the anti-Sandinista forces are backed by the U.S. government—Reagan Republicans setting the line, the Democrats following suit. And with such support has come the virtual *contra-ization* of the press.

Christopher Dickey's book is not the antidote to the daily obsequiousness of the press. He, too, is infected by it. But in him the reporter and ideologue are at odds, and from this conflict some truth emerges. These days it is something to be grateful for.

Dickey's exposure of the contras' methods, and what such methods reveal of their goals, will be a shock.

"Tigrillo hangs people"

"Human rights abuses" is not the issue. This term is far too mild and misleading to describe the brutality of the contras. Intimidation, beatings, robbery, destruction of homes and livelihood, rape, torture and murder—these atrocities are the conscious policy of the contras.

Dickey recounts a contra leader's description of one of his field commanders, Tigrillo, or little tiger—"you cross the river with him and he becomes a tiger. He hangs people. He rapes. He shoots people who don't obey him. I once saw one of his soldiers challenge him and he pulled out his pistol and shot him. He doesn't have any doubts about killing."

Neither, apparently, do the other contras. We read about the murders of nuns, teachers, workers, and other civilians. Contras kill each other in arguments over prostitutes, or in envy, irritation or drunkenness. The contra high command finally is forced to execute field commanders, men like Suicida and Krill.

A contra official explains to Dickey: "We couldn't keep being mild; we had to set a good example and a good precedent—above all in the case of Krill, who had killed so many, well, commandos."

"Above everything he had killed a good group commander," said Krill's captor. "Right there in the camp. For pleasure. For pleasure! That was our complaint against him. It was too much."

These methods do not describe an army that is confident of winning the support of the masses, or even cares to try. In this the contras have preserved the outlook of Somoza's National Guard. From Dickey's book a psychological portrait emerges of



Girl wounded by contras

the type of man who first joined the Guard—the men who constitute the backbone of the contras today.

Consider Nicaragua before the July 1979 revolution. A peasant who could look forward only to a life of grueling work and poverty joins the National Guard of Anastasio Somoza Debayle. Now he is a man with a gun, feared and obeyed. He receives benefits, privileges. The sergeant dreams of becoming an officer, handing out rewards and punishments, controlling greater numbers of men, deciding life and death.

Dickey describes one group of National Guardsmen who escaped to El Salvador: "They had no money to buy a milpa [small farm] and, anyway, no desire to farm the land of another country. If they had wanted to be farmers, after all, they would not have gone into the Guardia....All they really

knew how to do was fight, and the territory they knew how to fight in was Nicaragua."

The Guardsman is transformed into a contra and, in what seems to him to be self-defense and survival, he becomes a vampire, spilling blood in order to live. Or, as a contra leader explained to Dickey, "there are people who learn to kill and who love it."

An aid to unravel the myths

Last year alone Congress voted those people \$27 million in "humanitarian aid," enabling them to continue their war against Nicaragua.

Perhaps "With the Contras" will make it harder for the United States to perpetuate that war. Yet the book has many weaknesses. Dickey relies too heavily on contra sources and is often willing to accept their point of view. Many contra criticisms of the Sandinistas go unchallenged.

And the style of the book poses its own problems. The narrative technique, which lends an air of truthfulness to the entire text, is belied by the biased sources meticulously listed in the 42 pages of notes. Without checking these notes the reader can be misled.

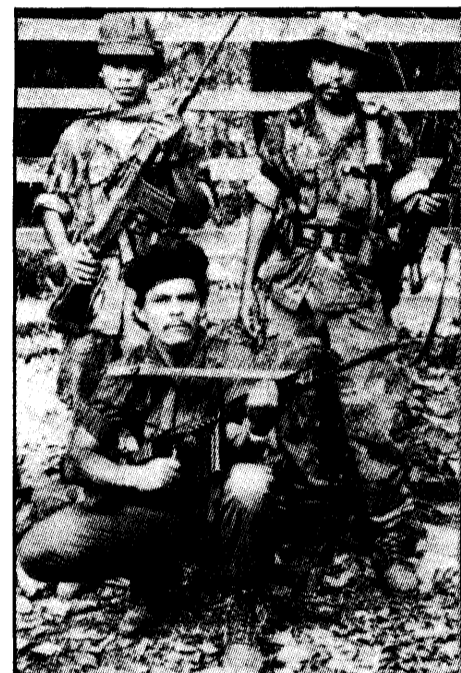
Early in the book, for instance, we seem to be side-by-side with Eden Pastora, the famed Commander Zero, in the last month of the insurrection against Somoza. In this flattering account Pastora triumphs, not only over the National Guard, but over the bureaucratic incompetency of the Sandinistas as well. Turning to the notes, we find the sole source for this "information" is Pastora himself in an interview given two years after he took up arms against the Sandinistas and became the uneasy ally of the contras.

Despite these drawbacks, Dickey's book

captures a sense of what the war is like. "With the Contras" covers a wide terrain. Dickey reports from the battlefields in El Salvador and Nicaragua, details the machinations of contra leaders in Miami and Honduras, eavesdrops on policy-planning meetings in Washington, D.C., and describes the maneuvering of the CIA throughout Latin America.

Dickey does not succeed in all he has undertaken. His biases are a hindrance. But the information he has unearthed is significant.

This book will help unravel the pretensions, myths and lies that the United States has fostered about the contras. For that reason alone, "With the Contras" deserves to be read. ■



Contra chief "Suicida" and cronies

The Color Purple: Moving, but considerably flawed

By ZAKIYA SOMBURU

The Color Purple, by Alice Walker. Simon & Schuster, 295 pp., \$3.95. Movie by Steven Spielberg, Warner Bros.

"The Color Purple" takes place in rural Georgia and Zimbabwe (known as Rhodesia under British colonialism). It spans three decades from 1909 to the beginning of World War II.

The film is based on the novel of the same name by Alice Walker. The author deserves much praise for her knowledge of the era and her masterful blending of the lives and experiences of a few African-American families and individuals with the people of an African ethnic group, called the Olinka. All of them are caught in the

trap of white domination—American and European style.

But the novel has some drawbacks. For example, Walker has one of her characters, Nettie, come to the conclusion after superficial investigation that Africans are to blame for the slave trade. Without an alternative explanation, this statement only perpetuates the myths that mar the learning of Black history.

Black Americans were victims of legal discrimination, frequent atrocities such as

unravels her tale of incest, racism, brutal male chauvinism, sex (heterosexual and homosexual), lynchings, white paternalism, capitalist and imperialist exploitation.

The letters also detail the heroic struggles of Black people trying to understand and cope with their environment—and enjoy some aspects of their existence.

The "Color Purple" opens with Celie as a victim of sexual abuse and impregnation by her stepfather, a man she and Nettie believe is their father until they learn the truth years later. Their real father and his two brothers were lynched when Celie was two years old and her mother was pregnant with Nettie.

That incident is just the first of several negative portrayals of Black males. But the reasons for this negativity is not made clear—if dealt with at all. Moreover, these negative images are not balanced out by any positive ones.

The vestiges of institutionalized slavery and continuing white oppression is what is responsible for much of the internalized oppression that the Black characters—particularly males—inflict on each other and their families. That should have been elaborated in the film, not to excuse such conduct, but to heighten awareness of the pervasive direct and indirect influences of the dominant society.

But this lack of depth is more glaring in the film than in Alice Walker's book. The film is not an accurate reflection of the novel. Unfortunately, more people will see the film than will read the novel.

I found the film to be of high interest, absorbing, and worth seeing. But if at all possible, the novel should be read before viewing the film. ■

MOVIE REVIEW

lynchings, beatings, burnings, rape of Black women, and general emasculation of Black males. At the same time, the continent of Africa was ruthlessly exploited of its human and natural resources by European colonial powers.

The majority of Americans, regardless of ethnicity or education, are virtually ignorant of the real truth of the period covered in "The Color Purple." Just the other day I met a young white man who did not know that legal discrimination against Blacks once existed in this country.

Therefore, any Black writer who writes about the condition of Blacks during that era and desires acclaim from Black people today, has to include indictments of the people and system responsible for the hell that we caught then—and are still catching now.

The novel is written in the form of letters. Through the letters of Celie (later known as Miss Celie) and Nettie—two close, warmly devoted sisters—Walker

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Ladies iron out problems and cook up a storm

"Mommies, mommies,
Don't be commies,
Stay at home and
Fold pajammies."

On Feb. 16, at a benefit performance for the San Francisco Gray Panthers, a flock of faithful San Francisco ladies and their gentlemen escorts were treated to an old-fashioned revival. Ladies Against Women (LAW), a group whose time is nigh in San Francisco, held a session in Consciousness Lowering (CL) led by ChairMan Mrs. T. "Bill" Banks and Founderette Mrs. Chester Cholesterol.

The opening picket line sported SAVE THE SPERMS picket signs, a testimonial on the rights of the Unconceived, and an educational on "Sperms Are People, Too." Gentlemen in the audience were gently reminded by the ladies not to engage in unmentionable male behavior that would flush away their precious sperm. Cheerleader Canni Cotten led the audience in several life-affirming cheers:

"Who, me?"

I'm no queer,
I have a baby
Every year!"

Members of the LAW Men's Auxiliary contributed to the Consciousness Lowering in ways ranging from muscling the podium around on the stage to a guest appearance of gynecologist Dr. Mal Practice. The ladies especially appreciated that the revered Dr. Mal took time from his busy leisure schedule to attend the session.

Although proper ladies leave weighty matters like foreign policy to men, LAW delicately handled this subject by offering support to Nancy's China policy. The thrifty slogan "Make America A Man Again: Invade Abroad" wastes not a word on masculine detail and can be accessorized for any occasion.

Of course, no CL Session would be complete without a cooking demonstration. Mrs. Chester Cholesterol shared her favorite recipe, Twinkies From Scratch. Watch LAW's newsletter, *The National Embroiderer*, for more cooking hints.

Rounding out the evening were Mrs. F. (Phyllis) LeShaft and the Right, Right Reverend Jerry Fallout with a final benediction. No one could display his



The Rev. Jerry Fallout and friends in the Plutonium Players' "Ladies Against Women." For more information write: 1600 Woolsey St. #7, Berkeley CA 94703.

command of fundamentalist theology better than the Right Rev as he asked, "When Adam smacked Eve, did she go running to some pinko women's shelter? No!"

Each lady returned to her own kitchen that evening with her consciousness duly salvaged and comforted by the final cheer:

"Keep America
On the track
One step forward

Three steps back!"

LAW is extending its missionary work and has gone on pilgrimages around the country, even to Canada where they observed, "there certainly are a lot of foreigners up here." So, ladies, look for notices about CL sessions in your area, wherever white gloves and polka dot dresses are sold. Who knows, they or other volunteer do-gooders may stage a protest appearance against the unladylike Abortion Rights Marches on March 9 in Washington and March 16 in Los Angeles. ■

Our readers speak out

New Zealand

Dear editor,

We would like to congratulate you on putting out a superb socialist newspaper.

Down here in New Zealand it is often difficult to form an objective picture of political developments in the United States.

Your reports, written in a clear and accessible style, help to fill the gap. It is good to see that Socialist Action, as well as the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and the Socialist Unity current, are keeping the banner of the Fourth International flying in the United States.

We do not necessarily agree with everything you publish, and regret the divisions that continue to exist among American Trotskyists. But your coverage on the peace and anti-apartheid

movements, Solidarnosc, and trade unions in the United States is exemplary.

With internationalist greetings,

F.M.,
Christchurch, N.Z.

Likes paper

Dear editor,

My friends in the Free South Africa Coalition have found your information on South Africa most hopeful. A friend of mine will be contacting you shortly to get some back issues of *Socialist Action* that have substantial articles on South Africa. Perhaps you could supply some other materials as well.

Keep up the good work.

M.S.R.,
Columbia, S.C.

Leaders stink

Dear editor,

I am enclosing \$5 for a subscription to *Socialist Action*. I'd also like to tell your readers that as a member of the Teamsters union in St. Paul, I support Local P-9 very strongly. I think that their leadership in Washington stinks. I think it's wrong that the governor of our state sent in the National Guard as Hormel's own private army.

I hope to God all the unions in the state of Minnesota remember our governor Rudy Perpich when it's election time. He's not a friend of labor.

What P-9 needs is a lot of support from all the unions. It also has to get support from its townspeople. They have to get a club one foot longer than the ones the police and the guards have. They have to stand shoulder to shoulder. I will join them.

Roy Fitzgerald,
St. Paul, MN

Proud of P-9

The following letter was sent to *Socialist Action* member Jake Cooper by Genora Dollinger [Johnson], leader of the famous Women's Brigade in the Flint General Motors strike of 1936. This letter is reprinted with the author's permission.

Dear Jake,

The news is so dismal each day for those of us who have been midwives of industrial unionism. Labor is taking such a beating on every front. Hard won gains are being scrapped while these caricatures of national union leaders are falling all over each

other to lick the boots of the capitalist owners and managers.

If only these spunky, principled Hormel workers in Austin [Minn.] could know what pride we feel reading about them. And we're proud of you, too, Jake for the role you're playing.

Genora,
Los Angeles

They honked

Dear editor,

Jan. 22, 1986, marked the 13th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision which made abortion legal. Planned

Parenthood, the Committee to Defend Reproductive Rights, S.F. NOW, and others staged 'human billboard' events at several choice locations throughout this city. I was part of a group of 10 from Planned Parenthood at the corner of 6th and Brannan, a major city intersection.

The signs we carried read "Honk, if you support legal abortion."

The response was overwhelmingly positive. Opponents were definitely in the minority. Truck drivers pulled on their air horns. Bus drivers honked in support. Cab drivers were especially supportive.

Christine Vaughn,
San Francisco

Correction

The February 1986 issue of *Socialist Action* contains an article (page 4) titled "Inflamed mob firebombs Cincinnati abortion clinics." This title is incorrect. It should have read, "Two Cincinnati abortion clinics firebombed."

Likewise, the article contains a sentence which reads, "The answer to that question, on Dec. 30, resulted in \$75,000 in arson damage..." The first clause of this sentence, "The answer to that question," should have been omitted from the article.

The pro-choice counter pickets who were defending the clinic on Dec. 28 reported that certain particularly hostile right-to-life demonstrators *did* threaten to destroy the clinic. Numerous phone calls which threatened destruction were received at the clinic itself.

However, the headline falsely gives the impression that the Americans Against Abortion demonstration firebombed the clinics.

On Monday, Dec. 30, in the early hours of the morning, two clinics were bombed almost simultaneously and with the same methods, indicating a concerted effort to shut down the clinics in the city.

Authorities have not made any arrests to date.

Although the local fire officials originally estimated the damage at \$75,000, as we reported, the Planned Parenthood clinic now claims over \$400,000 in damage, considering the medical equipment that was lost.

Both the Planned Parenthood Sanger Clinic and the private Women's Health Care Center have managed to continue providing services. However, fanatical demonstrations in front of the clinics each Saturday have forced two clinics in Cincinnati to stop providing Saturday procedures.—The editor

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Disaster of shuttle Challenger

By DAVID KEIL

The life of teacher Christa McAuliffe was sacrificed on Jan. 28 in a public-relations project that had fooled many people—until it ended in disaster.

By sending her up with the ill-fated space shuttle, the planners of the mission hoped to win more public support for their dead-end goal: To carve out parts of outer space on behalf of U.S. "national" military interests. The tragedy, which claimed the lives of seven astronauts, was a serious military setback for them.

It was candidate Ronald Reagan's idea in the 1984 election campaign to send up a teacher, whose only function on Challenger was to have been to televise two classes. Looking back, the idea appears as "nothing more than an effort to make space travel look mundane," according to the editors of the *Boston Globe*. That it was.

In August 1984, the National Education Association responded, "We don't need to send a teacher into outer space. We need to send teachers into classrooms fully equipped and ready to help students learn." That was correct. Still, many progress-minded people looked forward with excitement to Christa McAuliffe's flight.

McAuliffe was deceived about the safety of the shuttle, as were most people. "Today's space shuttle," she said in an interview, "isn't the type of thing, I think, that anybody really looks at with fear that there's going to be an accident. I feel, probably, safer doing something like that than driving around the New York streets."

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) knew differently, but deliberately fostered a cavalier attitude by including McAuliffe in the plans as a passenger—as if the shuttle were an ordinary airliner.

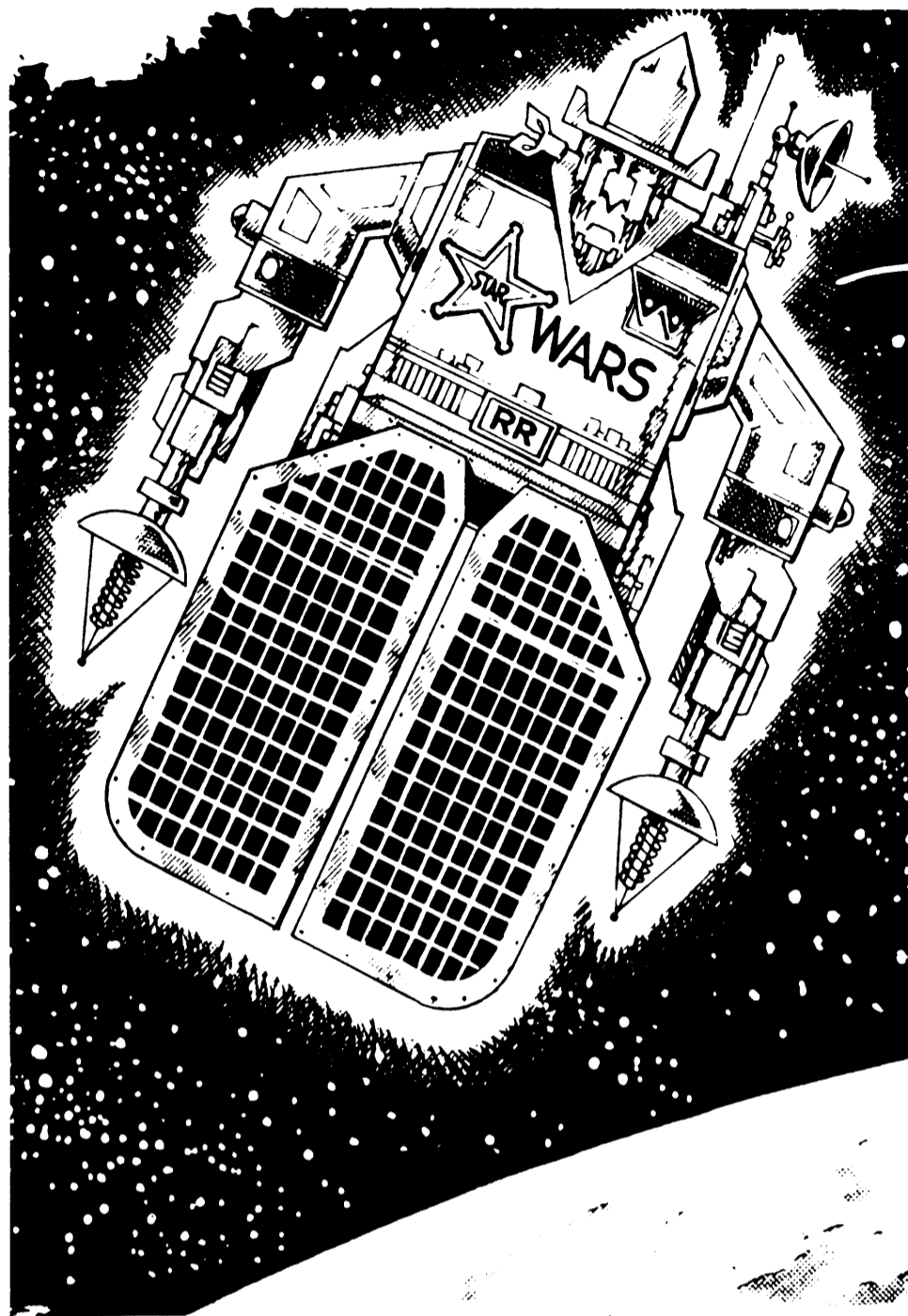
After the disaster, former astronaut Walter Schirra helped expose the deception, saying, "We don't even know how to fly the thing yet."

It appears that NASA needed to feed the safety delusion and to "include the public" by sending up a teacher because business and military support for the shuttle had fallen off. Contractor estimates of operating costs of \$100 per pound for shuttle payloads had turned out to be low by a factor of 20. The Air Force, looking for a reliable way to put weapons in space, has increasingly leaned toward rockets without human crews.

For that reason, the public non-astronauts were recklessly invited aboard the shuttle. Christa McAuliffe and her family paid the price, and schoolchildren will have nightmares for some time.

Still, the promoters of the shuttle are continuing to push it. After all, the major contractors can only benefit financially from waste, sometimes even destruction, in the space program. Rockwell International, which built the four shuttle craft, reaped \$595 million last year on revenues of \$11 billion. Corporations such as Martin Marietta, Morton Thiokol, Lockheed, and Grumman are also at the trough.

General Dynamics is in the picture, too: James M. Beggs had to step aside as NASA



director on Dec. 4, 1985, after he was indicted for fraud in connection with government contracts held by that corporation when he was a General Dynamics executive.

The governmental and corporate decision-makers were aware of the three fatal accidents to U.S. and Soviet astronauts, the frequent malfunctions, and the recent launching failure in the French Ariane satellite program.

They were aware of the secret 1983 report, prepared by Sierra Energy and Risk Assessment Inc., a subcontractor to the Air Force Weapons Laboratory, which concluded that the chance of a catastrophic accident involving the solid-fuel booster rocket was 1 in 35.

They were taking a chance on Jan. 28, and met a disaster. Yet, they give every signal that they will continue to send up non-astronauts for the publicity gains.

Star Wars and the shuttle

This aim may be related to the fact that the Strategic Defense Initiative program, otherwise known as Star Wars, which depends on the shuttle, is itself a jump into the void. Only people who take their fantasies to be reality (such as the president, perhaps) believe that Star Wars will protect anything or anybody from missiles.

The rest of the Star Wars proponents are staking the national economy, and the survival of humanity, on the hope that a massive escalation in the arms race can intimidate or wear out the Soviet Union and the semicolonial peoples enough to guarantee another "American Century."

They told Christa McAuliffe she was safe. What does that say about their nuclear-arms policy?

Even as the Air Force and such prominent scientists as James Van Allen (*Scientific American*, January 1986) are

questioning the usefulness of a space program that focuses on sending humans up, the shuttle remains an important tool of the military. Paul Nisbet, an analyst quoted by the *Wall Street Journal*, expects the investigation of the Challenger explosion to go "as rapidly as possible to minimize the delays," because the shuttle is the only launch platform for the military space program today.

Future spy satellites depend on the shuttle. Before the explosion, classified cargoes were booked on three 1986 shuttle missions. One of the astronauts killed in the shuttle explosion, Ellison Onizuka, had

Gov't pushed for liftoff

After days of nasty weather, Jan. 28 dawned cold and clear. Christa McAuliffe was to venture into orbit. In the evening, President Reagan was to lecture TV viewers about the State of the Union.

And for a nightcap, perhaps, the Great Communicator would conduct a first-ever televised chat with a teacher in space! What better way to boost flagging public enthusiasm for Star Wars?

Instead, Jan. 28 exploded in scandal. The presidential commission hearings that began last month reveal that NASA flagrantly disregarded the recommendations of project engineers to cancel the flight.

Analysts working for NASA first expressed alarm last summer that a "catastrophe" was in the making. They pointed out that flight safety was "being compromised by the potential failure of the seals" that prevent hot gases from escaping the booster rockets.

Engineers working on the projects stated repeatedly that cold weather would likely

flown on an entirely classified shuttle military mission in January 1985.

Such activities violate the 1967 Outer Space Treaty signed by the United States and the Soviet Union, which states that space exploration "shall be carried out for the benefit...of all countries...and shall be the province of all mankind."

That's an elementary principle for the space age, when everyone on earth has to stand under, and feel the effects of, human-made objects in space.

"No secrets in space"

The entire shuttle project has been conducted in the opposite spirit—one of military secrecy. After the Challenger disaster, NASA took almost five hours to make its public statement, which said nothing, annoying even conservative commentators. Spokesman Jesse Moore did not even say that the astronauts were presumed dead, or answer a question about the amount of liquid fuel in the tank that exploded.

Of course, like anyone who witnessed the explosion, he knew the facts: Seven people had instantly died in an explosion of hundreds of tons of liquid hydrogen, one of the most powerful explosives.

The labor movement should consider boycotting a program that treats the public with such contempt. NASA even sought to silence its teacher-astronaut, who was an active union member, as she trained for the shuttle flight: Christa McAuliffe was forbidden to give interviews for weeks before the launch.

The unions have every reason to demand "No secrets in space" and respect for the 1967 treaty. The big military and space contractors are among the worst union-busters. Neither they nor the aerospace bureaucracy have any right to keep secrets from us. The little green box in Challenger that would "kill you in two seconds" if you found it on a beach? Tell us what it was!

Not just the shuttle, but the entire field of high-technology communications, from satellite links to disk-based data banks and cultural resources, cries out for an end to secrecy. Technology invites us to have access to more information and culture than ever before. But the corporations and the government deny it to us.

Working people not only have a right to know about the military and industrial risks to them, but also to put a stop to them. For that, we need public control and ownership of the large high-technology industries, which have already stained the U.S. space program with the blood of the Challenger astronauts—one of them a trusting teacher.

