

A Socialist ACTION

Report back from E. Europe,
See pages 13-17.

Vol. 8, No. 6

JUNE 1990

50 CENTS

Labor solidarity needed for Greyhound strikers



By MALIK MIAH

Greyhound Chairman Fred Currey is beginning to learn what Eastern Airlines' boss Frank Lorenzo discovered: union-busting can be very costly. The country's only nationwide bus line lost \$55.8 million during the first three months of this year.

The loss, combined with \$340 million in debt, puts Greyhound on the brink of bankruptcy. The company's \$150 million senior debt, for example, is trading at 40 cents on the dollar, down 60 percent from January.

The financial problems of Currey reflect

Boston rally backs Greyhound strikers,
See page 6.

his difficulty in breaking a strike by 9400 members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) that began on March 2. Greyhound's bosses had counted on 3000 drivers crossing the picket line by mid-April. So far less than 500 ATU members have scabbed. Currey has hired 3400 "replacement" workers.

Taking a chapter out of Lorenzo's notebook, Currey is offering "cut-rate" fares to attract passengers. Most of these tickets will barely cover operating costs.

Currey has also hired "security" guards to protect Greyhound buses from "violence-prone" strikers and spent some \$11 million on advertising to push his union-busting campaign to the public.

Currey went so far as to announce at a May 8 press conference that "the strike is over, or at least it's irrelevant."

But that's not the view of the ATU strikers, who are more determined than ever to stop the buses and force Currey back to the bargaining table. The strike is about winning decent wages and working conditions. Strikers are ready to stay out as long as necessary to win those modest goals either from Currey or from whoever manages Greyhound.

Solidarity rallies and expanded picketing are the backbone of the fight. Joining the strikers are paperworkers and shipyard workers in Portland, Maine; construction and hotel workers in Boston; and many other unionists at Greyhound terminals around the country. It is common to find striking workers from Eastern Airlines or other workers currently or recently on strike on the picket line.

Greyhound ups the ante

In response to the growing determination of the embattled strikers and their supporters in the labor movement to win a decent contract, Greyhound has upped the ante in its union-busting demands.

Currey's latest demands call on the union to commit suicide as a labor organization. The proposed pact calls for a six-year contract with no pay increases in the first four years and 3 percent hikes in the last two years; elimination of 4500 union jobs; pay cuts for drivers of up to \$7000 a year; no pensions for workers hired after 1983; and job protection for all scabs.

The strikers have already suffered major

(continued on page 6)

Nicaraguan gov't assaults unions

By ALAN BENJAMIN

On May 16, the nationwide strike by Nicaraguan public workers ended after a settlement was reached between the Chamorro government and the striking unions.

The walkout began on May 10. It was called by the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) and the National Union of Public Employees (UNE), two pro-Sandinista unions. They demanded a 200 percent increase in wages and the maintenance of a civil service law enacted by the Sandinistas just prior to Chamorro's election. Many workers viewed this law as protection against layoffs and arbitrary firings.

While the Chamorro government was forced to back down from its openly anti-union stance (it had proclaimed the walkout "unlawful, illegal, and non-existent"), it ended up making few concessions to the workers.

"Chamorro decreed a 60 percent wage increase for public workers," Rodrigo Ibarra, a leader of the Nicaraguan Movement for Revolutionary Unity (MUR), told *Socialist Action*. "This represents almost nothing when you take into account the skyrocketing inflation rate that has resulted from the new government's sharp devaluations of the córdoba [the national currency]."

The Chamorro government rejected the unions' demand for an escalator clause that would raise wages to match the rise in living costs. Nor did the government withdraw its intention to suspend the civil service law. Instead it referred it to the National Assembly, which it controls. Everything

indicates that it will soon be suspended.

There was no language in the settlement, moreover, that would guarantee the jobs of the public workers. It is only a matter of time before the mass layoffs and firings begin.

On the third day of the strike, the top FSLN commanders solidarized with the public workers. At the same time, however, Daniel Ortega called on Cardinal Obando y Bravo to be a mediator in the strike.

Ortega's appeal to Obando was viewed as a stab in the back by many strikers, who saw

this as a call to end the strike. Soon after Obando stepped in, a settlement was reached that fell far short of the workers' demands.

Ibarra explained the role of the Sandinista leadership in the current situation. "You must understand that the Sandinista leadership has formed a *de-facto* governmental alliance with the Chamorro wing of the UNO [National Opposition Union] coalition," he said.

Ibarra continued, "Daniel Ortega hailed Chamorro as a Sandinista in an interview (continued on page 18)

Cops use car bomb explosion to frame up Earth First! leaders

By CLAUDETTE BÉGIN

OAKLAND, Calif.—"Someone had tried to kill us!" Darryl Cherney told reporters in a telephone interview from jail. Cherney and Judi Bari, two organizers from the Earth First! environmental group, were injured on May 24 by an anti-personnel bomb planted behind the driver's seat of their car.

The bomb exploded here in Oakland while the two environmentalists were on their way to a meeting at the University of Santa Cruz to recruit students into the struggle to save the old-growth redwood forests from the timber corporations that are leveling them.

Police and FBI agents responded to the bombing by ransacking the offices of peace

and environmental groups and charging the victims with having made the bomb themselves.

Daniel Barron, Earth First! organizer in San Francisco, told *Socialist Action* that Judi Bari was singled out for attack because of her success at drawing lumber workers into the struggle. She had reported several death threats against her in recent months. As we go to press, Bari lies under police guard at Highland Hospital with a fractured pelvis.

Cherney was jailed as soon as he was released from the hospital and then interrogated by the FBI for 13 hours without food or drink. Each time the Earth First! (continued on page 18)

Two liberals blow their cover



Fightback

By
Sylvia Weinstein

Dianne Feinstein, a former mayor of San Francisco, is running for governor of California. To garner votes, she masquerades as a feminist and liberal. But since most capitalist politicians want the votes of those on both sides of most questions, she has "modified" her position on abortion.

Feinstein was quoted in *The Los Angeles Times* last week decrying sex selection as an "abuse" of the right to choose to have an abortion and added that "if it became a major problem in California, I might very well sign such a bill [to stop abortions intended as sex-selection]."

The anti-abortion forces have initiated an uproar over an imaginary problem of abortions being done to avoid bearing a child of an unwanted sex. And now there is a bill in the California Assembly to prohibit such abortions. It was put there by the anti-abortion nuts to create the impression that women

who choose to terminate a pregnancy do so frivolously.

Every single hospital, clinic, and family-planning center in the country has stated over and over again that there is absolutely no evidence of such abortions! And the anti-abortion forces have been unable to come up with any.

The China ruse

Dianne Feinstein has seized on this issue to win a few votes from anti-abortionists. Grasping for evidence that such abortions are a problem, she cites China as a country which allows sex-selection abortions. But this fake story was spread by U. S. government officials. It was used to justify the U.S. government's cutting-off millions of dollars to the United Nations for birth-control programs in underdeveloped countries.

China does have a two-child-per-family policy and allows legal abor-

tion on demand. But there is not an iota of proof that sex selection is part of their policy. The Chinese government are no angels. But a poor country which is hard-pressed to supply any form of birth control for its population could hardly afford to provide abortions for the frivolous purpose of sex-selection, too.

Actually we shouldn't blame Feinstein alone. She is just another capitalist politician trying to rake in voters. All capitalist politicians would break strikes while claiming to be pro-worker, cut medical care for the poor while claiming to be for good healthcare for all, and replace affordable housing with luxury condos while crying crocodile tears for the homeless.

Yet another "study!"

One of their tricks, when they have no answer to any social or political problem, is to vote to "study" it. I wish I had a nickel for every time they have voted to "study" child-care, affirmative action, education, housing, or pollution.

The quintessential example of this method came out in a letter of May 3 to *The New York Times* from Colorado Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder. Pat Schroeder is also a self-described liberal Democrat, who also wants to get votes on both sides of the abortion issue.

Schroeder, along with Maine Congresswoman Olympia J. Snowe—who is against abortion rights—

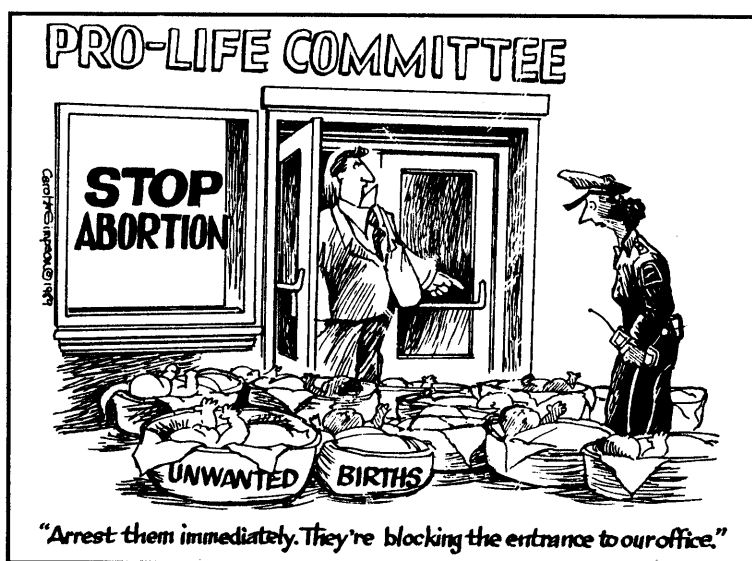
are co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. This body, Schroeder proudly acknowledges, has taken no position on abortion since 1977.

This phony "feminist" wrote that she and her anti-abortion colleagues on the Congressional Caucus have found "common ground in our support for reducing the number of unintended pregnancies through family-planning and contraceptive research, thereby reducing the need for abortions."

She went on to announce that she and her anti-abortion colleagues are introducing a bill, the Contraceptive and Infertility Research Centers Act, which would create three contraceptive and two fertility research centers to operate under the auspices of the National Institute of Health.

Sound good? No! It it will be years, if ever, before these "studies" produce any real help for poor women who desperately need all the technical assistance required to guarantee that every child is a wanted child. But worst of all, she covers up for the anti-choice fanatics by joining her anti-abortion colleague on contraception and other issues, thereby diluting the focus on abortion rights.

Abortion is central to the elementary right of a woman—and the woman alone—to choose and is the focus of the current attack on women's reproductive rights. That's why the movement to keep it safe, legal, and accessible must keep up its guard—not only against its avowed enemies, but also against all its double-dealing "friends." ■



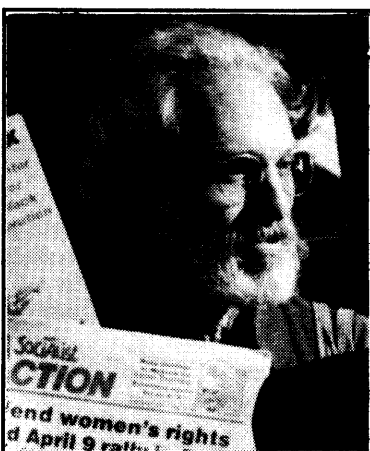
A 'Rustling' in the Philippines

"U.S. Out!" has been the cry in recent demonstrations and strikes in the Philippines. The Pentagon wants to keep its military bases there. In return, it has promised to supply the Cory Aquino government with more military hardware that could be used against the guerrillas of the National Peoples Army (NPA).

The American people must judge whether our country is right in helping to keep a "low-intensity conflict" brewing in the Philippines. Last month, I saw a new documentary film that provides important background information.

"A Rustling of Leaves: Inside the Philippine Revolution" gives a vivid portrait of people who are involved on both sides of the conflict—from teenaged guerrilla fighters to Jun Pala, a Hitler-admiring deejay who is the voice of the right-wing death squads.

The film's director, Nettie Wild,



Behind the Lines

By
Michael Schreiber

and her crew operated under conditions of great personal danger. At one point, for example, they filmed a firefight between the NPA and the Philippine army. The rebels' radio operator, a close friend of the filmmaker, was killed in the battle.

I was able to speak to Nettie

Wild a few days after viewing the film. She told me that she first became interested in political developments in the Philippines several years ago while working as an actress in Vancouver, B.C. Wild later received a Canadian government grant to work in the Philippines with the "creative dramatics movement" there.

"I started to see a pattern of oppression that I had never been exposed to before," Wild told me. She visited sugar workers, for example, who labored from sunup to sundown for barely \$1 a day. She saw children who spend their hours picking through the steaming garbage dumps that ring Manila. These people are shown in starkly beautiful (and terrifying) scenes of her film.

The army attacks

While working in the southern island of Mindanao, she was approached by people from the political underground. They told her that their guerrilla unit was beginning to organize its own dramatic company and asked if she would join in.

On one occasion, the guerrilla dramatics troupe participated in a large gathering attended by hundreds

of NPA fighters from all over the country. Suddenly, the army attacked the gathering with bombs.

"It was like a Grade B movie," Wild told me. "And I was in the middle of it." The guerrillas and Wild escaped into the surrounding mountains, where the local people fed and sheltered them.

This experience helped to convince the filmmaker that nothing would change in the Philippines unless fundamental changes were made in the government and society as a whole. She decided to make a film that would enable the outside world to understand what social activists in the Philippines, like those she had met and worked with, were fighting for.

Marcos forced to flee

Wild returned to the country during the 1986 elections, in which Cory Aquino was running for president against Marcos. She expected that Marcos would simply steal the election and that the guerrillas would resume their fight much as before. But these expectations quickly changed; the mass mobilization forced Marcos to flee.

The Communist Party, the NPA, and other leftist organizations were confused about what course to follow; they had called a lukewarm boycott of the elections. Now that Marcos was gone, the pro-capitalist forces that supported Cory Aquino—backed by the armed forces—were able to capture a large part of the credit for ousting Marcos.

The Aquino government soon arranged a cease-fire with the guerrillas. Several months later, however, the ceasefire was blown apart when guards outside the presidential palace opened fire on a demonstration by farmers who were demanding land reform. Eighteen people were killed in the massacre, which is shown in news footage included

in Wild's film.

"If the contradictions of the Aquino regime had not been clear before," Wild told me, "they certainly were now. At that point, we began filming."

"As bad as under Marcos"

Unfortunately, the scope of the film was limited by the conditions imposed by low-budget, semi-clandestine movie-making. The struggle of the trade unions and other mass organizations in the cities, for example, is barely mentioned. "That's a real hole in my film," Wild admitted.

Today, Wild said, conditions are as bad or worse than under Marcos. Many of the people she filmed are now lying low or in exile. The right-wing vigilante groups—with ties to Contragate conspirator John Singlaub and other U.S. government operatives—have gained strength.

Back in the USA, Secretary of State James Baker's office refused to allow one of the people interviewed in the film, Ed de la Torre, to enter the country in order to speak at the movie's premiere. De la Torre was a "Communist," they charged, and had set out to "overthrow the U.S. government by force and violence."

At the same time, most major media in this country have refused to provide publicity about the film. These restrictions severely limit the ability of Americans to evaluate a situation that has the potential of becoming our "Vietnam War" of the 1990s.

"Guerrilla filmmaking in the Philippines," Nettie Wild pointed out, "has become guerrilla film distribution in the United States."

To rent "A Rustling of Leaves" or for information, write to the Empowerment Project, 1653 18th St., #3, Santa Monica, CA 90404. Telephone (213) 828-8807. ■

Socialist ACTION

Closing date:
May 26, 1990

Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN
Asst. Editors: MICHAEL SCHREIBER
JOSEPH RYAN

Staff: Alex Chis, Paul Colvin, May May Gong, Malik Miah, Hayden Perry, Barbara Putnam, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: DAVID KIRSCHNER

Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$8 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: For one year (12 issues)—U.S. 2nd Class: \$8, 1st Class: \$16; Canada and Mexico 2nd Class: \$12, 1st Class: \$16; All other countries 2nd Class: \$15, 1st Class: \$30. (Money orders, checks should be in U.S. dollars.)

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

RU 486: A hard pill to swallow for anti-choice fanatics in U.S.

By JONI JACOBS

RU 486 (the French "abortion pill") has been called everything from a "practical way to de-escalate this divisive war" around abortion rights to "chemical warfare against the unborn."

Medical studies indicate that RU 486 provides a safe, effective method to terminate early pregnancies. But how soon—and under what conditions—will RU 486 be available to American women? And what impact will it have on the fight for women to control their reproductive lives?

RU 486 is an oral steroid hormone that blocks the effects of progesterone, thereby causing the uterine lining to break down and expel a fertilized egg.

In France, the drug is administered over a series of four visits to a physician. On the first visit, the woman's pregnancy is confirmed and she is counseled on her options. If she chooses RU 486, she must also agree to a surgical abortion if the drug fails. By law she must wait one week to "reflect" upon her decision.

On the second visit, the woman takes three RU 486 pills. Two days later, she returns for a shot of prostaglandin, a synthetic hormone which, when used in conjunction with RU 486, greatly increases the effectiveness of the drug. On the final visit a week later, the woman is examined and, if the procedure has failed, undergoes a surgical abortion.

A study published last March in the *New England Journal of Medicine* confirms the safety and effectiveness of the drug. In over 2000 women tested, RU 486 was 95 percent effective, with relatively few side effects. The most common side effects were heavy and prolonged bleeding (with one woman in 2000 needing a blood transfusion), abdominal pain, cramping, and nausea. These side effects are comparable to, or less than, those associated with childbirth.

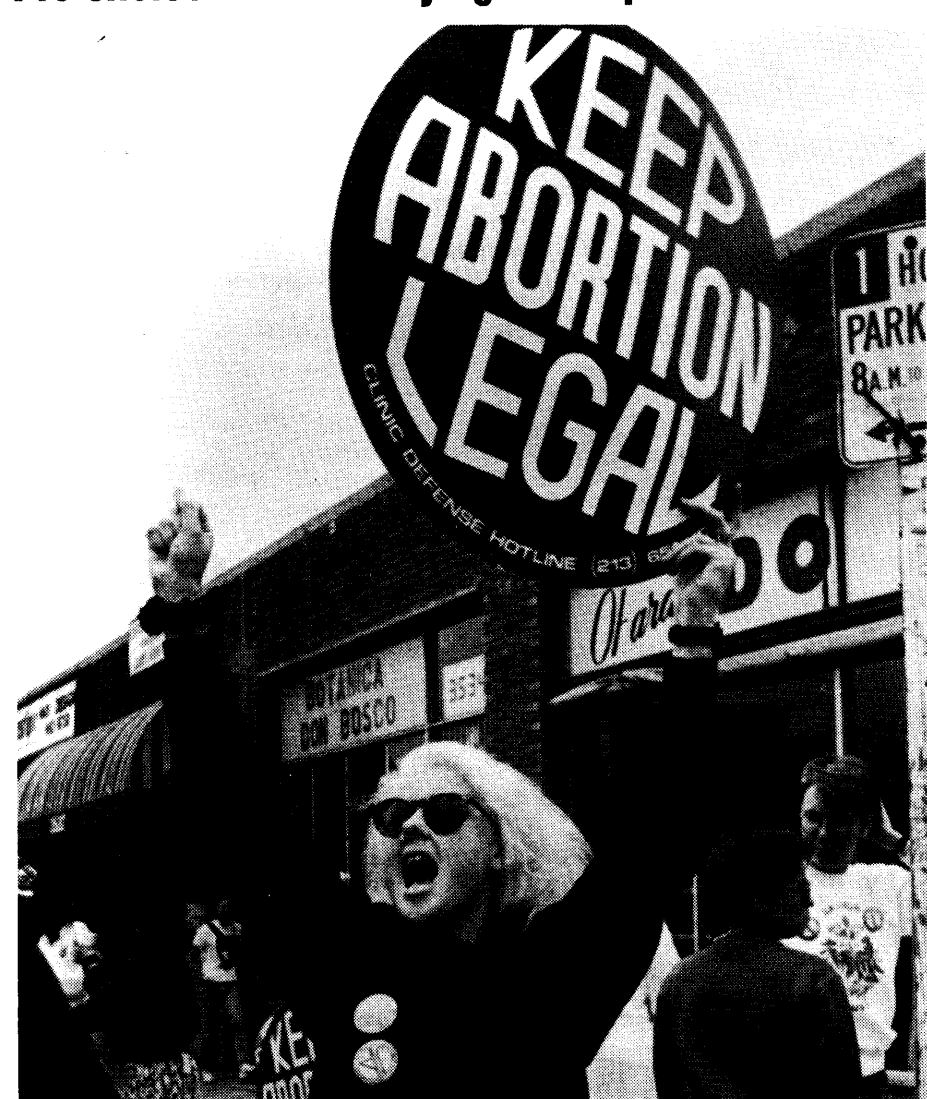
RU 486 has also tested effective in treating breast cancer, endometriosis, glaucoma, prostate cancer, and Cushing's Syndrome. This significantly broadens the medical application of RU 486 and adds authority to the fight to allow testing of the drug in the United States.

Administration firmly opposed

A recent Harris poll indicated that 59 percent of all adults think RU 486 should be available to American women. But the federal government remains adamant in its opposition to allowing RU 486 into the country for testing purposes. "Our approach is not to encourage anything that would terminate a pregnancy," explained Dan Heinbok, spokesperson for the Bush administration, as quoted in *The San Francisco Bay Times*.

Proponents of RU 486 are seeking alternative routes. The most likely appears to be via California, which allows drugs not au-

Pro-choice wins victory against Operation Rescue



Kathleen O'Nan/Socialist Action

The struggle to uphold women's right to safe and legal abortion scored a major victory last month when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a New York injunction against Operation Rescue's attempts to blockade abortion clinics.

The New York injunction invoked a law originally used against the Ku Klux Klan. NOW President Molly Yard said of the decision, "Randall Terry's [spokesman for Operation Rescue] deceitful description of Operation Rescue's actions as protected free speech and civil disobedience has been exposed as a public relations sham. The right to free speech does not include ... assaulting and harassing women."

thorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be tested for manufacture and distribution within state borders.

In April, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution which "calls on the Governor and the State Legislature to allocate sufficient funds to ensure that a scientifically valid testing program with regard to RU 486 will proceed in a timely and expedient manner."

All three candidates for California governor are posturing as the candidate who most supports testing of RU 486. Attorney-General John Van DeKamp has been the most visible; he wrote to the drug's manufacturer, Roussel Uclaf, asking them to re-

lease the drug for testing in California prior to FDA approval.

But Ariel Mouttet, international product manager for RU 486, said the company is not willing to supply the compound. She stated that prostaglandin, which must be used with RU 486 to render it effective, is not marketed in the United States in the proper dosage. Moreover, the company contends that the United States is not ready for RU 486 because it hasn't "resolved its attitude concerning abortion."

Several small pharmaceutical companies have approached Hoechst A.G., Roussel Uclaf's parent corporation, for licensing rights to RU 486, but so far the company has not granted them. The National Organization for Women (NOW) has vowed to start its own single-drug company to manufacture and distribute RU 486 if all else fails.

Anti-choice groups are afraid

Although they deny it, the company seems to be intimidated by a threatened international boycott by anti-choice organizations of any company which manufactures the drug for U.S. testing. Roussel Uclaf and Hoechst A.G. have been inundated with mail, telegrams, and phone calls demanding that the drug not be licensed in the United States.

Anti-choice organizations are terrified of RU 486's availability, with good reason. The drug has the potential to revolutionize abortion technology by keeping the procedure within the private realm of a woman and her doctor. Because RU 486 is so safe, non-intrusive, and private, many women facing unwanted pregnancies who may not choose a surgical abortion would have another option open to them.

RU 486 also robs the anti-choice movement of one of its most powerful images. Many people feel uncomfortable with posters of aborted fetuses commonly displayed by anti-choice groups like Operation

Rescue. But because RU 486 is used at such an early stage of fetal development—when the fetus is the size of a blood spot—those posters lose their impact.

Questions remain

Many questions remain about how revolutionary RU 486 will be in our present society. For example, the estimated cost of RU 486—and the attendant multiple visits to the doctor—is \$250, comparable to that of surgical abortions.

In France, which has nationalized health-care, 80 percent of the cost is subsidized by the government. But the United States has no nationally-subsidized health care, and most low-income women have no health insurance or private physicians. RU 486 may be too expensive for them, especially if public funding for it is denied, as is likely in the present climate of cuts in state family-planning budgets and funding for abortion.

There is also speculation that under strict government control of RU 486, it would be distributed at a limited number of sites. These sites would likely continue to be targets for harassment and violence by Operation Rescue and other anti-choice groups.

Moreover, because low-income women need more time than wealthier women to gather financial resources for any abortion, chemical or surgical, RU 486—which must be used before the seventh week of pregnancy—may not be an option for them at all.

The drug has not been tested for its effects on sickle-cell anemia, lupus, and other diseases that predominately affect women of oppressed national minorities. Organizations like the Black Women's Health Project and the Native American Women's Health Resources Center have withheld their support for the drug, pending more information on how it will affect Black, Latina, and Native American women.

Almost everyone agrees that RU 486 will find its way into the United States. The question is whether it will be via safe, legal testing or via the black market—where misinformation about the drug could lead to abuse and misuse that could result in health complications and death.

At its last national conference in July 1989, NOW passed a resolution forming an "RU 486 Action Campaign." The resolution based the fight for RU 486 on the "feminist goal of women to control our own fertility." This is a basis on which the majority of working women can, should, and must be mobilized if the campaign to make RU 486 accessible to women worldwide is to succeed. ■

Canadian women brace for new anti-abortion law

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

There is a good chance that the Canadian House will pass a new restrictive abortion law, despite polls showing 68% of Canadians opposed to it. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney is applying pressure to Conservative members of Parliament, demanding their support. As we go to press, a vote is scheduled on May 29.

Thousands of women took to the streets on May 12 in over 20 cities and towns throughout Quebec and English Canada to voice their opposition to this proposed new law. Sizeable turnouts included 2700 in Toronto, 1500 in Vancouver, and 1000 in Ottawa.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women adjourned its national conference to participate in the Ottawa demonstration. This meeting passed an emergency resolution calling on all member groups to hold protests on May 25 during the parliamentary debate. A number of doctors have publicly stated their intention to defy any restrictive new abortion law.

Regardless of the outcome of the vote in Parliament, leaders of the Pro-Choice Action Network plan to focus on demanding that the provincial governments provide access to abortion services; i.e., that abortion be fully funded under the provincial health-insurance plans and be available in all parts of the country. ■

Brandeis students assess 'Walkout'

By CARRIE ALLISON

BOSTON—"I think we made some activists out there," said Amy Rutkin of Brandeis Voice for Choice (BVC), following the May 1st Student Walkout for Choice that was put together by her organization. According to the BVC, over 2000 participants arrived on the Boston Common throughout the afternoon, some from as far away as Canada.

"Despite the rain, despite the fact that the Green Line [part of Boston's subway system] broke down, and despite the fact that this was one of the hardest times for students, it was a really great day," Rutkin told *Socialist Action*. "There were students from all over, and a lot of high schools, even some elementary schools. For students to be able to put together such a large-scale event is quite a feat."

But for Rutkin, the real measure of the Walkout's success lies in the future. "As far as we see it, this was the first of many statewide student events. I believe we have laid the foundations for larger actions."

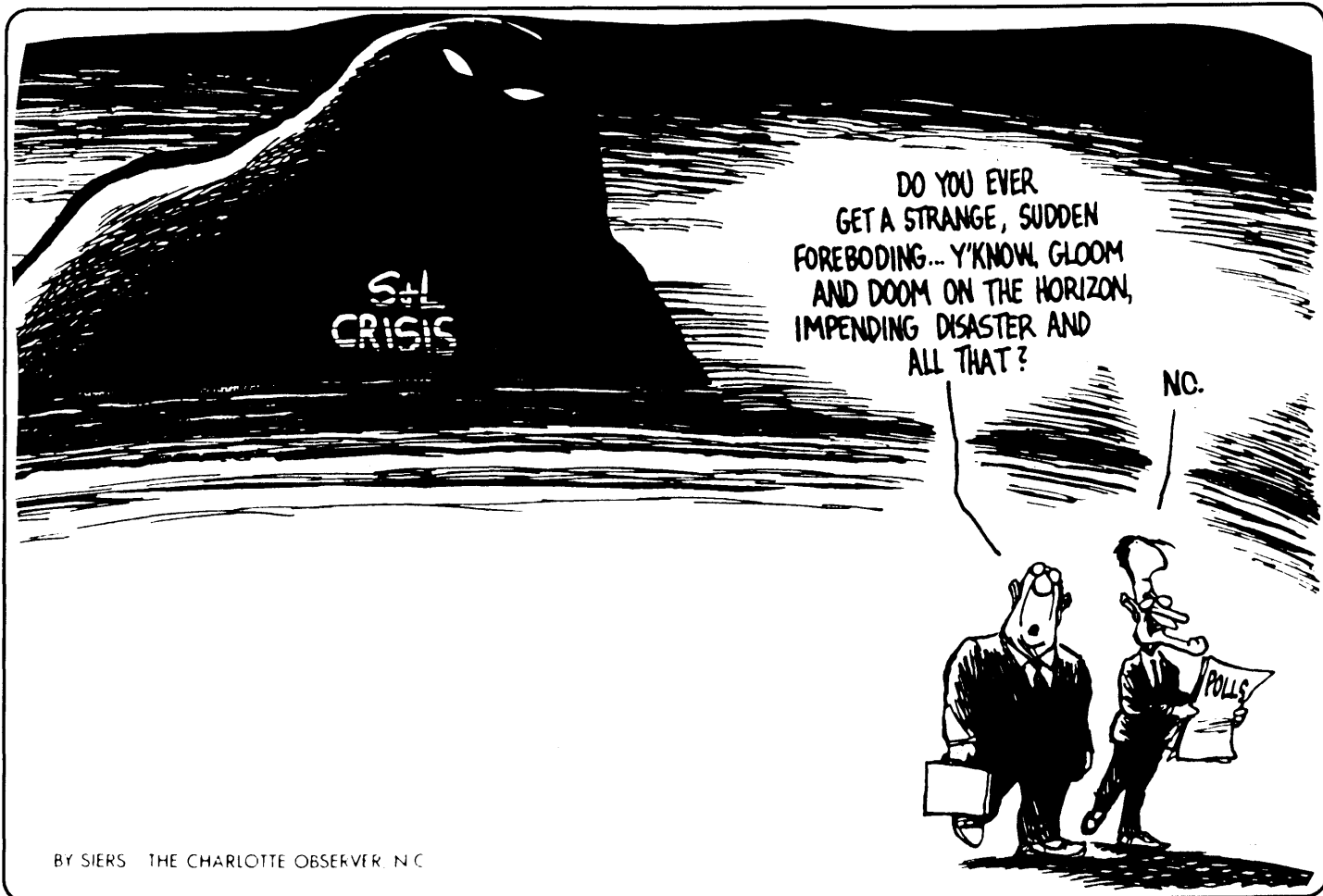
BVC plans to continue building its

statewide network of campus activists next fall. They will also work to coordinate their efforts with more off-campus groups, like NOW and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). "People are continuing to do clinic defense," said Rutkin. And although BVC hasn't yet decided what next year's action will be, Rutkin is sure "it will be a good one."

The Walkout marks the first time in many years that students have organized such a large pro-choice rally on their own. And students at the rally were very receptive to socialist ideas, purchasing a number of individual copies of *Socialist Action* as well as subscriptions.

But what was missing was a real militant spirit that would have galvanized the potential for independent pro-choice activity on campus. Lacking any real appeal to activism outside the mainstream of electoral politics, the demonstration never quite lived up to its potential. The crowd was subdued and for the most part listened calmly to a string of politicians, including gubernatorial candidates Evelyn Murphy and William Weld. ■

Savings & Loan scandal: How to rob a bank without a gun



BY SIERS THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER N.C.

By HAYDEN PERRY

"*Inside Job: The Looting of America's Savings and Loans*," by Stephen Pizzo, Mary Fricker, and Paul Muolo. McGraw Hill, New York, 1989. 440 pages, \$19.95.

As damage-control estimates for the nation's savings and loan institutions soar up and up, people ask, "How could these little, essentially mom-and-pop financial institutions, lose as much as \$500 billion?"

The authors of "Inside Job" have the answer. They name the con men who looted, the politicians who profited, and the officials who permitted the most massive swindle in American history.

A prologue, set in Washington, D.C., prepares the stage. For years, S&L executives had complained that government regulations limited them to low-profit home mortgages when there were millions to be made in wider financial circles.

In response to these pleas and President Ronald Reagan's exhortations to "get government off the backs of business," Congress passed the Garn-St. Germain Act in 1982. This lifted most federal controls on the thrift and savings and loan industry. While signing the bill in the Rose Garden, Reagan said, in effect, "Now you will see what unregulated free enterprise can do in the thrift industry."

The whole nation has seen, with dismay, exactly that. One example was enacted in the little resort town of Guerneville, 60 miles north of San Francisco. Stephen Pizzo, editor of the *Russian River News*, saw the wondrous effects of deregulation on the local Centennial Savings bank. This was a typical small town thrift institution with \$2 million in capital, and barely enough home loans to cover expenses.

As deregulation dawned, Pizzo tells us, Centennial's directors "wanted someone at the helm who could sail their little thrift out of becalmed seas and into the uncharted potential promised by this newly deregulated industry."

On Dec. 16, 1980, the directors found their man and appointed him president. Although he had spent years in the thrift business, the new Chief Executive, Erv Hansen, did not look or act like a banker. He wore cowboy shirts and boots, and spent much of his time in bars with the local "redneck" cowboy element. His enthusiasm for Centennial's prospects under his leadership was infectious. "The beauty of it is there is money in it for everybody," he boasted.

Where was the money coming from? That question bothered Pizzo and led him and his

collaborators on a three-year paper chase through the thickets of multi-million-dollar scams and swindles.

Brokered deposits

Guerneville was a good place to start. Hansen and his pals demonstrated how to rob a bank of millions without using a gun. First Hansen had to put millions into the bank. He could not do this just by offering toasters to new depositors in Guerneville.

He had to draw in money from all over the country. One way to do this is by using brokered deposits. These are large accumulations of cash, such as union pension funds. Money managers are hired to invest these funds profitably and safely.

S&Ls were paying ever-higher rates of interest and were "super-safe." Despite deregulation, every account was insured up to \$100,000 by government agencies. Ultimately, however, it was the American taxpayer who guaranteed these accounts.

Big depositors could open any number of \$100,000 accounts. This was great for the depositors, but not so great for the thrifts. These big depositors might pull out their money suddenly—which could have the effect of a run on the bank. To avert this, more brokered deposits had to be drawn in, at ever-higher interest rates.

This did not concern Hansen, as he raised the level of Centennial's deposits from \$2 million to \$49 million in 1983 and ballooned them up to \$404 million by 1985.

With millions in deposits, millions had to be loaned out. This was a more complicated process because Hansen intended that most of these loans go to him and his friends. His friends included Siddarth Shah (an engineer with Piombo Construction Company) and Nicholaas Sandman (a Dutch land developer). Another friend was Beverley Haines, a Centennial teller, who was promoted by Hansen to chief loan officer and vice-president.

Loans and more loans

Now the stage was set for loans and more loans. Centennial loaned Sandman \$4.5 million on a development scheme that eventually collapsed. Centennial paid Shah a \$150,000 finder's fee for introducing Sandman as a good credit risk. They did not ask for their money back when the loan went sour.

Then Hansen persuaded the directors to buy Shah's Piombo Construction Co. for \$14 million. Hansen wanted an enterprise through which large sums could flow without arousing suspicion. Construction firms are ideal for that purpose.

Shah was made a Centennial vice-president

to facilitate the cashflow.

Centennial's directors were willing to make large loans, partly because they generated immediate profits. "Points" of added interest were tacked onto the loan, to be collected as soon as the papers were signed. Five points added to a million-dollar loan would create an immediate \$50,000 profit. "Loan origination fees" and other charges added more profit and laid the basis for executive bonuses.

These were only paper profits, however. Centennial would lend the money to pay all the charges, plus two years of interest payments. A \$1 million loan would be boosted to \$1,200,000 with the extra money reserved for interest payments. Thus, a loan would look good on the books for a while, even if the borrower had disappeared.

Thieves get together

Under federal rules, Hansen could not borrow more than \$100,000 from his own bank. This was not enough for his lavish life style. To get around this, Hansen looked up an old friend, who had established Columbus-Marin S&L. Columbus made loans totalling \$174,000 to Hansen. In return, Centennial loaned Columbus \$550,000, while Columbus returned the favor by making 14 loans to Centennial directors. Few of these loans were ever repaid.

These loans were made on the security of real estate that was appraised far above its real value. To make these inflated prices seem creditable, Hansen and his friends would resort to "land flipping," selling a piece of real estate back and forth among themselves at ever-higher prices. No money changed hands till the loan was made.

Not surprisingly, these shenanigans lead to defaulting loans, but Hansen had a scheme to delay the day of reckoning. He lent another friend \$1 million to set up Atlas S&L, and invited him to "participate" in some of Centennial's projects. Soon Atlas became the "fall guy," holding a mess of Centennial's non-performing, defaulting loans.

With these S&Ls in place, Hansen could tap his money machine at will. He moved Centennial into a \$7 million headquarters building, ordered a twin-engine Cessna, and bought a stretch limousine at a cost of \$72,000. This extravagance was crowned in 1983 by the most lavish Christmas party the citizens of Guerneville ever enjoyed. The bill for the bash came to \$148,000.

Claiming a profit of \$2.6 million for 1983, the directors gave Shah and Hansen two thirds of it through bonuses of \$818,000 each. The "profits" were created through smoke and mirrors, but the bonuses had to be in real cash.

For two years, Hansen and his pals were on a roll, becoming respected movers and shakers in that part of California. When Pizzo expressed doubts in the *Russian River News* about Centennial's sudden prosperity, Hansen gave money to a rival publisher. When state and federal regulators began asking questions, Hansen put a former regulator on his payroll. When regulators got too persistent, Hansen got his "man in Washington," Rep. Doug Bosco to protest the harassment of an honest businessman.

Operation "bust out"

But that only bought time. In 1985, Hansen decided it was time for operation "bust out"—to get as much cash as possible out of Centennial and pull out. Shah, as vice-president, wangled a golden parachute worth \$750,000 before quitting. Hansen cashed in through a more devious route.

The regulators declared that Centennial must immediately raise \$7 million in new capital to back its inflated loans and deposits. Hansen had another scheme.

He found a buyer for Piombo Construction Co., which Centennial had bought for \$14 million three years before. It had been stripped of its best assets, but the new buyers were willing to pay \$25 million for it. The buyer was identified only as Sierra Diversified Investments of Shingle Springs, Calif. They did not appear to have \$25 million. They did not even have a listing in the phone book.

Sierra came up with \$100,000, which Hansen said was enough of a down payment to give them control of Piombo and \$800,000 in its bank accounts. Hansen also gave them a \$1 million operating loan.

Feds move in too late

For three years, federal regulators had watched developments in Guerneville from afar. They wrote a letter to Centennial deploring the executives' excessive bonuses, but took no further action. Finally, the phony sale of Piombo Construction could not be ignored. Regulators moved in on Aug. 20, 1985, ousted Hansen, and took over.

They found \$165 million was missing. This single heist netted three times as much as the 6000 bank robberies committed in the United States in 1985. Bank robbers with guns get long sentences. But crime in the executive suite is treated more gently.

Hansen died before he could be indicted. Beverly Haines was convicted of stealing \$1.5 million. She was sentenced to two years, but released to do community work after two months.

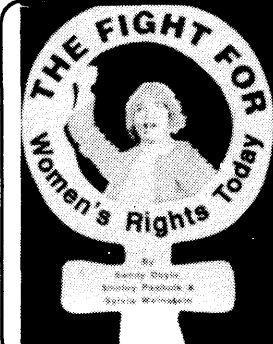
If Centennial were the only case of looting an S&L, the financial system could absorb the loss. But thrifts are failing all over the country. "By the end of 1988," Pizzo writes, "Centennial and 581 other thrift institutions were dead and another 800 were in intensive care and might not survive." Many suffered much larger losses than Centennial. The much publicized Keating-Lincoln collapse may cost the taxpayer \$2.5 billion.

Pizzo does not say that every failed thrift was a victim of criminal embezzlement. Falling land values and oil prices, and the lure of junk bonds brought even honest executives down. Regulators, however, report they have found evidence of fraud in 80 percent of the failed thrifts.

Pizzo documents the fraud in numerous bankruptcies and points to the involvement of Mafia families in many of them. The nature of this involvement is indicated by another quote from Pizzo. He says, "Some of the people who had run these institutions were also dead—garroted, shot, or victims of suspicious accidents."

The ultimate victim of the looters is the American taxpayer. The costs, which have not been totaled yet, are beyond all reason; and threaten the solvency of the nation.

A subsequent article will examine the role of the government in the collapse of the S&Ls and its failure to solve the problem. ■



A Walnut Publishing Co. pamphlet

By Sandy Doyle Shirley Pasholk and Sylvia Weinstein

\$1.25 (plus 65 cents postage)

Write to: 3435 Army St., #308 San Fran, CA 94110

How parental consent laws deprive teenaged women of right to choice

By JONI JACOBS

The pro-choice movement is anxiously awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in two more cases that could adversely affect abortion rights in this country.

On Nov. 29, 1989, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Hodgson v. State of Minnesota* and *Ohio v. Akron Center for Reproductive Health*. Both cases concern the constitutionality of parental consent and notification laws for teenaged women seeking abortion. The Court has until this July to announce its decision.

The Minnesota Minors' Consent Act requires a health provider to notify both biological parents of a minor prior to performing an abortion. The law makes no exception for teens of divorced parents or couples who are not married, or for teens who are already married or have children.

The Ohio statute involves a complicated judicial waiver process which subjects minors to an exceptionally rigorous standard of proof of harm if parents are notified. The waiver process often takes up to 23 days. This delay increases the need for second-trimester abortions, which are more dangerous than early abortions.

The Supreme Court's decision will have a great impact on minors' access to abortion. Currently, 34 states have parental consent or notification laws; 26 states provide for a judicial waiver process.

The state makes the choice

Testimony in *Hodgson* established that the statute had caused an increase in both the teenage birth rate and the number of dangerous second-trimester abortions. The evidence was gathered throughout the four and one-

half years since the law has been enforced.

Parental consent laws demonstrate the hypocritical treatment of minors' reproductive rights in this country. While the laws are based on the belief that minors are not mature enough to make a decision regarding abortion, no such "maturity standards" exist for access to pre-natal care, or labor and delivery care. The state makes one choice accessible while denying another; in essence, the state makes the choice for the minor.

And the choice made by the state has a potentially devastating—and lifelong—effect on teenaged women. Each year more than 1 million minors become pregnant. In fact, 40 percent of American women become pregnant at least once during their teen years. Most who carry the pregnancy to term keep the baby rather than placing it for adoption.

Studies on women who place their children for adoption show a higher incidence of psychological trauma than for women who choose abortion.

Eighty percent of pregnant teenaged women drop out of high school, thereby immediately reducing their potential for a decent standard of living. Statistics show that 51 percent of families living in poverty are headed by women; of which 40 percent work outside the home.

Yet public-funded programs for low-income women with children are constantly being cut back. Parental consent laws, which create more families of single women, perpetuate the cycle of poverty among women.

Help the family "communicate?"

Proponents of parental consent laws claim that the laws foster intra-family communication. This has not been shown to be the case. In families where parents and children

have established good communication, teens involve their parents in decisions regarding unwanted pregnancies. This happens in the majority of cases.

But in dysfunctional families, where children and parents cannot communicate, these laws only aggravate the existing conflicts. For teenaged victims of incest, for example, laws which involve the rapist in the decision are nothing short of cruel punishment for the victim.

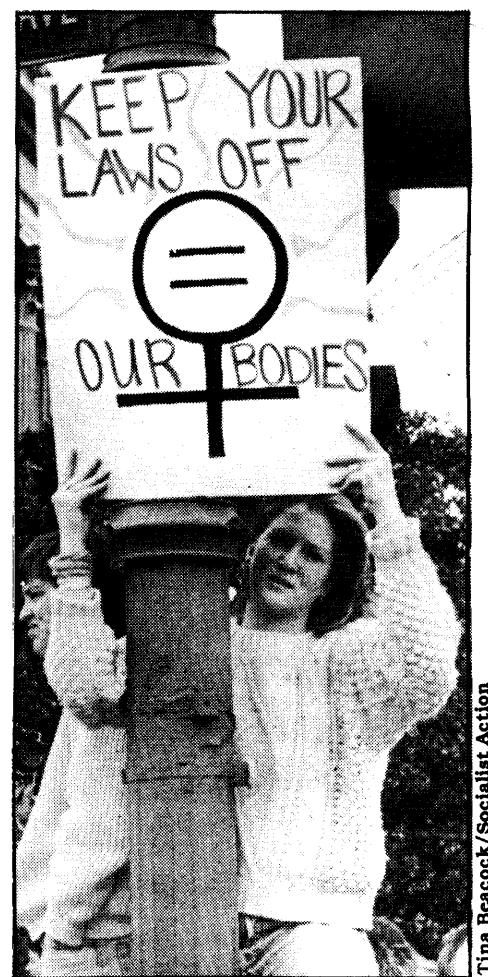
The judicial waiver process provides no solution for teens in difficult situations. Minors do not usually have access to lawyers or knowledge of how to initiate legal proceedings. Moreover, the court process is intimidating for people in general, especially teenaged women.

In reality, the laws have nothing to do with protecting minors or fostering better communication between parents and children. The laws are designed to stop abortion by making it inaccessible to women below a certain age level.

States generally require parental consent before invasive medical treatment, such as surgery, for minors in non-emergency situations. But just as generally, exceptions are made for intimate matters such as venereal disease, AIDS, and pre-natal care.

These exceptions recognize the importance of confidential access to reproductive healthcare for minors—a rationale that must also apply to abortions.

Denying safe, legal and accessible abortion to teenaged women is especially dangerous, as minors are more likely to let nothing stand in their way of getting an abortion if they want one. If they are unable to skirt parental consent laws, desperate minors will seek out illegal abortions, or attempt to self-



Tina Beacock/Socialist Action

Thousands of teenaged women demonstrated in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 12 to defend abortion rights.

induce one.

Already we have seen the tragic consequences of these parental consent laws. In 1988, Becky Bell, a pregnant teenager in Indiana (which has a parental notification law), died of a self-induced abortion rather than involve her parents in the decision to end an unwanted pregnancy. Her father, William Bell, is now touring the country to alert parents that these laws do not help teens—they can potentially kill them.

By ANN GLICK and SUSAN FARLEY

BOSTON—On Jan. 13 of this year, Mary A., a pro-choice clinic defender, was arrested while defending an abortion clinic in Boston against an attack by Operation Rescue (OR). She was arrested for assault and battery with a dangerous weapon—her "foot."

Half-a-million people read about Mary's story in a column in the *Boston Globe*. After a three-month legal defense campaign, Mary A. was found "Not Guilty" at a judge's trial on April 17, 1990.

However, the legal expenses incurred by Mary A. to defend herself against these frame-up charges has led to an on-going campaign to raise money to defray these costs.

On the morning she was arrested, Mary A., like many other pro-choice activists led by Boston NOW, was ready to defend women's access to the clinics. She is a member of Boston NOW's pro-choice phone alert system.

The following interview with Mary makes it clear that while Operation Rescue (OR) is having financial difficulties, and in some cities is closing its offices, it is still a major threat to women's rights and women's lives.

Socialist Action: What happened at the Gynecare clinic on Jan. 13?

Mary A.: I was standing in front of the clinic entrance. We had all linked arms to keep Operation Rescue away. My husband was on one side of me; on the other was another clinic defense woman.

This one cop kept walking back and forth, kind of surveying the line, and a woman from Operation Rescue was running up and down the line, too. She was looking at the pro-choice people and talking to the cop.

Meanwhile Stephen Darling [of OR] was crawling around the ground, trying to get through people's legs—first one woman's, then my husband's, and then mine. We were all jammed in together real tight—and he just kept coming at me.

I put my foot on his shoulder; otherwise I would have fallen down. Within seconds, the police came up from behind me—from the barricades. The officers grabbed me within seconds of Stephen Darling's attacking me.

S.A.: How many times have you been called out to hits at the clinics?



Cynthia Burke/Socialist Action

Women defend clinic in Minneapolis. In Boston, Mary A. was arrested for doing the same thing—protecting a woman's right to reproductive healthcare.

Mary A.: Four or five times.

S.A.: How was this hit different?

Mary A.: It was very different—it was much more physical. People were tangled up pushing and shoving, and the police kept moving the barricades, which were right up against us. The cops would pull them away all of a sudden and then throw them back into our backs. The police were grabbing people or pulling them away from the line.

S.A.: What happened after the police grabbed you?

Mary A.: They asked Stephen Darling if he was all right. He said, "It didn't even hurt." They put me in the wagon and took me to the station. I was very frightened. I was crying. I had never been arrested before.

I kept apologizing to the officer who was booking me. He said, "If you had stayed home today and made breakfast for your husband this would not have happened to you." I told him my husband was with me at the rally. They took my picture. My husband and brother-in-law bailed me out. I was then

able to leave the station.

S.A.: What happened after your arrest?

Mary A.: I was referred to two lawyers by Boston NOW. One was a *pro-bono* lawyer. He was not available for my arraignment. He, too, was arrested at a different clinic that morning.

The other lawyer [Wimberley Burton, former treasurer of state NOW] also referred to me by NOW said she would take the case at a reduced fee. She was available to be with me. She also made me feel that I would be fairly and strongly defended.

S.A.: What happened at your arraignment?

Mary A.: Judge Bakas dismissed the case without prejudice.

S.A.: A week later the charges were reinstated. Who reinstated them? Why? And isn't this unusual?

Mary A.: A week later, I received a letter from the District Attorney's office to the effect that the charges were reinstated. I wasn't sure what was going on. How could that

happen? But when a case is dismissed without prejudice there is always a chance that the DA's office will push for their day in court. My lawyer told me that it is almost unheard of—the only case like it she was aware of was a case of the rape of a child.

[This is the same District Attorney's office that was responsible for the stop-and-search racist harassment in Boston in the aftermath of the Stuart murder. See February 1990 *Socialist Action*.]

S.A.: On April 17 you went to court. What happened?

Mary A.: Neither the officer who arrested me, the so-called victim (Stephen Darling), nor his witness could pick me out of the crowded court room. Again Judge Bakas wanted to dismiss the case right there. But the prosecuting attorney and the DA's office insisted there be a trial.

So there was a judge's trial. Several people testified on my behalf. Our case was solid. Of course, I have to pay for my defense. Operation Rescue gets their legal counsel free of charge, compliments of the city of Boston.

S.A.: If you were found not guilty in April, why was the Ad Hoc Mary A. Defense Fund established?

Mary A.: A group of NOW members and other clinic defenders felt that I should not be solely responsible for the legal expenses of my trial. At this point in time, NOW has dropped the ball in my defense.

The fund was established to let people know what happened to me and what it will cost us all if we are not able to defend a person who is victimized by Operation Rescue while defending the clinics.

[Some of the money for Mary A.'s legal defense has been raised, but much more is needed. A benefit will be held on Sunday, June 24, at the Middle East Restaurant, 472 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Donations to the defense fund can be made to: Ad Hoc Mary A. Defense Fund, MIT Branch, P.O. Box 222, Cambridge, MA 02139.—A.G. & S.F.]

Union tops hedge on women's choice

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

The struggle to uphold women's right to safe, legal, and accessible abortion received a setback last month.

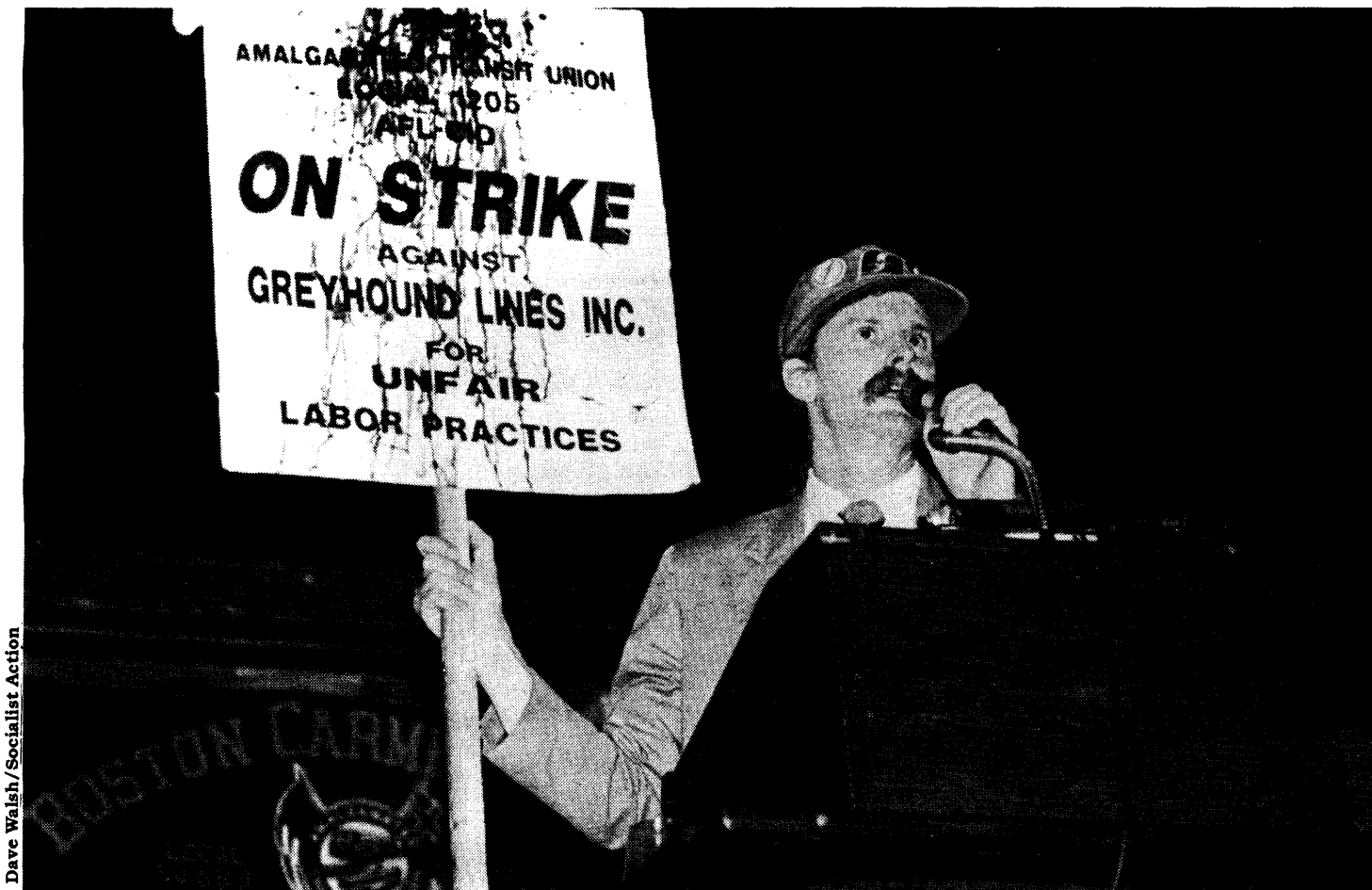
AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland sent a letter to state and local labor council bodies ordering them not to "endorse or oppose any abortion-related legislation or engage in any activities to support or oppose such legislation" pending a decision on the abortion issue by the Executive Council expected some time later this year.

This statement comes at a time of increasing action on the abortion issue by unions and union members who have been joining in the pro-choice demonstrations in record numbers.

Thousands of unionists participated in the two giant national pro-choice mobilizations in 1989 and a growing number of unions are adopting resolutions in support of women's reproductive rights, including abortion as a vital issue for working women and their families.

The National Organization for Women and the Coalition of Labor Union Women [CLUW] are engaged in a lobbying effort to bring the pressure of the pro-choice majority of union members to bear in the effort to bring the AFL-CIO on board the pro-choice movement.

They are urging local NOW leaders as well as all unionists to petition the members of the AFL-CIO committee charged with presenting a recommendation to the Executive Board. Socialist Action readers are urged to help in this effort. [For further information contact CLUW at (212) 242-0700.]



ATU Local 1205 Vice President Mike Holden displays blood-splattered picket sign of Roy Nutter, Local 1205 president, who was bludgeoned with a club by a scab driver while on picket duty the day before the May 17 rally.

Greyhound workers and supporters rally in Boston

By SCOTT ADAMS-COOPER

BOSTON—More than 200 unionists and their supporters rallied at Faneuil Hall here on May 17 in a show of solidarity with striking workers at Greyhound. Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1205 in Boston, along with Greyhound workers around the country, have been on the picket line since early March.

Greyhound management, led by Fred Currey, has lately been telling the media that the strike is over. But Tony Romano of the Boston Carmen's Union, a sister ATU local to Greyhound workers, told the crowd, "It will not be over until every single Greyhound worker is back to work with a decent contract."

Greyhound workers went out on strike after the company refused to bargain in good faith at the outset of the negotiations. Fred Currey, described by one speaker as "a Lorenzo clone," set out to bust the union. The workers did not want to strike.

In the last seven years, drivers have taken big wage cuts. In 1983, they gave back 18 percent in wages and benefits. In 1987, they lost 30 percent. Now wages are down to the 1975 level.

"Boot the bus!"

The Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler set the tone for the evening. Ellis-Hagler is a leader of Boston's Black community and a longtime supporter of the Greyhound workers. He was arrested during the militant 1983 strike.

He noted that Greyhound owes the city of Boston \$500,000 for police protection at the local terminal, and is on the verge of defaulting on that payment. Striking a theme familiar to everyone in Boston, he told the crowd, "You know what happens when you default on a parking ticket. Somebody comes along and boots your car. What we want to see is the same treatment for those buses. Boot the bus!" The cry of "boot the bus!" was heard throughout the evening.

Ellis-Hagler took up Greyhound manage-

ment's theme of the strike being over. "That is the corporate point of view. We see it differently from a union and a community point of view. We say that the strike isn't over with; it's just begun!"

"What they don't understand is that the community also has a say in this, because Greyhound isn't going to earn one dime until ridership goes up," stated Ellis-Hagler.

"And ridership is not going to go up as long as you're on the line," he continued, "because we're going to respect that picket line, and we're going to stand out there with you."

"And no, we won't ride the dog! We in the community won't give our lives away, or put our lives in the hands of inexperienced drivers, who don't know what in the world they're doing. No, Boycott the dog!"

"Blood is on Currey's hands"

David Scondras, a member of the Boston City Council, described legislation he has introduced in Boston that would outlaw the hiring of so-called "replacement" workers during a legal strike. He asked the crowd to contact the other councilors and "tell them that you want them to pass this anti-scab

law to protect the Greyhound workers."

"I know that Boston isn't itself a union," Scondras declared, "but it is a union town.... It has the right to stop the activities of any company that leads to violence or death...."

Mike Holden, a striking Greyhound worker who chaired the meeting, described an incident that had happened the night before the rally. "This Greyhound scab driver got out of his bus and he beat Roy Nutter [the president of Local 1205] with a club. He hit him in the face several times, and he had to get 10 stitches around his jaw."

The scab, who police refused to arrest despite the presence of many witnesses not involved in the strike (including security guards from a local hotel), is alleged to be an ex- or off-duty New York City cop.

Holden displayed the blood-soaked shirt and picket sign Roy had been holding. "That blood is on the hands of Fred Currey and all the other greedy bastards in this country like Lorenzo...."

"They [Currey and Lorenzo] don't care about workers," Joe Walsh, an international vice president of the ATU told the crowd, "they don't care about people, and they sure as hell don't care about unions. Well, Mr.

Currey and Mr. Lorenzo, without trade unions you're nothing. You're zilch. Without our experienced labor to make your companies run, you're nothing."

Broad union support

The audience at the rally included union electrical workers, hotel workers, garment workers, Eastern machinists (who were given a special welcome), Harvard University clerks and technical workers, schoolbus drivers, communications workers from NYNEX, Amtrak workers, and others.

Other speakers included Paul Eustace, secretary of labor for Massachusetts; Jim White, the secretary of the state Office of Handicapped Affairs; state and regional AFL-CIO representatives; and representatives from a number of these unions, who presented checks to Local 1205 for their strike fund.

ATU locals from Bonanza Bus Lines in Providence, R.I., and Peter Pan Bus Lines in Springfield, Mass., presented checks, and the Peter Pan representative told the crowd that drivers and mechanics there had just voted overwhelmingly against a contract offer. "Management thought we'd be intimidated by Greyhound. No way!"

...Solidarity

(continued from page 1)

concessions since a hard-fought seven-week strike in 1983. In 1987 ATU members had their wages cut some 30 percent after Currey bought the company in a leveraged buyout for \$350 million.

When the strike began, many of the 6300 drivers were making as little as \$6.50 an hour and could work up to 10 consecutive days before getting overtime pay. Wages were also contingent on the number of passengers and drivers' safety records.

Besides the drivers, the ATU represents some 3000 mechanics, cleaners, and clerks. Other mechanics are organized by the International Association of Machinists, who are not honoring the ATU's picket line.

Edward Strait, president of the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions, the ATU's bargaining unit, called the company's new proposal "worse than the ones we had before. We're going backwards."

Employers are out for blood

While Greyhound claims it is servicing 98 percent of its routes, strikers point out that many former routes have been dropped and

ridership is down significantly.

The ATU top leaders are using more than the strike to try to force Currey to the bargaining table. They've hired Brian Freeman, a banker, to examine a possible union-led buyout should Greyhound go bankrupt. Freeman recently put together a union buyout of United Airlines under an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan). That deal, which imposes major concessions on the workers, is pending bank financing.

This initiative by the ATU officials comes on the heels of the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board authorizing the board's regional office to file an unfair labor practices complaint against Greyhound. The counsel charged that Greyhound had unlawfully imposed certain contract proposals before negotiations reached an impasse.

The Greyhound strike is important for the labor movement. Since the destruction of the air traffic controllers union in 1981 by the Reagan administration, the organized labor movement has been in steady retreat.

The unionized workforce continues to decline. In the private sector (excluding government workers) it is 12.4 percent compared to 16.8 percent in 1983. Overall, unions represent only 16.4 percent of U.S. workers. The employers are more and more out for blood. Fred Currey and Frank Lorenzo are

not unique; they are just leading the pack.

Greyhound's management is out to destroy the union. Trade unionists and other supporters of the labor movement need to redouble our solidarity with these workers. We need to keep Currey's back to the wall. We need effective solidarity—mass picketing to keep the buses in the garages, or, where that isn't yet possible, to limit the number of passengers riding the scab busline.

The labor movement must also rally to the defense of two strikers victimized for allegedly shooting at a scab-driven bus. Harry Lewis and Roy Simes were arrested April 10 on federal charges and denied bail May 11.

The Teamsters at a Midwest regional conference voted to donate \$4000 to aid their defense effort. Defending these workers is an effective way to expose the complicity of the cops, courts, and Currey's scab outfit, and to support the workers' right to strike.

Since the strike began one striker, Bob Waterhouse, has been killed and more than 60 strikers injured. Court injunctions limiting picket size and location have been issued in more than a dozen cities.

Standing firm against the bosses is the only way the union movement will begin to revitalize the slogans "an injury to one is an injury to all" and "solidarity forever" until victory is won.

Harold Schonbrun

Harold Schonbrun, veteran Trotskyist militant, died in Chicago, Ill., on May 20 at the age of 74.

Schonbrun, a long-time supporter of Socialist Action, joined the Trotskyist movement in 1938 in Toledo, Ohio. An article on his life will appear in the July issue of *Socialist Action*.

Ohio workers protest poisons at work sites

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

WARREN, Ohio—"We just come to work here; we don't come to die!" This was an expression heard frequently on the morning of Saturday, April 28, as workers from throughout the Mahoning Valley testified about the chemical hazards in their plants. They were participants in a public hearing to commemorate Workers Memorial Day organized by Workers Against Toxic Chemical Hazards (WATCH) in Warren, Ohio.

A chemically poisoned GM worker echoed the feelings of many when he said, "I went

to Lordstown for the American dream. What I got was the American nightmare." Although GM Lordstown is a relatively new auto plant, opened in 1966, the average age of death is 57. In addition to high rates of cancer and heart disease, workers experience nausea, loss of consciousness, and frequent nosebleeds.

Workers and retirees from Thomas Steel, SAJAR Plastics, Warren Consolidated Industries, Wean United, and Copperweld made it clear that the problem isn't confined to one plant or one industry. All told similar stories of corporate disregard for basic health

and safety conditions.

Although serious problems remain, workers at Warren Consolidated Industries and GM Lordstown have eliminated some hazards through active union safety committees. Others said that their local unions have bought into the company's arguments that increased safety costs might lead to a plant shutdown.

A worker from an area steel plant answered this charge when he said, "I'm not here to shut Copperweld down, but I say if we can spend \$42 billion to build a bomber that looks like a bat, if we can spend \$42 billion

to destroy the universe, then we can spend \$42 billion to save lives."

Rhonda Miller, speaking for Kids Against Toxic Chemical Hazards, compared large corporations to drug dealers, saying that when they get caught, they pay a fine and resume pushing poisonous chemicals.

The hearing concluded with a determination that no one should be forced to choose between a job and a healthy life. More unions and stronger unions were looked to as a way to stop corporate profits from being placed above human life. WATCH chairperson Peggy Van Winkle vowed, "It's going to be a long fight, but we're going to win."

A march and rally followed these hearings. Speakers included Joe Fiorino, president of the Trumbull County Federation of Labor AFL-CIO, other labor officials, WATCH members, environmentalists, and elected officials. Clearly visible throughout the rally was a memorial to the 75 Lordstown workers who died from cancer between January 1987 and July 1988.

The following interview is with Peggy Van Winkle, Chairperson of Workers Against Toxic Chemical Hazards (WATCH).

Socialist Action: Describe WATCH.

Peggy Van Winkle: It consists of chemically poisoned workers, current employees, former employees, and families of deceased employees. We started in 1988 to find out how chemicals in the GM Lordstown plant were affecting people.

We called a meeting with the union and they brought in management when we asked for a proportional mortality ratio study. This study showed that 41 percent more of us were dying at GM Lordstown than the national average.

OSHA cited GM for 750 violations, including 178 willful ones. The UAW is working with us, trying to get better health and safety measures.

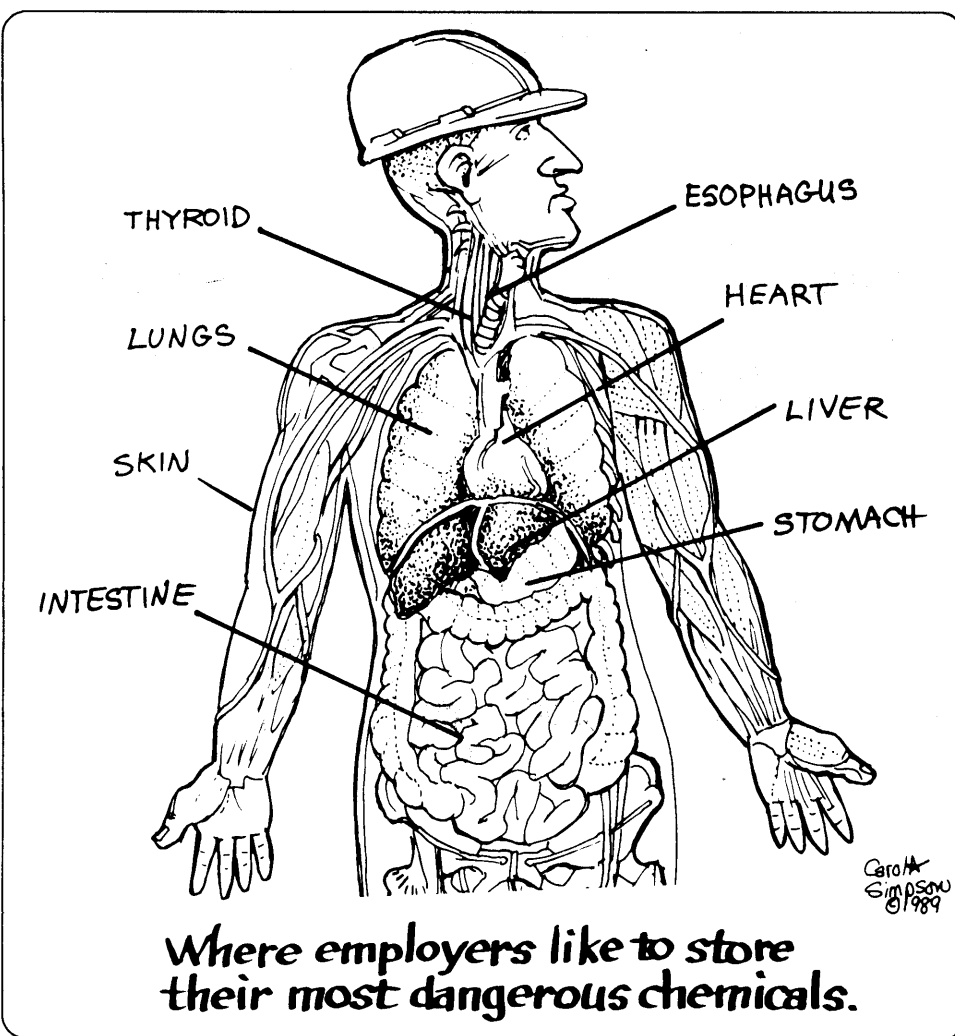
Now we're finding more and more people at other plants with similar problems. So we're spreading WATCH from just GM Lordstown to anyone that wants to join. I believe the problem of toxic chemicals is much larger than people realize.

S.A.: What has been the reaction of workers and retirees to your efforts?

Van Winkle: There's mixed feelings. Some say, "Oh you people are going to close the plants down." We're not here to close the plants down. We're here to clean the plants up. It's a lot cheaper to clean the plants than close them.

We want to see these plants so clean that we feel that we're at home when we go into work. We don't want to worry about chemicals altering our health for

'We're here to clean the plants up'



the rest of our lives or even leaving work every night with a headache and a nosebleed.

S.A.: What support have you gotten

from the youth?

Van Winkle: We've had some, since they are our future workers. We had a 16-year-old speaker from Kids

Against Toxic Chemical Hazards at our hearings. She told the truth and pointed a finger at us, asking what we are going to do to clean up the plant before she gets a job there. I think the youth will eventually play a large role.

S.A.: Have you gotten support from elected officials?

Van Winkle: We haven't heard from a lot of elected officials yet. By next year, they'll be coming to us because they'll be counting heads. It's just a shame they didn't see us this year.

S.A.: What activities has WATCH been involved in?

Van Winkle: We picketed in front of Allied Erecting and Dismantling Group to help them with their health and safety issues. We support Solidarity USA [a group of LTV retirees and their spouses formed to protect pension benefits after the company filed Chapter 11]. We're an all-around broad-shouldered support group that assists with OSHA complaint forms and helps an injured worker find a doctor or an attorney.

S.A.: What do you plan to do next?

Van Winkle: We need to get environmentalists, groups like WATCH, and the unions together. Then we could organize a march on Washington together. We'll start making plans in a week or two for a march next spring. We're going to have thousands of people and we will be listened to.

S.A.: How can anyone interested in starting a similar group get in touch with you?

Van Winkle: They can call me at (216) 545-0234. We are glad to have more members or affiliates of WATCH, and we don't turn anyone down. My address is 1804 1/2 N. State St., Girard, OH 44420.

'People have 4.7 times the national average of leukemia'

The interview below is with Larry Wilson of Yellow Creek Concerned Citizens.

Socialist Action: What caused you to become involved in environmental issues?

Larry Wilson: A leather tanning company wiped out my family farm by dumping its waste into a stream that goes through the farm. It killed all my livestock and contaminated my garden to where the vegetables were not edible.

People living around the creek were getting sick. We have 4.7 times the national average of leukemia, which is confirmed by a governmental agency, the Center for Disease Control. We have over 10 times the national average of cancer.

We've lost about 10 percent of our population to cancer. Just recently, my son got central nervous system damage and suffered permanent vision impairment because of an immune system problem brought on by the chemicals.

S.A.: What was the reaction of other people in the community?

Wilson: It's a very rural area back in the mountains where over 50 percent of the people are illiterate. There's only about 1000 people in the entire land by the creek. Once

they learned what was going on, they became involved. We have 450 active members. We consider that pretty fair.

S.A.: What was the reaction of workers in the plant?

Wilson: It was very hostile. We've had some instances of violence and a lot of threats. Initially, there were demonstrations by workers against us.

The company said the community was responsible for shutting down two-thirds of the plant. In fact, they had made a decision years before to transfer that particular portion of the operation and the 300 jobs that went with it to Argentina, where the environmental laws are looser. And more important, according to their testimony under oath, the wages and benefits are much, much cheaper there.

Although it was an economic decision, they tried to convince the workers that community people were trying to put them out of work. It's an example of something we see all the time. It's an attempt to keep us from getting together because once we do, there's more victims than there are victimizers.

Just recently, after 10 years, some workers are looking around and seeing that whatever

problems we had, they have more. They were taking these problems home and their families were getting sick. So, we've just begun a cooperative program with workers in the plant. We're in the very early stages and we hope it continues.

S.A.: What has been the reaction of government officials?

Wilson: It's really disheartening to see that we have federal and state governments legalizing murder. There is actually a national law that you can put a certain amount of cyanide in people's drinking water and there's nothing they can do about it. That's murder.

Literally hundreds of thousands of chemicals much more toxic than cyanide have been put into the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink—and it's legalized by our federal and state governments.

If they kill one out of every 10,000 people, they say that's acceptable. But it's only acceptable to the poisoners who are doing this for profit. It's not acceptable to the people being poisoned.

S.A.: What has been the reaction of local elected officials?

Wilson: A county judge in Eastern Kentucky called me a radical, anarchist, communist. We're called troublemakers. We're called emotional. They say don't get emotional, but I want to know what we're supposed to do when our kids are dying. They tell us don't get angry, but I don't know what else you can do when you see people being killed. They say just go home,

shut up, and we'll take care of you. Well, they've taken care of us for 200 years and we see what we've got. It's time that we take control of our own lives.

S.A.: Have you considered members of your group for office?

Wilson: We supported some city council people and won a two-thirds majority. When our group tried to change a city ordinance, the mayor would veto it. When they overrode his veto, he'd issue an executive order saying, "Ignore the override." This forced the city council to file suit, but the judge was a friend of the mayor, so he sat on the decision for two years.

The folks that we're up against built the system. So, we took a beating because we were ignorant of how it works. We thought the judicial system worked. We didn't know that justice is for sale, that the poor and powerless can't afford justice, that only the rich and influential can afford justice.

S.A.: What activities have Yellow Creek Concerned Citizens carried out?

Wilson: We do lots of things. We've circulated petitions; we've filed suits; we've had public hearings. We've done a lot of protest marches. We've done civil disobedience. We occupied City Hall for two weeks. We set up roadblocks and laid down in front of trucks hauling toxic chemicals.

We even took one truckload of hazardous chemicals and dumped them on the Capitol steps in Frankfort. We do whatever we think needs to be done to correct the problem.

Evolution of the SWP over the past decade:

The pitfalls of using organizational methods to settle political disputes

By MALIK MIAH and
BARRY SHEPPARD

Last month's issue of *Socialist Action* reported that the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party has launched a campaign against Socialist Action (SA) among the SWP's members and supporters, charging that SA members are "finks." To the workers' movement a fink is a police informer or professional strike-breaker.

The ostensible grounds for this charge is the distribution by SA of a bulletin put together by Malik Miah. This bulletin provided the rank-and-file supporters and members of the SWP with the full record of Miah's recent expulsion from the SWP. The SWP top leadership had wanted to keep this hidden from the ranks.

For this "crime," the SWP Political Committee (PC) labels Socialist Action and its members as finks, who are "not to be treated as fellow workers." It also states that it will not "accept" the distribution of Miah's bulletin to its rank-and-file members and supporters, and further threatens SA with unspecified "consequences" of "any continuation of this course."

Working-class militants have always regarded finks as class enemies who were to be dealt with accordingly. The SWP PC's threats imply that "anything goes" in dealing with SA.

This attempt to put a "fink jacket" on another organization in the workers' movement and the scarcely veiled threat of the use of violence is unprecedented in the history of the SWP. In and of itself it indicates the depths of the degeneration the SWP has undergone in the past decade—that is, under the stewardship of SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, unchecked by the presence of the older, working-class central leaders of the party who have passed from the scene.

This is the first in a series of articles in which we will analyze the political and organizational evolution of the SWP during this period.

This first article will trace the rupture with the SWP's organizational principles that began in 1981, which has culminated in the current ominous campaign by the SWP leadership to read SA out of the workers' movement.

1981 SWP Convention

During the preparatory discussion in the SWP leading up to the 1981 convention, political differences appeared over the evaluation of the Nicaraguan revolution and its leadership, the FSLN, as well as over trade-union work and the party's attitude towards the Castro leadership of the Cuban revolution.

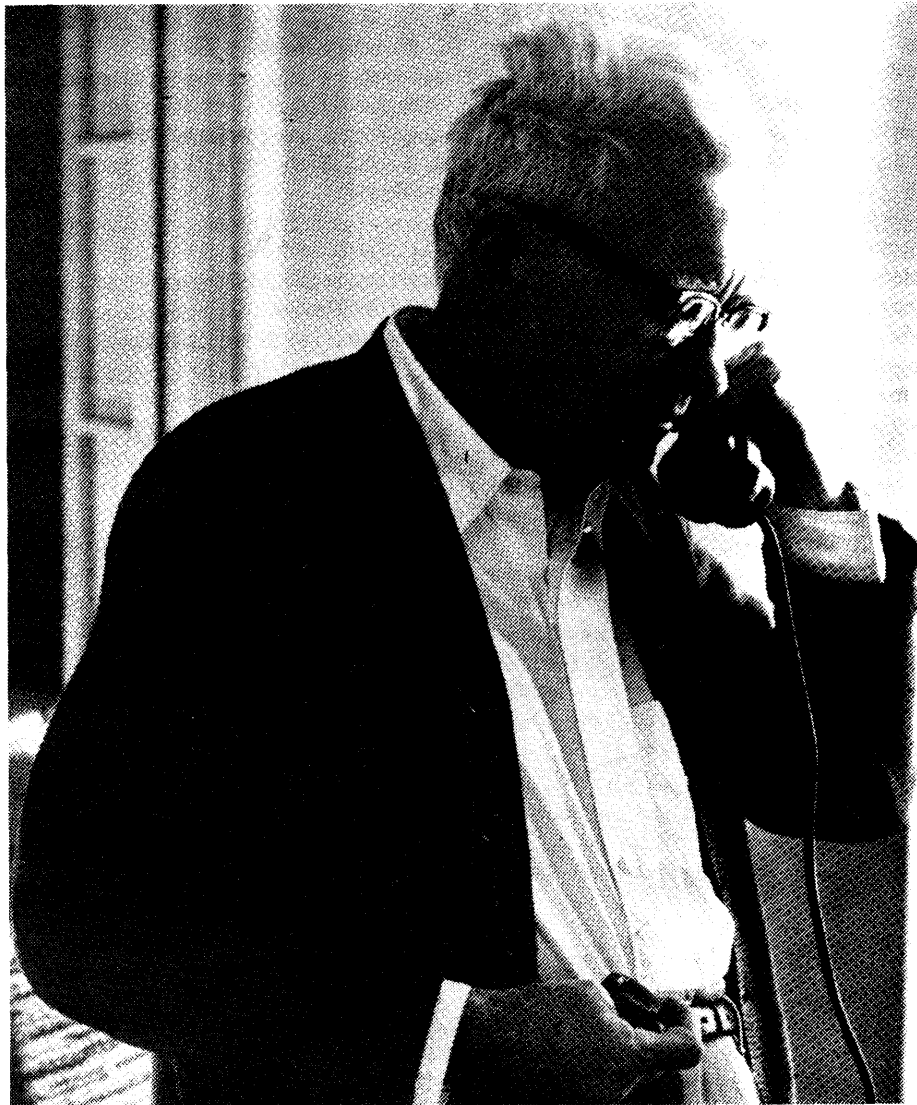
These differences stemmed from the SWP leadership's new interpretation of Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. [See accompanying article on Trotsky's theory.] One of the minority tendencies that had formed during the preconvention discussion predicted that the majority was in the process of abandoning permanent revolution.

At the end of that convention, representatives of two minority tendencies announced that they would abide by the decisions of the convention and await the next appropriate opportunity, according to the party's organizational principles, to raise their points of view.

One of the minority tendencies announced its intention to continue its existence in order to organize its participation into the written discussion prior to the World Congress of the Fourth International, scheduled to open in early 1982. All members of the SWP had the right to contribute to this discussion.

National Secretary Jack Barnes also spoke. His remarks were in the spirit of a "Catch-22." In essence Barnes said that the SWP's organizational principles allowed the continuation of factions or tendencies following a convention, but that it disallowed such for-

Barry Sheppard and Malik Miah are former central leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. They have recently joined Socialist Action.



James P. Cannon in 1970

"The attempt to impose hierarchical committee discipline ... is the most reprehensible practice imaginable. It is right out of the Stalinist book...."

"[T]he imposition of National Committee discipline ... is a sure way to deprive the rank and file of any real opportunity to weigh and consider possibly different opinions, or shadings of difference, and thereby deprive them of any real opportunity to form their own deliberate opinions before taking a vote."

"Trotsky once said, 'honest information is the first prerequisite for democratic discussion.' One of the most important elements of honest information in a discussion by the party membership consists of the opinions of all leaders who are familiar with the questions under discussion."

— James P. Cannon, founder of the SWP—from a Sept. 5, 1953, letter to a British cothinker

mations to function in any way until the next preconvention discussion period opened.

This statement by the National Secretary represented a break with the SWP's organizational principles in two ways.

First, while this statement was made during a session of the convention, no vote by the delegates was taken for or against it. It was merely assumed that a statement by the National Secretary was party law.

Never before in the history of the SWP was any individual, including one holding the most important post in the party, ever given such individual powers. This was a reflection of the fact that the leadership of the SWP was becoming more and more a one-man band.

Second, Barnes' statement represented a new interpretation of the party's organizational principles, which had been most recently recodified in 1965. Never before had any such interpretation been made of those organizational principles. The 1965 resolution nowhere says factions or tendencies must dissolve following a convention or that they cannot meet and discuss among themselves.

On the contrary, the 1965 resolution guarantees the "unconditional" right to form factions and tendencies. It does state that this

right must not be misconstrued to try to keep discussion going in the branches on disputed questions once a convention decision has been reached.

It also states that the party as a whole, through majority vote, has the right to regulate the conduct of tendencies and factions. But this right was never before taken to mean that a majority had the right to regulate a minority faction or tendency out of existence.

Moreover, there is no case of either Marx or Engels, or of the Bolsheviks, ever resorting to such an interpretation. The banning of factions in the Soviet party towards the end of the civil war has nothing to do with the current situation in the SWP. It was taken as an extraordinary and temporary measure.

Political discussion was vital

The practice of forcing tendencies and factions to disband following a convention is harmful to the democratic functioning of any revolutionary organization. The reason this is so, is that any time sharp differences appear in a revolutionary organization, sharp enough to warrant the formation of factions or tendencies, the situation cannot be resolved through organizational suppression of the minorities, but only through political

discussion.

While minorities must be disciplined and not try to reopen disputed questions until the proper time, it is unrealistic to try to force them to dissolve, and any such attempt only drives such formations underground. Political discussion retreats into the corridors.

It disrupts party life if minorities form secret factions, but it also disrupts party life and is not in the best interests of a productive discussion for majorities to outlaw tendencies or factions.

Following the 1981 convention, the political and programmatic differences deepened inside the SWP. The majority leadership, which had supported Trotsky's concept of the permanent revolution up through the 1981 convention, came out against it immediately following the convention. This was no small matter. Permanent revolution had been a fundamental part of the party's program since its founding in 1938.

[At the end of 1982, in fact, Jack Barnes presented a speech at a convention of the Young Socialist Alliance, titled "Their Trotsky and Ours," which made explicit the rejection of permanent revolution.]

In the face of this change in position by the majority following the convention, the minorities protested and soon formed a bloc to defend the historic positions of the SWP. On the basis of the new interpretation of the party's organizational principles—which had never been discussed or voted on but was now assumed to be party law by virtue of the fact that the National Secretary said it was—the leaders of the minority tendencies were convicted of functioning as a faction and censured by the National Committee early in 1982.

SWP cancels national convention

The SWP constitution stipulates that a party convention should be held at least every two years, and since its founding, this had been the practice of the SWP except in the most unusual circumstances. Thus, a convention was due to be held in 1983.

But in the spring of 1983 the SWP leadership proposed to the membership to postpone the convention, and took a membership poll which approved this postponement. Various arguments were advanced by the leadership about why a convention should be postponed.

One was that attention had to be paid to the Gelfand trial, a suit brought against the SWP by a member of the Workers League named Gelfand, which sought to use the courts to put a "fink jacket" on the party.

The SWP leadership later dropped the rationale of the Gelfand trial, which was of course an important task of the party. But it insisted the party needed to turn away from internal debate and outward towards public political activity before holding another convention.

The leadership, however, made a grave error in proposing to cancel this convention. The party National Secretary had made a speech that codified a major change in the party's program. This change was resisted by a sizeable section of the party. In addition, the two minorities were in disagreement with the majority on much ongoing work of the party in relation to the trade unions, Nicaragua, Grenada, and the Fourth International.

By cancelling the 1983 convention, the party leadership violated one of the most important acquisitions of the SWP, which was to bend over backwards on all organizational questions during a political dispute in the party in order to reach the greatest political clarity in the discussion. This is important not only for any minority to have its democratic right to present its views to the party as a whole, but also for the majority to clarify its positions in the course of the debate.

This was the central lesson heretofore taught party cadres. It had been reinforced during the debate and split in the SWP that took place in 1940. Two books, which had been bibles of party organizational methods and its basic principles, came out of that split: "Struggle for a Proletarian Party," by James P. Cannon and "In Defense of Marxism," by Leon Trotsky.

In fact Cannon always credited Trotsky with teaching the American comrades the Bolshevik principle that political clarity took precedence over organizational questions. Now those priorities were reversed by the Barnes leadership.

The minorities were confronted with a worsened violation of the party's organiza-

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

tional principles. By ukase of the National Secretary, they weren't allowed to even meet and discuss among themselves except during preconvention periods. (It is a norm of democratic centralism for minorities to wait until preconvention discussion is opened to present their views to the membership as a whole.)

But the cancellation of the convention, which came after fundamental positions of the SWP had been changed without any discussion by the party as a whole, further barred discussion indefinitely.

So nothing was clarified, either for the majority or the minorities.

Minorities expelled from SWP

Then, with the 1983 convention cancelled, the majority used the fact that the minorities continued to exist to bring various supporters of the minorities up on charges of violating the organizational principles of the party and expelling them. Finally, all the remainder of the minority supporters were expelled in early 1984.

The majority interpreted actions by the minority as violations of party norms. But by cancelling the 1983 convention in the face of deep divisions in the party, the majority leadership taught the deeply erroneous lesson that the way to deal with political differences is through administrative means.

It is in this context of a major and inexcusable violation of the SWP's organizational norms by the party leadership that any "violation of party norms" by the minorities must be seen. This crude organizational maneuver by the leadership has corrupted the functioning of the SWP ever since.

A discussion on permanent revolution was never held in the SWP. The 1983 convention was cancelled and then the minorities were thrown out before the next convention so that the opportunity to discuss this major programmatic revision at that time was lost.

In fact, to this day, the SWP has never discussed Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and formally adopted a position on it, either in the Political Committee, the National Committee or the party convention. All there is on this question is the speech by Jack Barnes, which is presumed to be the party position.

Most members of the SWP don't know what the theory of permanent revolution is and what is supposedly wrong with it.

Shunning the heretics

Following the expulsions of the minority supporters, the SWP leadership deepened its fundamental error. It banned all members of the former minorities from attending SWP public meetings and from entering SWP bookstores.

The main rationalization for this was that the expelled members, who formed two groups, Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, referred to themselves as "public factions" of the SWP, and by so doing could be used by the government in future trials by claiming that they spoke for the SWP. Banning them from bookstores and public party meetings was supposed in some way to guard against this, but exactly how was never explained because there is no explanation that makes any legal or common sense.

In any case, the expelled minorities explained that they were using the term "public faction of the SWP" in the same way that the original American Trotskyists used the term "public faction of the Communist Party" after they were expelled by the Stalinists in 1928, and that in no way did they claim to speak for the SWP.

We say this banning of the expelled mem-

bers from bookstores and public meetings was a rationalization, because we know the real reason, which was explained by Jack Barnes to a meeting of the SWP National Committee we were members of.

Barnes explained that if he sees a member of one of the expelled minorities on the street, he won't even acknowledge their existence. He "looks right through them." This was said to give us the idea of the "proper" way to deal with these comrades, and we were supposed to help lead the ranks in conducting themselves in the same manner.

In other words, the ban on these former members attending SWP public meetings or entering bookstores was meant to be a kind of "shunning" that some religious sects engage in with "heretics." Once again, the lesson was driven home that the best way to deal with political problems in the workers' movement is through organizational means rather than politically.

Depoliticization of members

The party launched its turn to get the majority of party members into industry in the late 1970s with high hopes that a political radicalization of the working class in the United States and throughout the world was on the agenda. This turned out not to be the case in the United States.

In a future article we will discuss the evo-

lution of the SWP's turn to industry and its trade-union perspectives. For now, we only note that for the first half of the 1980s, the party maintained the perspective of an imminent radicalization of the working class.

A convention was held in the summer of 1984, which adopted a political resolution which stated that the "industrial working class and its unions [have moved] to the center of politics in the United States for the first time in almost four decades." Actually, of course, the unions had been in retreat in the 1980-1985 period, and in the United States and the other imperialist countries the working class was not radicalizing.

With the emergence of the P-9 meatpackers' strike struggle at Hormel in 1985-86, the party leadership changed its view of the

1980-85 period, characterizing it as a "rout" of the labor movement that had now been broken. This position was never written in a resolution, however.

Subsequently, we saw the extension of the meatpackers' struggle, the paperworkers' strike, miners' strikes at Massey and Pittston and elsewhere, the Eastern strike, and others. Most of these struggles were defeated. But there was not a single political resolution on the development of the class struggle in the United States produced by the SWP leadership in the five-year period from 1984 to 1989 to analyze these struggles and to critically examine party policy in light of these events.

Nor were there any resolutions on the important world developments in this period, including the great changes taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, China, or even Cuba.

In fact, with the exception of a short special convention to prepare for the World Congress of the Fourth International early in 1985, no conventions were held by the SWP until the summer of 1988. And that convention considered only part of a political resolution, on the state of the world capitalist economy, and had no political evaluation of events in the class struggle in the United States or worldwide.

There is an SWP convention scheduled for

to the membership as extremely serious issues, and to be on the "wrong" side of one of these questions means you are not a true "proletarian," or you are said to be "on your way out" and often given an assist to make sure you are out.

All this is called "conquering the norms of a proletarian party."

Another new "proletarian" norm has been established in cases involving the authors of this article. In 1987, Barry Sheppard raised a difference with a position adopted by the National Committee about a report which was to be given to a membership conference. The National Committee adopted a motion that all members of the NC had to support the report adopted by the NC at the conference if they were present.

This conference was open to all members of certain branches, including the one Sheppard was a member of. At the opening of the conference, the chairperson stated that a free and open discussion by all present was what was wanted, and that at the end of the conference a straw vote would be taken on the report. No mention was made of the fact that any NC members present would have to support the report, whether they agreed to it or not, both verbally and by voting.

The National Committee has every right to determine how its positions will be reported to the party. But it is a violation of

What is Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution?



The theory of permanent revolution holds that in those countries which had a belated capitalist development, the capitalist class is too weak and cowardly to resist imperialism. In fact, it is a direct agent of imperialism.

What this means is that in order to carry through the struggle for the redistribution of the land, self-determination and national liberation, industrialization, and democratization—that is, the tasks of the national, democratic revolution—workers and peasants cannot rely on any wing of the national capitalist class. They must join together to throw out both

the foreign overlords and the national bourgeoisies submissive to them.

A resolute struggle for power by the worker and peasant masses would therefore be inexorably oriented in an anti-capitalist, pro-socialist direction.

In the imperialist epoch, according to Trotsky's theory, the workers must lead both the democratic and socialist revolutions in the backward countries. These two types of revolution, which were separated in the West, are combined in time and space.

The permanence of the revolution consists

in the fact that the struggle for democracy irresistibly grows over into the movement for socialism under the leadership of the proletariat and its revolutionary party.

Another aspect of Trotsky's theory involves the international character of the socialist revolution. The working class can take power and begin the building of socialism within a national framework. But because of the world character of the productive forces and the world scope of the class struggle, the revolution cannot be consummated or socialism become established except on an international basis.

lution of the SWP's turn to industry and its trade-union perspectives. For now, we only note that for the first half of the 1980s, the party maintained the perspective of an imminent radicalization of the working class.

A convention was held in the summer of 1984, which adopted a political resolution which stated that the "industrial working class and its unions [have moved] to the center of politics in the United States for the first time in almost four decades." Actually, of course, the unions had been in retreat in the 1980-1985 period, and in the United States and the other imperialist countries the working class was not radicalizing.

With the emergence of the P-9 meatpackers' strike struggle at Hormel in 1985-86, the party leadership changed its view of the

June 1990. But as of early May, no political resolution was presented to the ranks for consideration.

This is an extraordinary situation in the history of the SWP. In the 1980s, there were only three constitutional conventions and only two political resolutions, the last one being written in 1984!

In place of regular conventions and the regular submission to the ranks of the positions of the leadership for democratic discussion and critical evaluation, there has been substituted a top-down method of functioning. National Committee meetings hear verbal reports, which are then communicated to the ranks through reports, the press, and so on, for implementation only—not for discussion and decisive vote by the membership. The result is a depoliticization of the party.

"Conquering proletarian norms"

While the SWP leadership has been singularly unable to produce a political resolution for years and years, it has been very active in writing long documents on organizational matters, usually involving discipline against SWP members.

Some of these are ludicrous. Great energy has been expended by the leadership in working through intricate reasoning on exactly what the true proletarian norms are in matters such as members holding baby showers, proper times and places for breast feeding, when children can be present at political events, and other such "critical questions" of the world revolution.

But make no mistake—these are presented

all past practice of the SWP to interpret this right to mean that NC members who happen to be members of a body lower than the National Committee cannot speak freely about their opinions on whatever subject is on the agenda of a meeting of that lower body.

Such "committee discipline" obviously violates the democratic rights of the entire membership to be fully informed of the opinions of the other members of whatever body is in session.

Similarly, one of the charges against Malik Miah that led to his expulsion in January 1990 (technically he is only suspended until the June SWP convention can rule on the National Committee's recommendation that he be expelled) was that he presented his views in a meeting of the trade-union fraction he was a member of—views which were not the same as those of the Political Committee. The positions of the SWP PC were of course presented at that meeting as well.

What comes through this brief history of how the SWP has evolved on the organization question over the past decade is the deepening of the trend to deal with political questions by administrative means.

The attempt to put a "fink jacket" on Socialist Action as a way to try to prevent SWP members and supporters from considering the facts of Malik Miah's expulsion, and to seal them off from political discussion with members of Socialist Action is the latest, and gravest, point reached in this process.

(first in a series)

Toward a Socialist America: What Socialist Action stands for

A Socialist Action pamphlet,
edited by Asher Harer,
with speeches by SWP founder
James P. Cannon

To order this pamphlet, and for a list of the 16 other Socialist Action pamphlets, write to 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA. Send \$1.30. Make check payable to Walnut Publishing Co.

By JIM HENLE

When Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown last December, signs went up at Beijing universities: "Learn from Romania." Taking inspiration from the mass uprising of the Romanian workers, Chinese students defied the intense surveillance of campuses with small rallies and celebrations.

In response, the Chinese government ordered martial-law troops, armed police, and security forces on "first degree combat readiness." Now, a year after its brutal crackdown on the student and worker movements at Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, the Stalinist regime still cannot exorcise their spirits.

The 1989 wave of the student movement began as a protest around the funeral of Hu Yaobang, a reform leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Hu was widely favored among intellectuals because of his campaign to clear many of those persecuted in the Cultural Revolution and other repressive campaigns.

While many students looked to the reform wing of the CCP as more intelligent and open, they also organized independently. Their key demands were for free press and for dialogue with the regime, which implied recognition of their autonomous groups.

Deng Xiaoping and the CCP leadership took the students' independence as a mortal threat. But it was not only the defiance of the students that threatened them. The "desertion of the intellectuals" opened the door to a deeper crisis, with the workers moving to center stage.

As CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin told reporters from *US World and News Report*, "We do not regret, or criticize ourselves for the way we handled the Tiananmen event, because if we had not sent in the troops, I would not be able to sit here today."

Market reforms erode gains

This crisis was brought about not only by the regime's political repression, but also by its program of economic reforms. After the disastrous years of Maoist austerity, Deng Xiaoping launched a program of market reforms, promoting family farms, small entrepreneurial activity, and market mechanisms throughout industry. Special economic zones (SEZs) were developed where foreign capitalists invested.

While these reforms produced high growth rates, they also led to serious inflation, greater income inequity, unemployment, and

One year later: Spirit 'Beijing Spring' still



Newly formed workers' organizations came out to support students against bureaucracy. These groups are now banned.

widespread corruption—particularly in the CCP, whose hierarchy controls key economic levers. For the workers, the reforms have meant the erosion of crucial gains of the revolution: subsidized prices, guaranteed employment, income, and benefits.

Workers responded massively to the calls of the students for basic rights and against corruption. Thousands organized in Beijing to support the students and protect them

from the possibility of military attack.

Most important, the workers began to form their own mass organizations, raising the specter of a Chinese Solidarnosc. According to Larry Jagan in the journal *New Politics*, "[W]ithin days of being set up on May 19, the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Workers boasted a membership of over 3000.... Before the cruel crushing of the democracy movement, the Federation

claimed to represent over 100,000 workers in more than 40 industries and sectors in the country's capital."

A sharp stick ...

In revulsion at the June 4 massacre the movement exploded into the streets of major cities across China. Major protests occurred in Shanghai, Chengdu, and elsewhere, involving hundreds of thousands. An under-

'Workers' councils will overthrow the tyrants'

Cai Chung-Guo worked as a peasant before he became a student and university professor. His parents are government officials. They are rehabilitated members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) who had been sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution.

Cai Chung-Guo was an eyewitness to the massacre in Tiananmen Square. He was interviewed last month in Los Angeles for Socialist Action by Ralph Schoenman and Mya Shone.

Socialist Action: Tell us about your experience in Tiananmen last June 3-4.

Cai Chung-Guo: I was in Tiananmen Square during the massacre, and it truly was a massacre. The first thing the Chinese government did after they sent the troops into the Square was to declare that there had not been a massacre. This is not true.

I was at Liu Bu Kuo on Chang An Boulevard near the Telegraph Building. The witnesses to the massacre there were all arrested. I am the only survivor. Many, many people were injured. They are afraid to speak to anyone. The police watch them and threaten them. They have been warned to deny what occurred should they be asked what happened.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Bureau is in charge of suppressing the events

at Liu Bu Kuo. Six youths working in this office saw for themselves what took place. They have all been threatened to keep them quiet.

S.A.: What were you doing in Tiananmen Square?

Cai Chung-Guo: I had come to Beijing from Wuhan along with 10,000 other students. I was one of the leaders of the Student Union at the University of Wuhan. We came to Beijing May 19 and lived at Beijing University through the events of June 4.

The students discussed and worked among themselves. On the morning of June 4 we began discussions with the Autonomous Federation of Workers. I spent a lot of time with them listening to their speeches and declarations.

I was the first witness to describe the massacre. The massacre began at Mu Xhi Di and spread to Xi Dan and then to Tiananmen Square. Twenty people were killed between Mu Xhi Di and Xi Dan from 11 p.m. to midnight June 3.

I urged the workers from the Union to leave Tiananmen Square, but they refused. They said: "If we leave what will happen to the students." They asked me to go to the Central Bureau of Tiananmen Square and tell the leaders of the students there that the army had begun to kill students. This was at 1 a.m. on June 4.

I went to the student leaders and described what happened. They did not believe that it was possible for the army to have done this, to have used force against them. I then described what I had seen, that the army was using machine guns and automatic weapons. "If you don't leave, they will slaughter everyone." Most of the students did not want to leave the Square and reluctantly did so.

S.A.: What about the workers?

Cai Chung-Guo: The workers stayed. There were 20 main leaders of the workers in Tiananmen. Most of them were killed in the workers' camp during the massacre in the Square.

S.A.: What impact did the recent upheavals in Eastern Europe have on the Chinese workers and students?

Cai Chung-Guo: The events of Romania gave new hope to them. *Dazibao* [wall posters] are springing up again, despite the tremendous fear of government repression. Acts of resistance are everywhere. This is the result of the courage demonstrated by the Romanian people in particular.

The events in Romania are very important for the Chinese. I traveled to Romania earlier this year; it was very exciting. Young men, women, old people all embraced me, crying, calling out to me: "Tiananmen, Tiananmen." I cried.



Young people of China will not forget.

I gave a talk at the University in Bucharest. I told them about the development of the student movement and the role of our workers. I said that the Eastern European students and workers should support us and we should coordinate our struggles. All the students stood and applauded after my speech. They shouted: "Action, Action."

One year later: Spirit of 'Beijing Spring' still lives

lae Ceau-ber, signs learn from the mass, Chinese willance of lebrations. vovernment police, and abat readi-crackdown ements at 1989, the rce their

ovement eral of Hu e Chinese as widely use of his persecuted mer repres-

the reform lligent and pendently. ess and for h implied rous.

leadership as a mortal efiance of hem. The pened the e workers

ang Zemin and News tucize our-Tiananmen ent in the it here to-

gains

ot only by out also by . After the rity, Deng market re- small en- set mecha- ecial eco- ped where

igh growth nflation, yment, and

a peasant d university vovernment mbers of CCP) who during the

ness to the e. He was Angeles for choenman

about your e 3-4.

Tiananmen it truly was hinese gov- troops into ere had not

Chang An ilding. The were all ar- many, many aid to speak them and warned to y be asked

arty (CCP) g the events



Newly formed workers' organizations came out to support students against bureaucracy. These groups are now banned.

Peter Turnley



Troops patrolling Beijing on the morning follow

widespread corruption—particularly in the CCP, whose hierarchy controls key economic levers. For the workers, the reforms have meant the erosion of crucial gains of the revolution: subsidized prices, guaranteed employment, income, and benefits.

Workers responded massively to the calls of the students for basic rights and against corruption. Thousands organized in Beijing to support the students and protect them

from the possibility of military attack.

Most important, the workers began to form their own mass organizations, raising the specter of a Chinese Solidarnosc. According to Larry Jagan in the journal *New Politics*, "[W]ithin days of being set up on May 19, the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Workers boasted a membership of over 3000.... Before the cruel crushing of the democracy movement, the Federation

claimed to represent over 100,000 workers in more than 40 industries and sectors in the country's capital."

A sharp stick ...

In revulsion at the June 4 massacre the movement exploded into the streets of major cities across China. Major protests occurred in Shanghai, Chengdu, and elsewhere, involving hundreds of thousands. An under-

Workers' councils will throw the tyrants'

at Liu Bu Kuo. Six youths working in this office saw for themselves what took place. They have all been threatened to keep them quiet.

S.A.: What were you doing in Tiananmen Square?

Cai Chung-Guo: I had come to Beijing from Wuhan along with 10,000 other students. I was one of the leaders of the Student Union at the University of Wuhan. We came to Beijing May 19 and lived at Beijing University through the events of June 4.

The students discussed and worked among themselves. On the morning of June 4 we began discussions with the Autonomous Federation of Workers. I spent a lot of time with them listening to their speeches and declarations.

I was the first witness to describe the massacre. The massacre began at Mu Xhi Di and spread to Xi Dan and then to Tiananmen Square. Twenty people were killed between Mu Xhi Di and Xi Dan from 11 p.m. to midnight June 3.

I urged the workers from the Union to leave Tiananmen Square, but they refused. They said: "If we leave what will happen to the students." They asked me to go to the Central Bureau of Tiananmen Square and tell the leaders of the students there that the army had begun to kill students. This was at 1 a.m. on June 4.

I went to the student leaders and described what happened. They did not believe that it was possible for the army to have done this, to have used force against them. I then described what I had seen, that the army was using machine guns and automatic weapons. "If you don't leave, they will slaughter everyone." Most of the students did not want to leave the Square and reluctantly did so.

S.A.: What about the workers?

Cai Chung-Guo: The workers stayed. There were 20 main leaders of the workers in Tiananmen. Most of them were killed in the workers' camp during the massacre in the Square.

S.A.: What impact did the recent upheavals in Eastern Europe have on the Chinese workers and students?

Cai Chung-Guo: The events of Romania gave new hope to them. *Dazibao* [wall posters] are springing up again, despite the tremendous fear of government repression. Acts of resistance are everywhere. This is the result of the courage demonstrated by the Romanian people in particular.

The events in Romania are very important for the Chinese. I traveled to Romania earlier this year; it was very exciting. Young men, women, old people all embraced me, crying, calling out to me: "Tiananmen, Tiananmen." I cried.



Young people of China will not forget.

Peter Turnley

I gave a talk at the University in Bucharest. I told them about the development of the student movement and the role of our workers. I said that the Eastern European students and workers should support us and we should coordinate our struggles. All the students stood and applauded after my speech. They shouted: "Action, Action."

ground network was able to conceal even the most prominent student leaders.

Fearing the power of the workers once they began to move, the regime acted swiftly to save itself. But in the wake of the brutal crackdown, the Stalinists' problems have only multiplied.

"The foremost task is to insure stability," according to CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin. All available methods have been applied to that end. First and foremost has been direct repression.

Over a thousand were killed in Tiananmen on June 3-4, thousands more injured. Thousands more have been detained across China. According to Amnesty International, "many arrests were carried out at night by soldiers and security forces, and those detained were taken to unknown destinations."

Independent student organizations and the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Workers were banned. Workers have been beaten and

They massed outside the university and together, students and workers, we marched on the Chinese Embassy.

I spoke to workers and Communist Party members, too. (I had been a member of the CCP.) There was tremendous sympathy for the Chinese people from everyone. They told me that the Chinese student movement had opened their eyes. I was very excited.

The experience of Romania is significant for another reason. It showed the Chinese people that workers' councils will be the principal force in overturning the tyrants in China because they played such an important role in Romania.

S.A.: What will it take to have a Romanian-like upsurge in China?

Cai Chung-Guo: You have to understand that the fall of the Chinese government depends not only on the dissatisfaction of the people but on the weakening of the Chinese government as well. Deng Xiaoping's death may prove to be a great opportunity.

A friend in Beijing told me: "Even the young police are saying to each other: 'Wait until the old Deng group dies.'" Certainly, there will be huge divisions within the Communist Party once the old guard dies. People are waiting for this moment and feel it will come soon. There is anger, expectancy, restlessness and growing hope.

S.A.: What type of society do you want to see come into place following a victorious anti-bureaucratic revolution?

Cai Chung-Guo: I don't want capitalism. I hate dictatorship, but people think that communist dictatorship is bad and capitalism is good. They don't understand. Since 1979 capitalism has been introduced into China more and more. Workers want social justice, democracy, and freedom. ■

Spirit of still lives

tortured, many in the Workers' Palace of Culture in Beijing.

While 784 detainees have been released since January to improve the regime's image, as many as 30,000 more, according to Asia Watch, remain captured. How many of the disappeared have perished in summary executions is unknown.

... and a few carrots

Brute repression, however, will not solve root problems. In order to stabilize and win

attacks on workers to prevent an explosion of discontent. For example, in an apparent concession, two-tier pricing will be curbed. Many items have a low subsidized price for goods produced under the plan, and a higher market price for surplus production over planned quotas.

This was seen by the bureaucracy as a key reform because it gave an incentive to produce over plan, but was resented by workers because of high prices. Now the two-tier system will be phased out, with the fixed prices being raised gradually instead.

The stability of the regime will also depend on the situation in the countryside. A good harvest this year brought a respite for the regime.

Realizing the dangers of the reform measures, the government made sure that fewer peasants were paid in IOUs for their quotas and that investment in agriculture increased. The policy of the "rich areas leading the poor" has been revised. Larger subsidies are going to the more backward areas, especially in light of the national movements in Tibet and in Muslim areas of Xinjiang province.

Economic program at impasse

But the long-term problems remain. Industry is stagnating. Inequality is increasing. Public works, including irrigation, have deteriorated since the inauguration of the "household responsibility" system. Land is being degraded. Increased food production can't keep pace with population growth, while repressive family-planning measures are extremely unpopular.

The Stalinist bureaucracy's economic program is at an impasse. None of its measures address the fundamental questions. While market measures can raise technique and lift productivity, they lead to overall disorganization, subordination to imperialist-controlled markets—and growing worker discontent.

But reinforcing the state sector preserves the most bureaucratized industries. The state sector is flat. Output rose by 3.7% in 1989, compared with 24.1% in the private sector. Inefficiency, waste, and corruption are endemic to this sector. Alienated from the regime and having no tangible incentives, workers are not motivated.

What lies ahead

Without democratic forms of workers' control at both the producing and consuming ends of a plan—which the bureaucracy is incapable of instituting—stagnation will be the long-term result.

The unfolding political revolution in Eastern Europe, especially the overthrow of Ceausescu, has made it clear that repressive Stalinism is crumbling.

But the ruling Stalinists in China are not without powerful friends. The best friend of the Chinese bureaucracy has been their imperialist business partners. Through secret meetings behind the backs of the peoples of China and the United States, the Bush administration has maintained close ties with the Stalinists. Despite all the crocodile tears, the Bush administration has continued China's "most favored nation" trading status.

The U.S. ruling rich are concerned above all with their investments and the strategic significance of China. They find that the Stalinists provide the best foothold today for capitalism. For their part, Deng and Co. seek out allies against the workers and hope for support from the imperialists.

In the short term, the Deng leadership is holding the fort with a "hard Stalinist" position. A key Feb. 8 editorial in the CCP press reaffirmed their stance against political (not economic) reform, saying that without strong CP leadership "there would be turmoil and warfare ... and the nation would be split."

It is this question of civil war and the threat of an independent workers' mobilization that has the party reformers temporarily in abeyance.

But when pressure rebuilds, the reform wing will undoubtedly resurface. The honeymoon period of Chinese economic reform is over, and political concessions will eventually be readied to appease workers' anger at austerity and the chaos of the market. A portion of the CCP will see it as being a matter of survival to offer these concessions.

In any democratic opening, the question of the workers' own organizations will undoubtedly be posed again. The social and political power of the workers, first glimpsed in Tiananmen last May and June, will flourish anew and raise the possibility of advancing toward genuine socialist democracy.

But to achieve this goal, Chinese workers and students will need to create a political party that draws all the lessons of the Tiananmen events. Such a party will have to be particularly clear on the anti-worker character of the reform wing of the bureaucracy, which is even more enthusiastic about reforms than Deng, the original architect of the program.



Troops patrolling Beijing on the morning following the massacre.

ground network was able to conceal even the most prominent student leaders.

Fearing the power of the workers once they began to move, the regime acted swiftly to save itself. But in the wake of the brutal crackdown, the Stalinists' problems have only multiplied.

"The foremost task is to insure stability," according to CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin. All available methods have been applied to that end. First and foremost has been direct repression.

Over a thousand were killed in Tiananmen on June 3-4, thousands more injured. Thousands more have been detained across China. According to Amnesty International, "many arrests were carried out at night by soldiers and security forces, and those detained were taken to unknown destinations."

Independent student organizations and the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Workers were banned. Workers have been beaten and

the people back, the Stalinists have temporarily slowed the economic reforms. With sharply tightened credit, inflation has been reduced to 6%, although last year as a whole it was still 17.8%. Wages, meanwhile, only rose 11.6%, so the carrot has not been so sweet as the stick is sharp.

A severe contraction has accompanied this belt-tightening. Growth was down to 3.9% for 1989, from 11.2% in 1988. More than 4 million local enterprises have closed, and 15 million have lost their jobs, with millions more underemployed.

There are now an estimated 60 million to 80 million floating workers in China; in one month this year, 1 million migrant workers poured into Guangdong alone. Sporadic protests of the unemployed have been reported, and an estimated 500,000 workers have applied to protest in 30 cities across the country. The applications have been denied.

The Stalinists have tried to modulate their

They massed outside the university and together, students and workers, we marched on the Chinese Embassy.

I spoke to workers and Communist Party members, too. (I had been a member of the CCP.) There was tremendous sympathy for the Chinese people from everyone. They told me that the Chinese student movement had opened their eyes. I was very excited.

The experience of Romania is significant for another reason. It showed the Chinese people that workers' councils will be the principal force in overturning the tyrants in China because they played such an important role in Romania.

S.A.: What will it take to have a Romanian-like upsurge in China?

Cai Chung-Guo: You have to understand that the fall of the Chinese government depends not only on the dissatisfaction of the people but on the weakening of the Chinese government as well. Deng Xiaoping's death may prove to be a great opportunity.

A friend in Beijing told me: "Even the young police are saying to each other: 'Wait until the old Deng group dies.'" Certainly, there will be huge divisions within the Communist Party once the old guard dies. People are waiting for this moment and feel it will come soon. There is anger, expectancy, restlessness and growing hope.

S.A.: What type of society do you want to see come into place following a victorious anti-bureaucratic revolution?

Cai Chung-Guo: I don't want capitalism. I hate dictatorship, but people think that dictator dictatorship is bad and capitalism is good. They don't understand.

Since 1979 capitalism has been introduced into China more and more. Workers want social justice, democracy, and freedom.

Beijing massacre was based on fear of Chinese working class

Tao Bin-Jiang is one of the organizers of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation. He was an eyewitness to the massacre in Tiananmen Square last June 3-4. The following interview was conducted last month in Los Angeles by Ralph Schoenman and Mya Shone.

Socialist Action: Tell us about your experience in Tiananmen Square last June.

Tao Bin-Jiang: I was in Tiananmen Square from the morning of June 3 until 8 a.m. on June 4. I saw at least 1000 bodies in the Square. I did not see those who were brought to the hospital near Chang An Boulevard although I heard that it was full of bodies. Many of the wounded were also brought to hospitals far from Chang An.

Resistance to the massacre developed around 5 a.m. on June 4. People gathered near the street intersections heard the army firing on the people in the Square. When they saw the bodies being carried away they couldn't control themselves and began to fight with the army. They began by setting the army trucks and tanks on fire. Fighting spread. Tiananmen Square was only one of the areas where the people fought back.

The army had not been able to approach the Square until 3 a.m. because the workers gathering in the street had massed to stop them. Throughout the East side of Beijing, people gathered in force and actually stopped the movement of the army through the streets. Some troops were unable to reach

Tiananmen Square until 7 a.m. on June 4. Many people were killed by the soldiers as they had to fight their way to the center of the city.

S.A.: How much support did the students have among the workers?

Tao Bin-Jiang: The student hunger strike in Tiananmen Square was strongly supported by the Chinese workers. It galvanized them. But they were concerned about the imposition of martial law on May 19.

The students were powerless to contain or direct the movement after martial law. The workers realized they had to organize themselves to force the government to accept the demands of the Democracy Movement. There was an overwhelming sentiment that martial law must be resisted.

Workers began to organize independent trade unions. They were the principal force to stop the tanks when they began to enter Beijing. The slogan of the union movement was: "We don't want even one soldier to enter Beijing." In fact, no soldier could enter before June 2.

Many people worked to develop the independent trade unions in every factory in Beijing. People supported the unions even if they didn't become members. Many were afraid to join the unions, but they sympathized and supported them nonetheless.

The massacre was not an accident; it was a studied measure. Following the June 3 killings, the workers planned to hold a big

demonstration. We were going to carry the dead bodies throughout Beijing and call for workers to rise up in all of China. We were calling for a general strike to begin on June 5. This would have caused an uprising in China. The Chinese government would have fallen had the general strike taken place.

Government bureaucrats were uncertain that the Deng Xiaoping regime could survive even after the brutal massacre dispersed the students and workers. Deng had no confidence in the troops. The families of the Chinese officials left Beijing and the leaders were prepared to follow them.

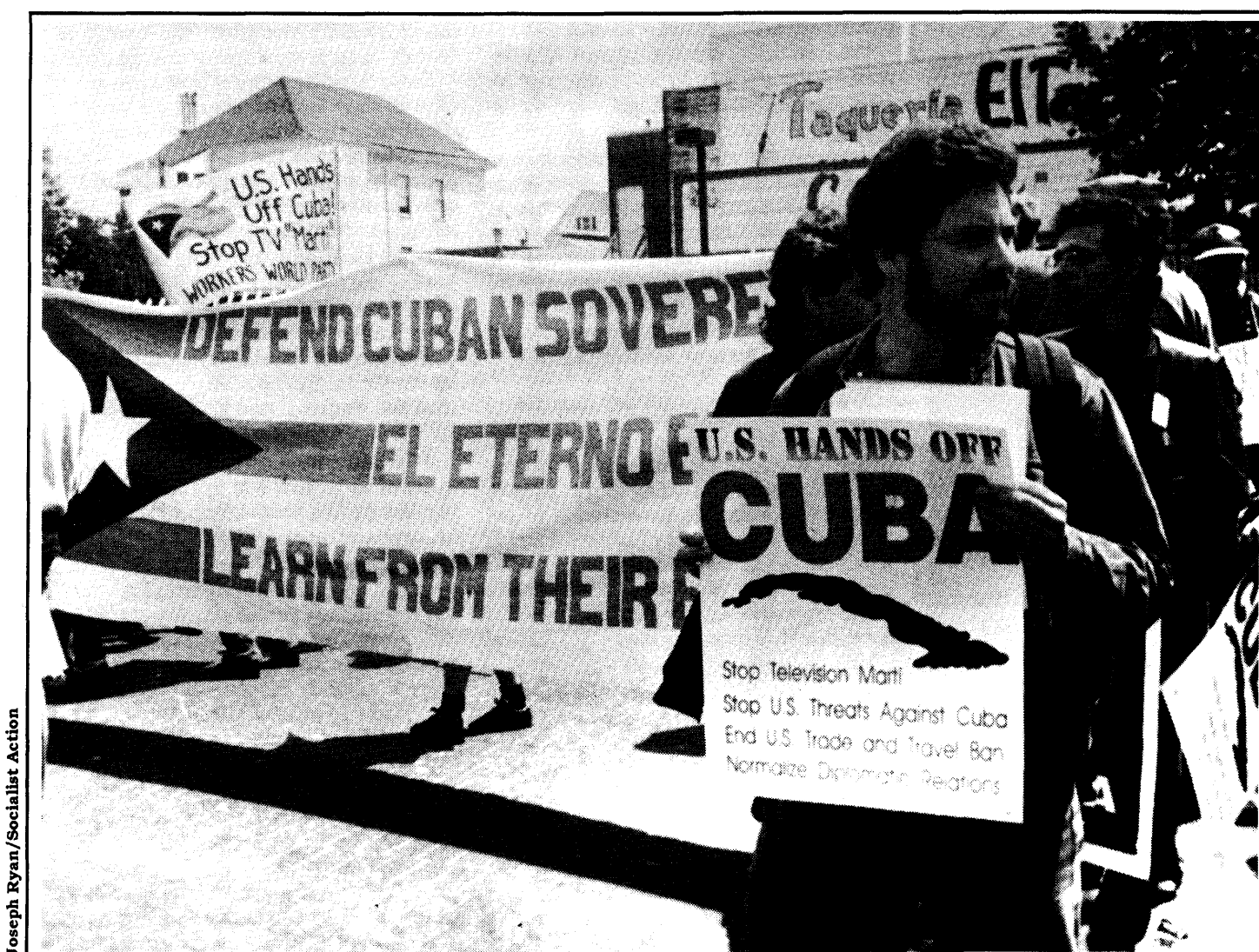
S.A.: What happened after the strike?

Tao Bin-Jiang: The government tried to suppress information about the dead and wounded. On June 8, the government announced that every hospital could care for all those wounded. Then they cut off the supply of medicine so that the wounded would have to be turned over to the government.

Some doctors took patients home with them, but they could care for only a few of the wounded. Other patients were taken to government facilities where, I believe, they were executed.

I believe 4000 to 5000 people were killed and another 4000 to 5000 were wounded. Of course, everyone denies this. There has to be an international investigation; otherwise there will continue to be a cover-up of this massacre.

Cuban diplomat Clinton Adlum: 'We've had to encounter the United States for too long to be surprised at this stage'



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Over 300 rallied in San Francisco on May 19 to demand "U.S. Hands Off Cuba!" The demonstration was organized to protest escalating U.S. threats against Cuba.

The following is a March 19, 1990, interview with Clinton Adlum, who is First Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. The interview, conducted over the telephone by Socialist Action staff writer, Alex Chis, has been abridged and changed only for style.

Socialist Action: It is well known that there is tremendous popular support for the government in Cuba, unlike what had been the case in Eastern Europe. How does Cuba view what is happening in Eastern Europe now?

Clinton Adlum: I can't tell you in detail what has happened, not having been there or having the opportunity of following closely how socialism was constructed there. I am afraid that my view would probably be affected by the information that I get here, even through your press.

But what I do know is that there are principles which should never be violated, and apparently they were violated there.

Now for us, socialism is the highest form of democracy. Whoever constructs socialism and does not keep this in mind, and does not guarantee a higher form of democracy for the people, deserves to be kicked out.

I suppose that based on what the press says about what happened, what was being done there [in Eastern Europe]: corruption, distancing from the masses, and accumulation of funds abroad—as it has been said in the case of Romania, where they had funds in Switzerland and things like this—these things have nothing to do with socialism.

Now we in Cuba keep this principle very much in mind. We maintain closeness with the masses to guarantee an adequate interpretation of the masses' desires. We work for the masses. The fact that you are a member of the party is not a privilege. So this is one of the basic principles that we have to understand.

The fact that you are a member of the party means that you are expected to make sacrifices for the people; not to use this as a stepping stone towards living a life-style which has nothing to do with socialism.

S.A.: In light of what has happened in

Eastern Europe, are there institutional forms of workers' democracy in Cuba to make anything like that completely out of the question there?

Adlum: Well, this is exactly what I was saying. We base our work in Cuba on these principles. Therefore, we cannot foresee anything like this. We do not foresee anything of the kind. No. Another thing which should be taken into consideration is the fact that we accomplished our revolution on our own, without any help from anybody. What we have done since 1959 has been in accordance with the wishes of the people, and we have made every effort to make up for all the time we have wasted before.

S.A.: What is your opinion on introducing capitalist market relations and capitalism into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? Would Cuba follow that road or would it do something else?

Adlum: In the case of the introduction of capitalism, I must repeat something similar to what I just said. We are confident of the importance and necessity of socialism. We see no need to change towards a capitalist system, therefore this says it all.

S.A.: Does Cuba have a view on the recent Lithuanian declaration of independence from the Soviet Union?

Adlum: These are internal problems of the Soviet Union, which have historical roots. It's very difficult. You have to be in the country, understand the country, to know exactly what happened, what occurred, why something was done, and why some things are occurring now.

It's very difficult because if you look at it from one point of view, you say, well if people want to separate they have the right to do it.

[However] we don't want to see the Soviet Union dismantled. We are not in favor of this.

Don't forget that we are very grateful to the Soviet Union. We are eternally grateful to the Soviet people, and when I say Soviet people, I am talking of all the people who are part of the Soviet Union.

In hard times they were the ones who gave us a hand and helped us when the United

States applied an embargo against us and took away our sugar quota. When we needed to defend ourselves, they helped us.

Even today, despite what people say and speculate, our relations with the Soviet Union are wonderful. We have no complaints. In fact during Mr. Gorbachev's last visit to Cuba, we signed a 25-year friendship agreement which did not exist in the past. Therefore, far from weakening, these good ties have been strengthened.

S.A.: I read recently that there had been a delay in some of the Soviet grain and wheat shipments which caused a little bit of difficulty, including some rationing in Cuba. Has that been resolved?

Adlum: I don't have the details, but I know that we encountered some problems with the wheat, yes. But the problems we have had are not a result of the political will of the Soviet Union, but are due to their internal difficulties. This must be clear.

S.A.: I'd like to ask you some questions on Central America, on the situation in Nicaragua now. Do you think Nicaragua would have done better to move towards the Cuban model? And what does Cuba suggest for the militants in Nicaragua now?

Adlum: We are very respectful of the sovereignty of friends. We avoid by all means any interference, or the giving of opinions, on the internal problems of other countries.

We have no right to say they were wrong; they should have done so and so, etc. But I think the basic reason for the lack of success is something which very seldom is taken into consideration.

If you will remember, you'll see that Nicaragua was kept permanently and systematically under fire. In other words, the heat was kept on the Nicaraguan revolution. It never had the opportunity of proving its capabilities.

The Sandinistas never had the opportunity of doing the things they wanted for the people of Nicaragua. Don't forget this.

No country in the world, regardless of the system, can be successful if it's permanently under siege, like Nicaragua was. Not only economically, but you had a permanent and total war against Nicaragua. Even while the

elections were going on, the contras were creating problems.

S.A.: With the events that have happened in Central America, including the U.S. invasion of Panama, and the firing on a Cuban merchant ship, is it accurate to say the Cuban revolution is in more danger now than it has been in many years.

Adlum: Well, the situation is undoubtedly very dangerous. Because for obvious reasons the United States is projecting themselves in a very emboldened manner.

In recent months the things which are being done indicate that the U.S. government feels free to go around with a big stick; intervening and interfering in people's affairs, more or less like a policeman of the world.

In Panama, for example, you still don't know exactly how many people were killed there, but as far as I know thousands of people were killed there.

We have observed in recent times an escalation, in the U.S. press for example. Every single day, not a day passes, we have become very popular, but in a negative manner. Yes, every day we appear in the papers, and they are trying very hard to discredit our leader, Fidel Castro, and my country. We don't know what they are planning to do but we have a very fertile imagination and we know the United States quite well.

So this makes us expect the worst. They keep creating problems. This case of firing on the ship was another one. They also shot at our sentinel at the [Guantanamo] naval base. They didn't hit him, but this was no accident. At least we cannot accept this was an accident.

They provoked a resolution in the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva and succeeded in getting Czechoslovakia and Poland to cosponsor this attack against us.

And many other things, which we see as an escalation. And now they're trying to start *TV Marti*, another violation of international law.

The U.S. economic embargo, and these attitudes which the United States has adopted; this escalation; and this manipulation of American public opinion; combined with the alliance which apparently has been established with some of these new partners the United States has now in Eastern Europe, which were our trade partners, forces us to expect the worst.

We are prepared for the worst and our people are prepared for everything. We have had to encounter the United States for too long to be surprised at this stage.

S.A.: Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?

Adlum: I'm pleased to talk to you because first, in a world where we are not given the opportunity to put over our message, we are always grateful for this type of opportunity.

The possibility of putting forth our message and giving the people of the United States the opportunity of knowing exactly what is going on in Cuba, to know how we are thinking and so on, is an opportunity we rarely enjoy.

Even when some of these major media organizations come to Cuba, they interview our leadership and when they return to the U.S. the information is very frequently distorted. There is no free flow of information to and from.

For example, many people don't know that we have eradicated illiteracy, that we have free education for all regardless of race or sex; that we guarantee health services for all of our people, which did not exist in the past.

This is why sometimes we doubt—I know sometimes I doubt very much—when it is said that there is a free press in the United States. If people in the United States were that free, they would know what's going on in other parts of the world. We are just 90 miles away and yet there are so many things about Cuba which are deliberately hidden from the people of the United States. ■

Eastern Europe on the brink as 'market reforms' clash with workers' social gains

Rod Holt

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The irresistible revolutionary upsurge that swept across Eastern Europe last year has rocked Stalinist regimes everywhere to their foundations. These regimes are incapable of solving the problems of their crisis-ridden, bureaucratized economies within the existing framework of planning and public ownership of the basic means of production. It is apparent that they have reached an understanding with imperialism based on solving the crisis by opening the door to capitalist investment.

This requires removing any obstacle to the restoration of market-driven neo-capitalist economic relations. The principal roadblock to the reintroduction of the market as ruler of all economic relations is the social conquests of the workers—primarily the unqualified right to a job and a guaranteed minimum living standard. Factories must be allowed to go bankrupt, dumping "excess" workers onto the scrap-heap of unemployed. And prices of the necessities of life must be allowed to find their levels in the "free" marketplace.

But the commodity that will not be permitted to rise to the level of its market price is labor power—wages must be kept below the rising cost of living through systematic state intervention. This is the norm of every capitalist society. Thus, the road to capitalist restoration requires that the ruling bureaucracies and their new-found middle-class allies must first break the resistance of the working class to their bitter capitalist medicine.

What are their prospects for success?

Four Trotskyists, two from Europe and two from the United States, organized a three-week tour—April 6 to 27—of six cities in three East European countries. One of our aims was to get the opinions of labor and socialist activists on how they think this question is likely to be decided. Our tour included stops in Prague, Czechoslovakia, Leipzig, East Germany, and four cities in Poland.

We hoped to also find answers to some related questions:

a) How deep is the appeal of capitalism which has dramatically surfaced in recent elections in Eastern Europe? Why has the mood shifted so sharply from the anti-Stalinist—but pro-socialist—mass sentiment widely reported in the capitalist media in the first weeks and months of the anti-bureaucratic mass mobilizations last year? and,

b) Why is concrete resistance to the introduction of market relations—notwithstanding the enormous growth in public support for capitalism in the abstract—so great in all the bureaucratized workers' states? And related to this is the question: Why is the opposition to the concrete steps toward capitalism even greater within the original borders of the Soviet Union than elsewhere in these societies?

I will state my conclusions at the outset so that the evidence I present can be better evaluated.

What kind of capitalism?

The appeal of capitalism, according to the model which East European workers perceive in Western Europe and the United States, is quite deep. And while workers are well aware of the perils of capitalism, they think this has been exaggerated by the "Communists."¹

The current attraction of the economically powerful capitalist states, which are still enjoying an unprecedentedly long period of prosperity, is blinding. Workers in Eastern Europe see only the "high" living standards—relative to their own—enjoyed by major sections of the population in the West. And like most workers in the developed countries, they have come to believe that capitalism, at least in the imperialist



Czech workers hold a 10-minute work stoppage in Prague on April 11.

A delegation of Trotskyists finds that workers in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany have many contradictory answers for the economic and political crisis they are faced with today

centers, has overcome the contradictions that have historically been expressed in outbreaks of massive economic crises.

However, workers in East Europe are well aware of the difference between capitalism in the highly developed countries, such as it appears today, and the nightmare version of "free enterprise" that they see in the backward, semi-colonial world. No one wants that kind of capitalism. Consequently, there is a broad-based fear that the "reforms" which have so far been instituted threaten to take these societies toward a "Third World capitalism"—not toward economic development and higher living standards.

There are mixed beliefs as to why this danger exists. Some think this is because the "Communists" are sabotaging the market reforms to discredit capitalism and preserve their dominant position in these societies.

Others see it is a legacy of what they call "feudal² socialism"—a creative description of the actual bureaucratic monopoly on political power in the workers' states. According to this view, the privileged "socialist" bureaucrats, who have treated national property as if it were their own, are in the process of transforming themselves into capitalist property owners with legal rights to profits.

This derives from a widely held perception that individual bureaucrats have so far been the main beneficiaries of privatization—

carving out for themselves junior partnerships in joint venture privatizations of publicly owned enterprises. The bureaucracy's program of "market socialism" thus seems to many workers to be a form of capitalist restoration which will leave workers totally empty handed.

Looking for a piece of the action

Many of those we spoke with believe that the bureaucratic rip-off of state property is a big danger. But at the present time, they believe it can be blocked only by finding some way to distribute shares in the workplaces to the workers. As they presently see it, if capitalism is the only way out, they want a piece of the action.

They repeatedly told us that so-called worker self-management has been tried but it ran into two problems: In the first place, a shortage of new capital for upgrading the technology; and in the second, the failure of self-management to provide an incentive to work hard.

By "self-management," however, they meant the system tried in these countries at one time or another of establishing a façade of workers' control. Such a system allowed some control over economic decisions in the workplaces, but restricted it exclusively to isolated enterprises.

This type of "self-management" is fraudulent. It leaves real control on all levels of the

economy—municipal, regional and national—in the hands of the bureaucratic dictatorship, which continues to exercise absolute control over all the nation's resources.

In Poland, forms of self-management were instituted during the height of Solidarity's upsurge. In the context of the mass worker mobilizations in that turbulent period, it represented a first experiment with workers' control.

After the mobilization was crushed with the imposition of martial law in December 1981, self-management was tamed and co-opted by the bureaucracy and used by it to try to regain a measure of confidence from the defiant masses of workers. Bureaucratically controlled "self-management," however, continued to deepen the economic malaise and served only to sharpen worker opposition to the bureaucracy.

Unfortunately, in the absence of a revolutionary proletarian party with a coherent alternative program, the evolution of consciousness toward revolutionary socialist perspectives that began in 1980-81 has been temporarily halted.

This explains why many workers in these societies have concluded that the only realistic solution to a limping and decaying economy will be through the importation of Western technology and capital. This implies some form of privatization. Underlying this is the widespread realization—an indisputable fact of life—that desperately needed capital from the imperialist countries will not be forthcoming if there are any restrictions on the profitability of foreign investments.

And given the current relative passivity of workers in the major centers of world capitalism, the alternative to capitalist-driven modernization—material aid coming from a victorious socialist revolution in one or more of these countries—seems to be an unrealistic and utopian dream.

Current contradictory mood

The current mood of workers we met is highly contradictory. It reflects, on the one hand, the defeat of the reactionary Stalinist utopian scheme of building "socialism"³ in

(continued on page 14)



(continued from page 13)

one country, or in any combination of backward countries. This realization is a momentous gain which cannot be over-emphasized. But for the time being the "failure of socialism" also serves to put wind in the sails of the imperialists.

In any case, an explosion of discontent with the course toward capitalist restoration is rapidly building up. The bureaucratic regimes are in a "Catch 22": Workers will not give up their social conquests until they see evidence that capitalist-fueled modernization has begun and there is hope for a better life to come. But capitalists will not meaningfully invest—and modernize the economy—until market relations have been put in place!

One advocate of capitalist restoration gave an illustration of the enormity of the task: "You cannot develop a market economy and attract foreign investors if you can't get a telephone call through or receive a fax." Another noted that it will cost East Germany, alone, "more than \$500 billion to upgrade its infrastructure to West German levels." Investments on such a scale will not be made until market conditions are firmly in place.

But the market cannot prevail if commodity prices continue to be administered; that is, if commodities are not allowed to express their values at prices determined by the laws of commodity exchange. This includes everything from food, clothing, and shelter to the price of labor. And there's the rub!

Even with Solidarity leaders taking responsibility for the Polish government's swift, far-reaching assault upon the administered price system, they are being stymied by growing worker resistance. While Polish workers might be willing to give up the security guaranteed by the planned economy in exchange for an eventual capitalist-driven prosperity, they want to see some positive results first. So far, they have experienced only inflation and unemployment without any sign of a down-payment on promised capitalist development.

The deepening crisis has impelled Lech Walesa to declare at a May 9 news conference, according to the *New York Times*, that the revolution has stagnated and that he pledged to foment "permanent political war."

What this war was to be directed against, Walesa left highly ambiguous. While his target was implied by his accompanying attack on Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and other Solidarity intellectuals in the government, he didn't get more specific than accusing them of "muffling" dissent, stating that this had created a "volcano" of dissatisfaction that could erupt at any time. But he gave no real indication of what the nitty-gritty ends of his "war" might be.

In other East European countries the coalition governments made up of bureaucrats and intellectuals have not yet dared to go as far and as fast toward establishing the rule of the market as in Poland. And Gorbachev, who set into motion the perspective of "market socialism," has so far been stopped cold by Soviet workers who have made clear they will not give up the gains they won in their October 1917 Revolution without a war to the knife.

And even though the workers' states in Eastern Europe were born deformed—never having been fully mobilized and never having experienced a period of full proletarian democracy as did Soviet workers—they too will not give up their social conquests, which are organically connected to the nationalized and planned economies, without a fight.



(Above) Many Polish farmers are saddled with turn of the century technology. Polish workers (shown here in 1981) look upon Solidarity as a social movement for democracy and economic justice.

The difference in the origin of their social revolutions—that is, the massive difference in the scale of the independent worker mobilizations which took place in Russia in 1917, in contrast with the post-World War II revolution in Eastern Europe—helps explain why the opposition to "market socialism" is so much more overt in the Soviet Union today than in Eastern Europe.

Solidarity Enterprise Commission

The great bulk of our time was spent in Poland—in Wrocław, Łódź, Warsaw, and Gdansk. In Gdansk, we attended the second national Solidarity Congress. We also had long and informative discussions with our co-thinkers—supporters of the Fourth International—in three countries.

We received what we believe to be a much clearer picture of the current state of working-class consciousness—especially the current political mood of Polish workers. And as was to be expected, the picture we got was complex and contradictory, reflecting the opposing class forces buffeting East European workers and forcing them to grapple with new alternatives in a rapidly evolving historical conjuncture.

In Wrocław, our co-thinkers there, who are led by Jozef Pinior, a well-known Solidarity leader and activist since 1980, arranged a meeting between our delegation and the Solidarity Transport Enterprise Commission. The worker leaders we met with included the enterprise union President Tomasz Surowiec and Vice President Henryk Borowski, and the president of the Transport Enterprise's Workers' Council, Ryszard Borowski.

They didn't agree on every detail, nor did they give the same emphasis to the different problems. But together they painted the following picture of the economic and political crisis in Poland today:

In the beginning, Solidarity made important gains, concentrating effectively on human rights, liberty, wages, and working conditions. But now Solidarity is increasingly "coming into conflict with reality." Unemployment, which they noted was "artificially provoked," is rapidly increasing. Clearly, they understood that unemployment was the bitter medicine which flowed from the Tadeusz Mazowiecki government's policy—the so-called Balcerowicz⁴ Plan—

which is based on the swift reintroduction of capitalist market relations and eventual large-scale privatization.

Each one had mixed and contradictory views on this big question. The Workers' Council president, for instance, said the following:

"Solidarity is unable to solve the problem of unemployment." They all-too-often "take half-measures." This is because Solidarity is only "partially our government." (This, it was clear, was not merely a reference to the Stalinists in the coalition government, but also to the middle-class politicians, headed by Prime Minister Mazowiecki, who are the official representatives of the union in the government.)

He went on to say, "There are solutions [to the problems of productivity] other than unemployment, but the nomenklatura⁵ still has the power to block them." This was a reference to the widespread half-truth, trumpeted by both the bureaucracies and imperialists, that there is no incentive to work hard in the publicly owned workplaces.⁶

While a solution to this problem was subject to debate wherever we went, the Workers' Council president went on to claim that the "problem lies in management." The solution, he argued, was to create "open competition" between manager candidates, and to "select managers" on the basis of their "program"; that is, on the basis of how they proposed to organize production in the given enterprise. And, he argued further, "management must be under the direct supervision of the workers and their Councils in each enterprise."

But the Solidarity president and vice president at this meeting seemed to disagree; they suggested that the problem was less a result of management than it was of the form of property ownership.

The Workers' Council president politely, but vigorously, disputed their view. (We got the impression that there was a long-standing difference of outlook between the heads of the Workers' Council and of the union.) He declared that social ownership was not the problem and that "there was no possibility of reprivatization" of the economy because Polish workers are for "the continued socialization" of all major enterprises.

He also thought that a way to gain greater control over the enterprises would be

through the municipal "self-governing bodies" which were to be elected on May 17. This, he seemed to be saying, was a step in the direction of overcoming the limits placed on workers' control and self-management by the government's policy of restricting it to isolated enterprises.

He then developed a contradictory line of thought. He said: "The problem is not who will own the enterprises—we want to be exploited in a socially useful manner. Up to now we have owned everything but have nothing." He concluded his thinking on this matter with a clear statement in support of the government-led campaign to encourage foreign investment—a view which seemed to be shared by everyone we talked to—both advocates and opponents of privatization.

He went still further along this opposite path when we asked him what he thought of the administered price system which kept the prices of basic commodities very low, guaranteeing a basic minimum living standard for all workers? He answered allegorically: "I want my friends to be able to afford the cinema, but I don't want to have to pay for it."

I don't believe that any contradictions we perceived were the result of faulty translation. Rather, they are entirely an expression of changing mass consciousness in a rapidly evolving situation. Moreover, these transitory conceptions are greatly conditioned by the pro-capitalist program of the almost exclusively middle-class political spokespersons for Solidarity.

Three interviews in Łódź

In the next city we visited, Łódź, we had three separate interviews arranged by Zbigniew Kowalewski, who was part of our delegation and our interpreter during the Polish part of our tour.

[Zbigniew was a founder and leader of Solidarity in Łódź in 1980-81. He was out of the country when martial law was declared in December 1981 and when Solidarity was subsequently driven underground. He had been unable to return until the resurgence and legalization of the union. Now his perspective is to help build a section of the Fourth International in Poland.]

We met first with President Longin Chlerowski of the Łódź Transport Enterprise Commission of Solidarity and with Vice President Waclaw Krygier. Chlerowski is also a member of the Solidarity regional leadership.

We started our conversation by posing two questions:

- How do you see the resolution of the current economic crisis? and,
- What are the most pressing issues you expect will be discussed at the national Solidarity Congress scheduled to begin in a few days in Gdansk?

He apparently had a sense of what our questions might be and proceeded to describe the background to the current differences in Solidarity at length. He started with almost a blow-by-blow description of the founding of Solidarity in 1980. It soon became clear that he believed it necessary to trace the origin of the disputes back that far so as to establish his credentials as a founder and ongoing Solidarity militant.

The August 1980 general strike that led to the formation of Solidarity, he said, started in his workplace here in Łódź (the City Transport Enterprise). Soon after Łódź workers struck, the Gdansk shipyard strike began. The Łódź strike committee could have won their original wage demands, he declared, but their political demand for the right to organize their own union caused the Labor Ministry to break off negotiations.

The Łódź Strike Committee voted to continue their strike until a resolution of the Gdansk strike. There was a settlement in Gdansk on Aug. 31 and Łódź workers returned to work on Sept. 2. They then proceeded to begin the process of transforming the 100 or so enterprise strike committees in Łódź into a citywide strike committee, and then into a union.

Andrzej Slowik was elected president⁷ of the Inter-factory Committee (the citywide strike committee). When the strike committee was formally established as a union soon after, Slowik was elected president of Łódź Solidarity. Following this he was also elected president of the regional Solidarity organization.

Slowik headed a leadership team that included, among others, Chlerowski, and our co-thinker, Zbigniew Kowalewski. The Slowik team led the workers' struggles in Łódź and played an important role in

(continued on page 15)

Solidarity as a whole until martial law was invoked in December 1981. Afterward, during Solidarity's period of underground existence, this team continued to play the leading role in the region's worker opposition.

Chlerowski believes that the current differences within Solidarity can be traced to the time it was first forced underground. He said that Lech Walesa began to unilaterally appoint a "dual leadership" to the one elected at its first national Congress in 1981 and which had continued to function as the ongoing leadership of Solidarity after martial law had been declared.

Walesa, he believed, "needed people who would carry out his policy." And Walesa claimed the right to do this "because he had been elected president of the union" at that Congress.

More recently, Chlerowski told us, Walesa tried to capture the leadership of the Lodz city and regional organizations. But the traditional local leadership won; Slowik was again elected president in both the city and regional organizations of Solidarity.

He also claimed that Walesa was responsible for the split in Solidarity in Szczecin. Solidarity '80, he told us, is now a separate union. He said Marian Jurczyk, a founding leader of Solidarity, had led the Solidarity '80 split because of an earlier bureaucratic attempt by Walesa to take over the union in that city, too.

"Now," Chlerowski said, "Andrzej Slowik is our nominee for president against Walesa." [See report by Rod Holt on the Solidarity Congress in this section.] He summarized his differences with Walesa as follows:

"Walesa is for top-down leadership but we are against that.... Almost from the beginning of Solidarity, Walesa has been in an alliance with the KOR⁸. And now the KOR is using Walesa to take over Solidarity." He further charged that the "KOR/Walesa combination has put up a slate of candidates" for the municipal government here in Lodz on May 27 "without consulting the union in this city." Chlerowski told us that the Solidarity union here has fielded an opposing list of candidates and that he is a candidate on the latter slate.

We asked Chlerowski what were his differences with the KOR? Here he got into the central questions workers were discussing wherever we went.

"The main trouble with the KOR is that they are for the reform of socialism. We want democracy.... We can't continue on the basis of the 'Round Table' agreement which was signed by the Communists and the deserters from Communism [the KOR intellectuals]—it's the same family.... We don't want to be under the economic or political domination of other countries."

We asked him if "democracy" to him meant privatization?

He answered: "If we remain within the framework of the 'Round Table' agreement, we are on the road to reform of socialism. We are against that. We are for changing the form of property ownership."

He went on to explain his view. He said there are four solutions being discussed in Solidarity: (1) Self-management, (2) Selling the enterprises to private capitalists, (3) Worker stocks; i.e., shares in each enterprise to be sold or distributed to its workers, with no one outside the enterprise entitled to buy shares, and (4) Workers having the right to buy shares in any enterprise.

He personally favored the third option. He said there was no answer yet to the question of what happens to workers' shares if they quit or get fired. His personal opinion was that workers must sell stock to other workers in the enterprise when they leave their jobs.

He explained that he didn't like the second and fourth options because the *nomenklatura* [the bureaucracy] would end up being the major shareholders and the real owners of the enterprises. "They have the money," he declared, "we don't."

We asked him why he was opposed to the first option (self management)?

"We tried it in 1981," he said, "when it was first proposed." The Workers' Councils democratically appointed and controlled managers, he said—and he thought it worked well. But now "it's not a deep enough change." The worker-stock plan, he believed, would introduce "the missing incentive to work hard" and bring foreign capital necessary for modernization. Moreover, he be-

lieved that worker ownership would provide a superior form of exercising workers' control.

He said there were differences on this question on every level of Solidarity and in every enterprise, including in his own. He thought that whatever preference is adopted at the Solidarity Congress, if any, each enterprise will nevertheless "be allowed to make its own decision" on the questions of self-management and the form of ownership.

We asked him what he thought of a planned economy? He answered: "This is not so simple. Some kind of planning is necessary because of the danger of many enterprises, which produce socially necessary products, going bankrupt. So we need some kind of plan or subsidization. But it can't be like the present system. It must be based on democratization."

He explained further: "Formerly steel plants, etc., were built in our localities without consulting the local people so that

We asked him a final friendly but loaded question. Who, in his opinion, would Western capitalists prefer in power, the Communist Party or Solidarity? He laughed and said, "I really don't know."

Solidarity leaders at textile plant

We met the same day with the nine-member presidium (executive committee) of the Solidarity Enterprise Commission at Pamotex, a sprawling textile plant in Lodz. There were four women and five men who sat us all around a long conference table in their union headquarters next to the plant. They set tea and cookies on the table and settled down for a leisurely discussion with us.

We asked them to tell us about their enterprise commission, their Workers' Council and their relations with it, and about the coming Solidarity Congress.

They were a very self-confident and good-humored group. They were very polite and patient with us. We showed them our news-

which never ceased during the period of martial law. One old-timer said he was arrested 12 times in this period and spent some three months in jail.

In relation to the upcoming national congress, they said they had taken part in working up the programmatic positions of the Regional Solidarity organization. They said they hoped Solidarity would be reunited at the congress, ending the division between Walesa and Slowik in Lodz, Andrzej Gwiazda⁹ in Gdansk, Jurczyk in Szczecin, and other local, regional and national leaders of Solidarity.

The Pamotex union leaders were clearly very critical of Walesa and apparently supporters of the Slowik leadership in the Lodz region. They argued that "Walesa's monopoly on power had to be broken" and that "there must be a free debate in Solidarity between all viewpoints." And they continued, "Walesa must decide whether he wants to be president of Solidarity or of Poland."

They were up in arms against a Walesa-supported move to amend the constitution which would limit the right to strike. It was necessary, they insisted, to stop Walesa's policy of "eliminating leaders who were too strong." They described a bureaucratization of Solidarity which they deeply felt had discouraged workers from joining the union.

The question of property forms

Most of the Pamotex leaders expressed opposition to the takeover of enterprises by foreign investors, going so far as to ridicule a recent visit by a prospective Japanese investor in their plant. "They are afraid that we won't work cheap enough," one said.

Another worker stated, "I'm not against new factories or modernization of existing ones. But we should not let them own the land on which they stand. We should lease the land to foreign investors for 20 years, and at the end of this time the factories should become our property."

At the same time, without flinching at the apparent contradiction, all seemed to be in favor of Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz's plan for preparing the market conditions for privatization as "the only way out." We asked why Polish workers couldn't manage industry as well as the capitalists? They told us, simply, "We have no money for development of the enterprises."

They asked us what we thought needed to be done to solve the economic and social problems of Poland? (I should point out that most of those we met with asked this question and seemed to want to pursue it further than we had time for.)

They listened intently to our cautiously presented outlook. They certainly understood and seemed to sympathize with our ideas about real socialist democracy based on an anti-bureaucratic revolution, workers' control over production and prices, and workers' self-management and control over planning. But when we explained our conception of economic aid coming as a result of the extension of the revolution to the developed countries of capitalism, they only nodded politely.

Discussion with Andrzej Slowik

We interviewed Andrzej Slowik, president of Lodz and Regional Solidarity and a candi-

(continued on page 16)



East German steelworker: fears grow over unemployment and inflation.

the central authorities not only planned our economic life but also disrupted and reorganized our social and private lives without us having a word to say about it!"

Besides, he continued, profits from local enterprises were taken away by the national government while "local government coffers, which are supposed to provide for local needs, were left empty."

Chlerowski emphasized and re-emphasized the need for democratic, i.e., local, control. "Some enterprises work well, others don't. But we have no control. People want to work harder for themselves, so that they can make more money and have more things. We want to eliminate everyone being penalized because some people won't work hard."

Then I believe he came to the heart of his position. He said: "Credits from the West are crucial to progress for us. Any attempt to reform socialism can only block credits and we will not be able to improve our lives."

paper, *Socialist Action*. They noted our Solidarnosc-style logo and smiled, pointing to it with a mixture of sympathy and tolerance and suggested that we find another name for "socialism." Experience with the official "socialists," they told us, has made the word very unpopular in Poland today.

They then began responding to our questions. They told us that there were about 4000 employed at the plant. Of these only 900 or so were dues-paying Solidarity members. This was a big drop from 1980-81, when virtually every Pamotex worker was in Solidarity. They were critical of their Workers' Council. They said it was elected bureaucratically under Communist auspices.

In fact, they said, they had just decided to make a motion of "no-confidence" in the incumbent Workers' Council. This, they said, was an opening shot in their preparations for a new election of that body.

They told us of their underground activity,

**POLAND:
The fight
for workers'
democracy**

Solidarnosc

By Zbigniew Kowalewski
with an introduction and article by Carl Finamore

Poland: Solidarnosc and the fight for workers' democracy

By Zbigniew Kowalewski,
with an introduction and article by
Carl Finamore

This 52-page pamphlet contains an abridged translation of three chapters from Kowalewski's 1985 book, *Give Us Back Our Factories: Solidarnosc and the Struggle for Workers' Self-Management in Poland*, as well as three articles by Kowalewski on the meaning of the current events in Poland.

Price: \$2.25 (includes postage)

About the author: Zbigniew Kowalewski was a delegate to the founding congress of Solidarnosc, where he represented the Lublin Group, a current committed to workers' self-management and socialist democracy.

E. German elections reveal uneasiness over unification

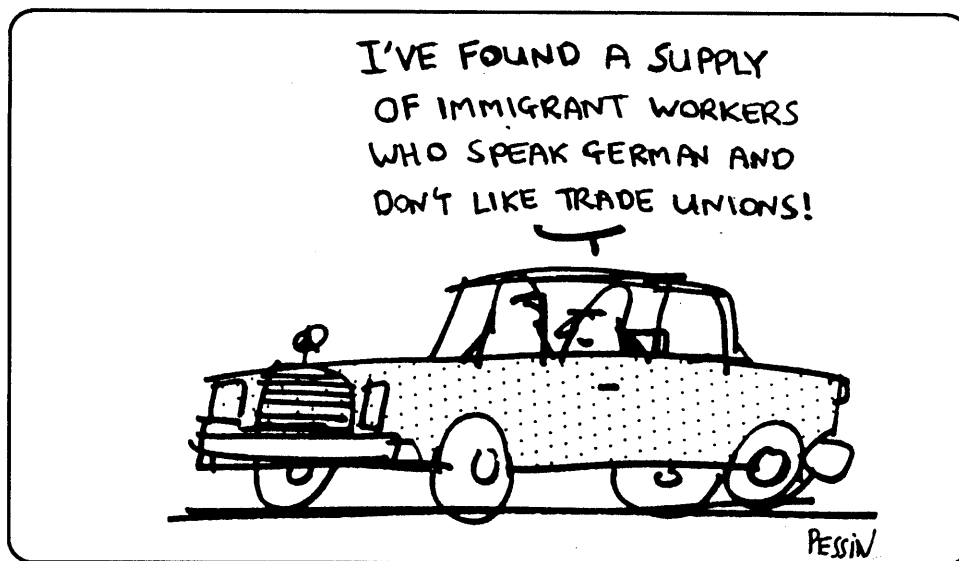
HAMBURG—On May 6, East Germans went to the polls for the second time in seven weeks. The election campaign for local city councils was marked by cautious, low-key campaigning in contrast to the media-hype spectacle of the national parliamentary elections held on March 18.

"Right now," one experienced observer commented, "East Germans feel like Little Red Riding Hood standing at the foot of Grandmother's bed." Misgivings about the costs of the pending capitalist German unification process were reflected in uneven election results.

The Social Democratic Party suffered only slight losses (0.6%) from the parliamentary elections and emerged with 21.3% of the total. The Party of Democratic Socialism (successor to the Stalinist ruling party that was swept out of power by the mass mobilizations of last fall) dropped 1.8% to a total 14.6%.

The big losers in the elections were the parties of the conservative Alliance for Germany, which heads the national government. The major group in the alliance, the CDU East (Christian Democratic Union), retained its position as strongest party with 34.4% of the vote. But it lost 6.4% compared to its total of seven weeks ago.

The big winners in the local polling were the farmers' parties. The Democratic Farmers party of Germany and the Farmers' Alliance scored only 5.7% of the votes nationally but captured between 20% and 25% in several farming areas.



The reason for these parties' growth in popularity is that the farmers have been the first to feel the effects of the planned economic union between the two German states. While the amount of produce exported to the West is still strictly controlled by European Economic Community regulations, Western produce has been pouring across Germany's "green border."

A flood of goods from the West would

quickly force East German industries into bankruptcy, creating massive unemployment. The effects are already being felt as managers cancel domestic contracts and place orders with Western firms to assure their own smooth transition to a "free market economy."

In a shoe factory in Erfurt, for example, 4000 workers manufacture 24,000 pairs of shoes a day. For the second quarter of the

year alone, orders for half-a-million pairs of shoes have been cancelled. The shoes are simply piling up and the plant will face closing within a few months, although the shelves in the shoe stores are empty.

The trade union movement, which has remained largely in the background of political events, is beginning to respond. On May 7, a delegation from the Free German Trade Union Federation met with Minister President Lothar de Maiziere to discuss their demands—which include 50% wage increases, a 30% cost-of-living increase, and a 38-hour week at no cut in pay. On the average, the work week in East Germany is currently 43 hours.

The increases would just about create parity between East and West German workers, assuming that the wages of East German workers are converted to D-Marks on a one-to-one basis (as planned) and that subsidies for basic food stuffs, clothing, and rent are abolished.

Predictably, the proposals brought forth howls of protest from governmental and business circles. All in all, the stage is set for a hot summer. Hard confrontations are in the offing, as the real costs of capitalist unification become clear and East Germans move to defend their living standards.

On May 10, textile and leather workers mounted a protest against cancellation of orders by selling shoes direct to the public in East Berlin's Alexanderplatz. Teachers and daycare workers marched to the Volksammer (parliament) to confront the Minister of Education. They demanded guarantees for job security and wage increases. ■

...Eastern Europe

(continued from page 15)

date in the election for president of Solidarity at the second national congress of the union. We told him of the impressions we had from our discussions with other Solidarity leaders and activists and asked him to comment.

He treated the question of foreign investment as necessary and welcome, and almost a foregone conclusion. He thought that it would become necessary to "experiment with many different forms of ownership." He said that with foreign investment will come "new forms of management, as well." These questions, he believed, were especially "complicated in the larger enterprises," and therefore it was not possible to "solve them all in advance."

Regarding the new forms of ownership, he said, "I favor a stock-ownership plan in which workers buy stock only in enterprises other than where they work." This struck us as another variation of worker ownership.

We asked him why? He explained that the worker as owner would conflict with the worker as employee and that this would divide the union and interfere with a healthy adversarial relationship between union and employer.

Working-class alternative needed

Since our return to the United States, I came across a piece on Eastern Europe, focusing on Poland. It was written by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. I don't think it is accidental that his line was almost identical to that of many of those worker leaders in Solidarity whom we interviewed.

I do not intend to imply that they are dominated by Kirkland. But the fact is that the AFL-CIO, in collaboration with U.S. governments since 1980, has played an enormous role in providing material aid to Solidarity and other forces which have emerged in opposition to Stalinism. It is therefore entirely understandable that the U.S. labor bureaucracy has gained great influence with Solidarity leaders and other opponents of Stalinism.

I will just quote Kirkland's opening paragraph to give the flavor of his position. It appeared in the May 16, 1990, *San Francisco Chronicle*. This newspaper noted that Kirkland was writing from Gdansk, where he was discussing "the May 27 election with leaders of Solidarity." Kirkland writes:

"Karl Marx said it was capitalism that created the working class. Now, it seems as if Marx has been stood on his head: It is Eastern Europe's working class that is creating capitalism. But in opting for a market economy, the region's workers will need real unions, on the Western model, perhaps now more than ever."

The role of the U.S. and European labor bureaucracies must be given due weight as a

major factor affecting the present orientation of worker opposition to the status quo in Eastern Europe. The labor bureaucrat is a close cousin to the middle-class intellectuals and professionals now in ascendancy in Eastern Europe. And despite their well-known opposition to "Communism," they are also cut from the same bureaucratic cloth as their Stalinist counterparts.

The middle classes are condemned by their intermediate economic position in modern society to be incapable of playing an independent social or political role in history. Therefore, they are only able to choose between the main contending social classes in the political centers of modern society.

Like their peasant counterparts, the urban middle classes, too, must look to one of these contending city classes for a solution to society's problems in periods of crisis. Furthermore, the choice that must be made is between the workers and capitalists in the metropolitan centers of world economic power, where their greatest force is concentrated.

In previous times—in the crises of the post-World War I period, during the Great Depression, and again following World War II—the turbulent upsurges of revolutionary minded working classes in Europe and Asia provided a powerful force attracting the middle classes to their side, especially the peasantry and the intellectuals.

The Russian Revolution, itself, with its dramatic demonstration of the great capacity of the proletariat to change the world, made a historic impact on intellectuals, many of whom cast in their lot with the workers of the world.

To this day, although this momentum has been largely dissipated by the treasonous policies of conservative petty-bourgeois leaders of the world's working class, the conquests that flowed from the October

Revolution still shine as a beacon of revolutionary hope. This is despite the terrible crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which led many to throw the baby out with the dirty bathwater.

But the mass working-class upsurge about to erupt in Eastern Europe will be bound to mobilize the working classes for struggle in their own name and in their own class interests. The coming conflagration will eventually also catch fire in the West in the course of the unfolding crisis of world capitalism.

Newly combative proletarians will again attract to their side the best of the middle classes and their intellectual leaders. No one should underestimate the important role intellectuals have played in the development of revolutionary Marxism. Nor should anyone doubt that they are bound to play this role once again.

The middle classes in the bureaucratized workers' states, today, have rallied to the side of world capitalism, which is the immediate beneficiary of the crisis of Stalinism. But tomorrow, the world's workers will again be compelled to challenge the world's capitalists for power—opening up a new revolutionary period.

The best of the human race, including intellectuals and even individual bureaucrats and capitalists who are most subject to the influence of the revolutionary workers, will once again come to the conclusion that there is no way out of today's historic crisis of human existence other than through the world socialist revolution.

The alternative remains today as in the time of Karl Marx: With the workers or with the capitalists? Socialism or barbarism! There is no middle road. ■

Footnotes:

1—We met no one on our tour, except our co-thinkers, who today characterize the Communist parties as "Stalinist." Everyone, especially the Stalinists, claims to be anti-Stalinist. And while workers know the difference, they have not yet discovered a way

to distinguish between the ruling bureaucracy's version of "socialism" and its true meaning.

2—The nobility of feudal times was also a caste endowed with sweeping privileges, but not an inherent property right. The right to own land was restricted to the landlords at the pinnacle of the feudal hierarchy. The fundamental class relationship in the feudal system of production was between landlords and serfs. Capitalism developed within and alongside the feudal system of production and ultimately clashed with it.

3—"Socialism in one country!" was the slogan advanced by Josef Stalin for abandoning the strategy of extending the socialist revolution to the advanced countries. Since socialism can only be built on the foundation of the highest levels achieved under capitalism, this slogan is a contradiction in terms.

4—Leszek Balcerowicz is the Polish Finance Minister.

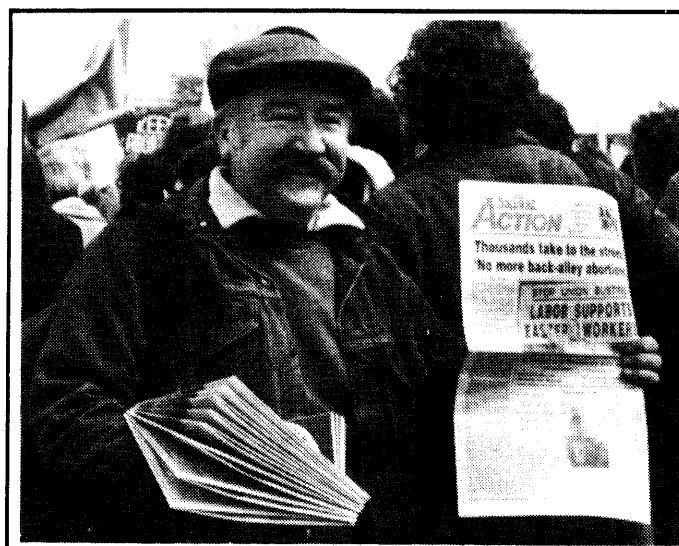
5—*Nomenklatura*: bureaucracy, privileged elite.

6—The problem of motivation is explainable other than as the result of public ownership. A far more convincing explanation for this flows from alienation due to bureaucratic mismanagement and the systematic misappropriation of the fruits of the workers' labors to support the privileges of the bureaucratic caste. This bitter fact of life under bureaucratic dictatorship is reflected in the oft-quoted phrase: "They pretend to pay us and we pretend to work."

7—"President" is used interchangeably with the term "chairman" in Poland and other East European countries.

8—KOR: Workers' Self-Defense Committee. One of the earliest radical movements in opposition to Polish Stalinism. It was led by Jacek Kuron and Karel Modzelewski, who initiated a left-wing break from Polish Stalinism. Kuron, currently Poland's Minister of Labor, is now in charge of disciplining the workers to enforce the IMF austerity measures.

9—Gwiazda: co-founder with Lech Walesa of Solidarity. He subsequently broke with Walesa and his Working Group over the issue of internal democracy in the union.



Subscribe today!

[] 6 months for \$4, [] 1 year for \$8

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Tel. _____

Send to: 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Fran, CA 94110

Solidarity's 2nd Congress reflects impasse of workers' leadership

By ROD HOLT

GDANSK, Poland—The independent, self-governing trade union "Solidarity"—potentially the most powerful workers' movement in the world—held its second national congress here on April 19-24. It had been close to nine years since its first congress.

Things have changed. In September 1981, delegates represented 9.8 million workers; today, 2 million. Then, the congress took 18 days; today, six.

Then, thousands of workers milled around inside and outside the arena as the congress went eyeball to eyeball with General Wojciech Jaruzelski. Today, the workers of the Gdansk region watch the reports on TV.

Then, Jaruzelski was plotting martial law rule and repression. Today, he is president of a coalition government between Solidarity and the Stalinist bureaucracy; his prime minister is a man he had jailed years before as a Solidarity adviser.

Then, the congress logo, boasting its youth, was a plump toddler; today, an umbrella, the symbol of an all-inclusive organization.

For the foreign press, things have also changed. Right at the start we were told, "Last time [in 1981] many things were free. Now you have to pay for everything." Indeed, it cost us 500,000 zlotys each, payable in U.S. dollars, to get our press passes. That's about two weeks' pay for the average industrial worker.

Official observers, invited guests, and the press occupied about half of the balcony seating in the Olivia Hall, which housed the first congress as well. Several thousand seats remained empty. We saw no provisions for the general public. There were no pressing crowds. The parking lot was mostly empty with just a few people coming and going.

Was this the national congress of Solidarity? Was this the same organization that had emerged from seven years of underground existence to sweep last year's national elections, having shamed the ruling Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) from the political stage?

Issues before the congress

For us, the top questions were: Was Solidarity going to create its own political party and forge ahead to take state power? How was Solidarity going to deal with the pressure from the working class driven to the wall by the Balcerowicz austerity plan? And how was Solidarity to deal with privatization, co-management, and the rights of employers?

The debates on these and other points were woven throughout the agenda under the heading of "The Draft Program." Every scheduled interruption thus enabled delegates to confer during the breaks. It also made the debate very difficult to follow as it stretched out to five days.

The congress decided to not form any political party of its own—much less march with the working class to the Belvedere Palace. It also rejected formulations that constrained Solidarity to be strictly a trade union; that is, an organization whose sole purpose is to defend the worker against the employer (state or private) and reject any direct role in the government.

Instead, the congress adopted the same ambiguous formula that it had used with such effect during the past 10 years: Solidarity was to be a union for all workers and a social movement. This was the formula used by Lech Walesa to organize the Civic Committees which elected to parliament not only members of Solidarity but independent pro-Solidarity people as well.

Although the congress press office didn't say, it would be safe to guess that 10 percent or more of the delegates were members of either the parliament (Sejm) or the new Senate. In the July 1989 elections, the Solidarity-organized Civic Committees took 134 of the 135 open seats.

In reality, these Civic Committees are a powerful nationwide political bloc, beholden to Solidarity. They may even use its name and logo if permission is given by the regional Solidarity executive commission.

But in an important sense, these committees—which after all are not part of

Solidarity—have been overlooked. The congress left town without setting any rules to regulate them. One and only one such committee, a national one, is allowed by the "round table" agreements and its head is a Walesa appointee. Who is responsible for the politics of these diverse, independent, and very much political organizations?

There are hundreds of these committees organized in every town and county in Poland and regional elections are coming up. Who's watching the store? The 1990 congress of Solidarity did not answer this question.

What about the workers?

What is Solidarity to do for the workers and peasants in desperate straits? Poland's economic woes, which began in the late '70's, have worsened into the '90's, with no end in sight.

Per-capita income was \$4700 in 1983; in

backs him. On the floor of the congress Walesa appealed to the delegates:

"Everybody complains. But I have asked all of you to bring your plans forward, and nobody did. I asked the professional economists of this nation to bring forward their plans. No one did. I think the plan will work. We've got to stop complaining about a plan that has been in operation for months now. Instead, we must deal with the social problems of the poverty and unemployment that were predicted all along."

Where will the money come from?

Walesa gave a brave and clever speech, but the hall was quiet. Where was the money to deal with these problems to come from? Delegates pointed out that dues received were insufficient to keep the organization afloat.

They said it was false that regional commissions were holding back dues. They pointed out that it was hard to collect dues



Second National Solidarity Congress lacked the atmosphere of excitement and hope that pervaded first congress in 1981.

1986 it was \$2000. We have no later figures, but inflation is a clue. In 1983, the zloty traded at 100 to the dollar. In March of 1989, when the bank began to buy and sell hard currency, the rate was 3000 to 1, and only one year later, the rate was 9400 zlotys for one dollar.

At that rate, an average worker brings home about the equal of \$100 per month, one fourth of the 1983 rate. These are conditions under which the Polish working class has been known to explode—as the union knows.

Leszek Balcerowicz, Poland's finance minister and Solidarity's very own man, presented a long-range economic plan to the present government's council of ministers—which was adopted. He defended this plan before the congress on April 23.

Balcerowicz's plan didn't fall from the sky. Poland is in debt to the West to the tune of \$39 billion. During and after the "round table" discussions that led to the legalization of Solidarity, Poland had been visited in sequence by David Rockefeller, a group of World Bank experts, a group from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Zbigniew Brzezinski, George Bush, and the EEC (the European Economic Community).

All of this took place during the five months in which the hard-core Stalinist president, Jaruzelski, was gracefully handing key ministries—the ministry of finance in particular—to the new prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Solidarity man and intellectual.

Food subsidies are gone. Subsidies to exporting industries are gone. Unemployment has arrived on a grand scale. So the Balcerowicz plan smells like the standard IMF plan despite being dressed up anew for Polish conditions.

Simply put, the IMF plan is to reduce the consumption of the workers and thus increase the surplus product, which in turn is divided up—a large chunk going to the banks and what's left going to purchase new and better capital equipment.

What is supposed to happen next is that the increasing capital wealth of the nation results in an increase in the productivity of labor—and thus the light at the end of the tunnel. So it is hoped.

Balcerowicz has his version. Lech Walesa

from workers whose real incomes were one-fourth of what they'd been no more than five years ago. Hadn't Walesa himself stated this sad truth from the podium on April 23? Didn't he say?:

"There is a political benefit, to be sure [with Solidarity's electoral victory in 1989.] But those who have supported us have no other benefits whatsoever. They work hard. It's grueling. They work 12 hours a day. They work three or four shifts. We have not won *anything* in the economic and social spheres." [speaker's emphasis]

It was stated from the floor that even Solidarity's second congress could not have been held were it not for a gift of \$35,000 from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the well-known joint venture of the AFL-CIO and the U.S. State Department.

The national commission admitted that 40 out of every 41 zlotys received came from abroad, principally from the United States. The delegates protested and set self-financing as a top goal. Underlining their commitment to this resolution, they proceeded to cut the size of the national commission from 122 to 96, thus eliminating 26 cushy jobs at the top.

Contradictory resolutions adopted

The delegates accepted the Balcerowicz plan, but they then did their best to make up for it. They provided for a union of the unemployed, set up a commission to negotiate a minimum wage with the government, opened up union membership to anyone who sells his or her labor power, and set a policy goal of eliminating bonuses and piecework payments in any compensation package.

They also asserted their right to strike—even though the language of the resolution discouraged resorting to strikes, pledging instead to "deal with conflicts by means of negotiations and agreements." The right to call sympathy strikes was also asserted. This represented a break with the "round table" agreements, under which the Solidarity leaders accepted the introduction of a clause limiting the right to strike into the statutes of the union.

A roaring majority of delegates, moreover, voted to remove an appendix to the "round table" agreement that granted special recogni-

tion to the Communist Party (PUWP).

All of this, as laudible as it was, did not address the central economic issues. Everybody in the hall automatically assumed that the \$39 billion owed to imperialist banks had to be repaid. The only suggestion we heard that was different was from a delegate who said that all the Communist Party people should be shipped to Russia and their property sold to the Western banks. It would have been funny except the topic was so grim.

The congress thus neither condemned the government's harsh austerity plan nor embraced it. It stood at a distance and declared its intention to do what it could to defend the worker from the shocking economic disaster. Nothing more.

The congress was preoccupied with schemes for attracting Western capital. Prosperity would come with the flood of dollars, which, with the government operating in the workers' interests, would not be wasted as in the past but would transform productivity in industry and agriculture.

There's a certain truth to all that—if you don't have to pay the money back. Shares are to be sold to the workers and to the West. Since the workers don't have much money (the Balcerowicz plan will see to

that) workers can buy shares at half price. That's one scheme. There are many.

Approved privatizations

The congress approved privatization in principle, assuming that heavy industry would remain state dominated. It agreed that employers other than the state would have to be given rights as employers. Legislation would have to be prepared.

In the future it was felt that Solidarity could work through the existing workers' councils to "co-manage" the enterprise. Workers councils already existed and just needed duties to carry out. This strategem would allow Solidarity to offer suggestions—even lead—in the enterprise's affairs without being responsible.

By keeping at this symbolic distance, Solidarity could criticize, bargain, and strike without an undue conflict of interest. That was the thinking behind a pretty vague strategy and was accepted piecemeal and reluctantly by the delegates.

The free market was accepted with some exceptions. The peasantry were going to need help as all their costs had skyrocketed; if they passed these increases on with price hikes, nobody could afford to buy. Export industries were also going to need subsidies if they were to sell at competitive prices abroad and avoid bankruptcy at home.

After 10 years, the bloom is off the rose. The crisis of leadership of the Polish working class is out in the open for all to see. The slogan of the Solidarity leadership—"Austerity now for prosperity later. Believe us!"—has already worn thin.

Whatever gains have been made, moreover, are more apparent than real. The Communist Party (PUWP), once 3-million strong, has become a rump party. It is now called the Social Democrats of the Republic of Poland (SDRP), numbering barely 50,000. But the Stalinist bureaucrats are still heading up government offices, the police stations, and the army barracks, locally and nationally.

The Polish workers have no choice but to bring up a new leadership that will sweep the encrusted Stalinists bureaucrats in the gutter and install a government in their own name, based on a democratically run and controlled planned economy. ■

... Nicaragua

(continued from page 1)

with a Spanish newspaper. Humberto Ortega is the head of the new army. The Sandinista leaders have openly stated that they do not want to destabilize Chamorro, that they are willing to collaborate with the government as a loyal opposition. And they mean it.

"But the Sandinista leaders are also under immense pressure from the pro-Sandinista unions and the Sandinista rank and file. They are seeking to direct the mass anti-Chamorro sentiment to improve their bargaining position inside this governmental coalition."

Meanwhile, a split has occurred in Chamorro's UNO coalition over Chamorro's decision to maintain FSLN Commander Humberto Ortega as head of the army. Vice President Virgilio Godoy openly denounced Chamorro for "caving into the Sandinistas."

Many supporters of the Sandinistas have argued that this split in the Nicaraguan ruling class could mean that the more openly counterrevolutionary legislation proposed by Godoy will be blocked.

MUR leader Rodrigo Ibarra disagrees. "The split between Chamorro and Godoy is tactical, not strategic," he said. "Both agree on the need to reverse every gain of the revolution. Where they differ is on the timing. Godoy wants to go faster. Chamorro and [Alfredo] Cesar understand they must go slow and use the Sandinista leaders to accomplish their goals."

Ibarra pointed out, for example, that the civil service law is expected to be suspended by a vote of both wings of the UNO coalition in the Assembly. He also stated that Chamorro and Godoy both agree on the need to incorporate two articles from

Somoza's Labor Code—Articles 116 and 119—into the current Labor Code.

These two articles had been taken out by the Sandinistas after the victory of the revolution. They essentially give the bosses the unrestricted right to fire workers without due cause and without any right to appeal.

Chamorro and Godoy also agree on a "counter-agrarian reform law" that would accelerate the privatization of state farms and allow the former owners to rent some of the lands that were expropriated from them by the Sandinistas. This is their first step to reclaiming their old property. All these proposals are now before the Assembly.

The Sandinistas are voting against most of these reactionary laws in the National Assembly but they have refused to mobilize the population against them. They have dropped their pledge to "govern from below." They are committed to "national reconciliation, unity, and peace."

At the same time, the Nicaraguan army, headed by FSLN Commander Humberto Ortega, has begun to disarm the peasants.

When elected, Chamorro stated her concern that thousands of guns had not been turned in, as the Sandinistas had requested during their electoral campaign. Chamorro's decision to retain Ortega as head of the army was based on his agreement to help recover all the guns still held by the civilian population.

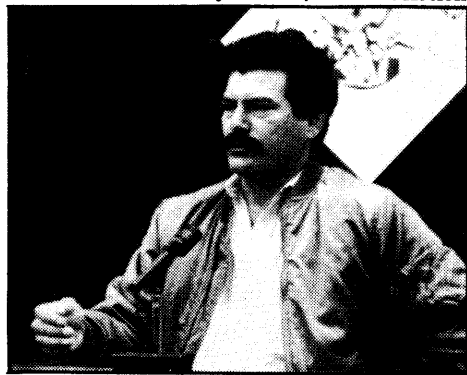
The army has gone into numerous peasant cooperatives with specific orders to disarm the civilians. Many of these are in the areas where the estimated 12,000 contras have been relocated.

In most instances, the army has not en-

countered any resistance by the peasants. "What is happening," Rodrigo Ibarra told *Socialist Action*, "is that those peasants who fear that the contras will come and kill them are just picking up their belongings and moving to the closest village or town for protection. They are demoralized. They see no alternative but to turn in their weapons."

Ibarra also stated that the contras, whose

Mya Shone/Socialist Action



Rodrigo Ibarra

supplies are running thin in some areas, have attacked peasant cooperatives and slaughtered their animals to feed themselves. "Yet despite these open violations of the laws governing their relocation," Ibarra continued, "the Sandinista leadership is still going ahead and disarming the peasants. This is an open betrayal of the gains of the revolution."

Meanwhile, top contra leaders have stated their refusal to turn in their weapons to the Chamorro government by the June 10 deadline. They are pointing to the nationwide strike by the public workers as proof of the fact that the Sandinistas have not been defeated and demobilized. Until that happens, they explain, they will continue to bear arms.

... Bomb

(continued from page 1)

defense team brought in money for bail, the police and courts increased the amount that was required to free him.

Rallies of environmentalists and lumber workers have been held in support of the two victims in Oakland, Ukiah, and Fort Bragg, Calif. Hundreds of organizations and individuals who are outraged at this frame-up have sent messages of support.

Earth First! has put out the call for hundreds of students to come to Northern California this summer to save the old-growth redwoods. Preparations are underway for a camp to house 300-400 students. They compare it to the Freedom Summer in Mississippi in 1964, and stress its completely non-violent character.

Unfortunately, another parallel can now be drawn to Mississippi—the use of political violence. Recently, a logging truck drove into Bari's vehicle when she and several children were in it. Activists have received 37 death threats. And now, an anti-personnel bomb nearly kills Bari and Cherney, two key organizers.

Earth First! organizers are determined to continue preparations for the Redwood Summer. They hope the police frameup will backfire and that more students than ever will answer their call to save the forests. Several meetings that were set for Bari and Cherney will go on in their absence.

Contributions for medical care and defense can be sent to: Bari-Cherney Emergency Trust Fund, 106 W. Stanley, Ukiah, CA 95482. Telephone (707) 468-1660. Earth First! can be contacted in San Francisco at (415) 824-3841.

Our readers speak out

May Day

Dear editor,

May Day 1990, the first May Day since the Berlin Wall came down, was marked by millions throughout the world with marches, rallies, and strikes.

In Moscow, anyone who wanted to was allowed to march with their own banners behind the official parade. This, understandably brought out a wide range of views reflecting the current struggles within Soviet society.

The pre-Soviet Lithuanian flag, the Czarist Russian flag, and anarchist black and red flags could all be seen. Most of the workers' signs, on the other hand, carried anti-perestroika messages: "No unemployment," "No private property," "Prices under control of the trade unions."

Havana, Cuba, was the site of perhaps the largest May Day march in 1990. The threat of imperialist attack probably spurred people into the streets, as 800,000 marched. Marches of over 100,000 also took place in other cities.

In South Korea, workers spent May Day marching, striking, and battling police. Over 100,000 workers defied government threats and went out on strike. A May Day march of over 10,000 in Ulsan protested police violence against workers who had occupied the Hyundai shipyards.

In Katmandu, Nepal, May Day was celebrated for the first time ever, as 15,000 demonstrated for democracy. And in Palestine, a general strike called by the Unified Leadership of the Intifada shut down the West Bank and Gaza. Many workers inside the pre-1967 boundaries simply stayed away from their jobs.

Workers of the world, unite under the banner of the Fourth International!

John Halabi,
New York, N.Y.

Biweekly?

Dear editor,

I like reading your paper, but I don't like how rarely it comes out. Once a month just isn't enough to be able to keep on top of changing events here and around the world.

Therefore, I've got a suggestion: publish a somewhat smaller paper (say 12 or 16 pages) on a biweekly basis. You could charge the same price, which would bring in more money to finance further expansion and circulation. What do you think?

James Patrick,
Lancaster, Pa.

Education

Dear editor,

California State University Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds was forced to resign on April 20, 1990. She had been under fire for using taxpayers' money to grant hefty salary increases to herself and other top administrators, for using \$207,688 to maintain her residence, and for purchasing a fleet of cars.

Reynolds applied this money to questionable priorities at a time when the state education system is suffering a budgetary crisis. In order to get funds for educational projects, Reynolds and the other Trustees tried to do away with the guaranteed cost-of-living increases of employees without negotiating with the California State Employees Association, an affiliate of SEIU Local 1000, AFL-CIO.

This attempt was defeated when employees on every campus organized rallies and made the issue public.

Although the cost-of-living increases were reinstated, they will only be extended through the duration of the present contract. In addition, management tries to pit cam-

pus workers against the students and faculty by suggesting that the quality of services will decline as the price paid for the workers' demand for liveable wages.

At the same time, the Chancellor threatened to reduce the enrollment by making admission requirements more difficult. Coming out of underfunded public high schools, many working-class students would be refused admission. In effect, working-class taxpayers would be paying for the college education of the privileged, while the future quality of life of their own children would be diminished.

This is yet another example of how the working class is forced to bear the brunt of the bureaucratic mismanagement and short-sighted self interest of the ruling class. Yet employers need educated workers; by cutting off the working class from quality education, the capitalist class jeopardizes its own future.

Tasso Geist,
San Francisco, Calif.

Mills strike

Dear editor,

"Strong women, proud women! All women, Mills women!" This was the chant at Mills College in Oakland, Calif., where students successfully shut down the campus and won their demand to keep the college enrollment limited to women.

On May 3, the Trustees had announced they would start admitting male students in order to resolve the college's financial problems. Hundreds showed up that night for a meeting of students. When asked who was not willing to be arrested, only two hands went up. By 6:30 a.m. students had shut down all administrative buildings on campus and occupied the key offices.

From the beginning, students approached the staff, faculty, and alumnae for support. Within 24 hours, the majority of the alumnae were behind the students. The staff, who had been threatened with losing their jobs if they assisted the

students in any way, were very responsive. Faculty agreed to suspend classes or hold them outside or in their homes.

Ninety percent of the students struck classes the first week, and 80 percent the second week. After that, the Trustees announced that Mills would not go co-ed.

Mills has been around for 138 years—mostly identified as a school for privileged women. Recently, however, as a result of affirmative-action gains, a more diverse student body has been recruited. Twenty-six percent are women of color. Because it is so expensive (Mills is a private college), 80 percent of all students get some aid, with 30 percent getting significant grants.

Although some Mills students have participated in clinic defense and Central American solidarity work, for most this was their first political activity. The saw the issue as a basic feminist one, the preservation of an educational atmosphere where women are encouraged to develop to the maximum of their ability.

At commencement, the students celebrated their victory. They struggled and they won!

C.B.,
Union City, Calif.

Correction

In our last issue, in Alan Benjamin's article on "The struggle for socialism around the world today," it is stated that "the German working class was divided against its will following World War II and was subject to the occupation of four imperialist armies..."

This formulation is incorrect. It should have read, "and was subject to the occupation by the four allied armies." In 1945 Germany was divided into four zones occupied by troops from the four allied powers: France, England, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, however, is not an imperialist country. It is a degenerated workers' state.—The editors

If you like this paper, look us up!

For forums, classes and other activities, contact the Socialist Action branch in your area!

Baltimore
P.O. Box 16005
Baltimore, MD 21218

Boston
P.O. Box 1046 GMF
Boston, MA 02205
(617) 497-0230

Chicago
P.O. Box 578428
Chicago, IL 60657
(312) 327-5752

Cincinnati
P.O. Box 27111
Cincinnati, OH 45227
(513) 272-2596

Cleveland
P.O. Box 6151
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 429-2167

Detroit
P.O. Box 32546
Detroit, MI 48232

Los Angeles
P.O. Box 60605
Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, CA 90060
(213) 660-2891

Minneapolis
P.O. Box 14087
Dinkytown Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 430-1476

For information about other areas, contact the national office of Socialist Action at (415) 821-0458.

New York
P.O. Box 20209 Ca. Fin.
693 Columbus Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10025

Pittsburgh
1625 Pillow Ave.
Harwick, PA 15049

San Francisco
3435 Army St., Suite 308
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-0458

Santa Barbara
P.O. Box 90644
Santa Barbara, CA 93190
(805) 962-4011

Seattle
P.O. Box 1182
Bothell, WA 98041

Is nationalism of the oppressed progressive?

The ruling white minority regime of South Africa is demanding special privileges for whites in a future non-apartheid South Africa. President F.W. de Klerk and other white nationalists claim this is necessary to protect whites from "majority domination."

In Lithuania, Russian nationalists are demanding that the Soviet government protect "their rights" from Lithuanian nationalists demanding self-determination—an independent Lithuania.

The government of Sri Lanka is waging war against the Tamil minority. Tamils are demanding self-determination. Sinhala chauvinists argue that the nationalism of the Tamils is against the Sinhala majority.

What is common in all these examples—and many more could be cited—is the claim of the dominant nationality that their rights are threatened by oppressed nationalities fighting for self determination.

Not academic issue

But is the nationalism of Black South Africans, Lithuanians, Tamils, and U.S. Blacks the same as those who oppress them? Is all nationalism identical?

Because nationalism is on the rise around the world it is useful to

review the Marxist stance on this question. The issue is not an academic one. It involves whether or not the workers and farmers of the oppressor nations themselves will be able to free themselves from capitalist exploitation. If they oppose the nationalism of the oppressed nations they will be committing political suicide.

The founders of scientific socialism—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels—were the first to explain the relationship between the nationalism of the oppressed and the struggle of the working class for their emancipation. In a letter Marx wrote to Engels in 1869 he said:

"The English working class will never accomplish anything before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. That is why the Irish question is so important for the social movement in general." (*Marx and Engels on Ireland*, page 284)

Engels, writing in 1882 about the struggles of the oppressed Irish and Polish peoples, explained, "I therefore hold the view that two nations in Europe have not only the right but even the duty to be nationalistic before they can become internationalistic: the Irish and the Poles. They are more international-

istic when they are genuinely nationalistic." (*Ibid*, page 332)

While English, French, and other European nationalisms were progressive in unifying popular struggles against feudalism in earlier centuries, by the late 19th century these nationalisms had become reactionary. They were whipped up by the ruling classes to keep the colonies in tow and the workers and peasants under their domination.

The nationalism of England became a battle cry to keep Ireland and other colonies oppressed. The nationalism of Ireland, on the other

Which Side Are You On?

By
Malik Miah



hand, became the rallying cry to mobilize the Irish people against that domination. English nationalism (read: chauvinism) kept the English working class from fighting against its own rulers.

V.I. Lenin, central leader of the 1917 Russian revolution, elaborated on Marx and Engels' views on nationalism. In his famous thesis, *"The Right of Nations to Self-Determination,"* written in 1914, Lenin stated:

"The bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support."

A look at current struggles

A look at some of the current struggles of oppressed nations confirms this Marxist approach to nationalism. Let's begin with South Africa. The Black majority is oppressed by the white minority. The whites have special privileges because of that oppression.

White workers and farmers have the illusion that the white system is in their interests. In fact, the white (capitalist) system is how the rulers both oppress the Black majority and keep white working people from joining with Black workers to fight their common enemy.

The only road for white workers to win emancipation from capitalist exploitation is to join with the Black majority against apartheid and establish a truly democratic South

Africa. Under such an anti-capitalist South Africa, affirmative action will be taken by the new government representing the majority to end the special privileges of whites.

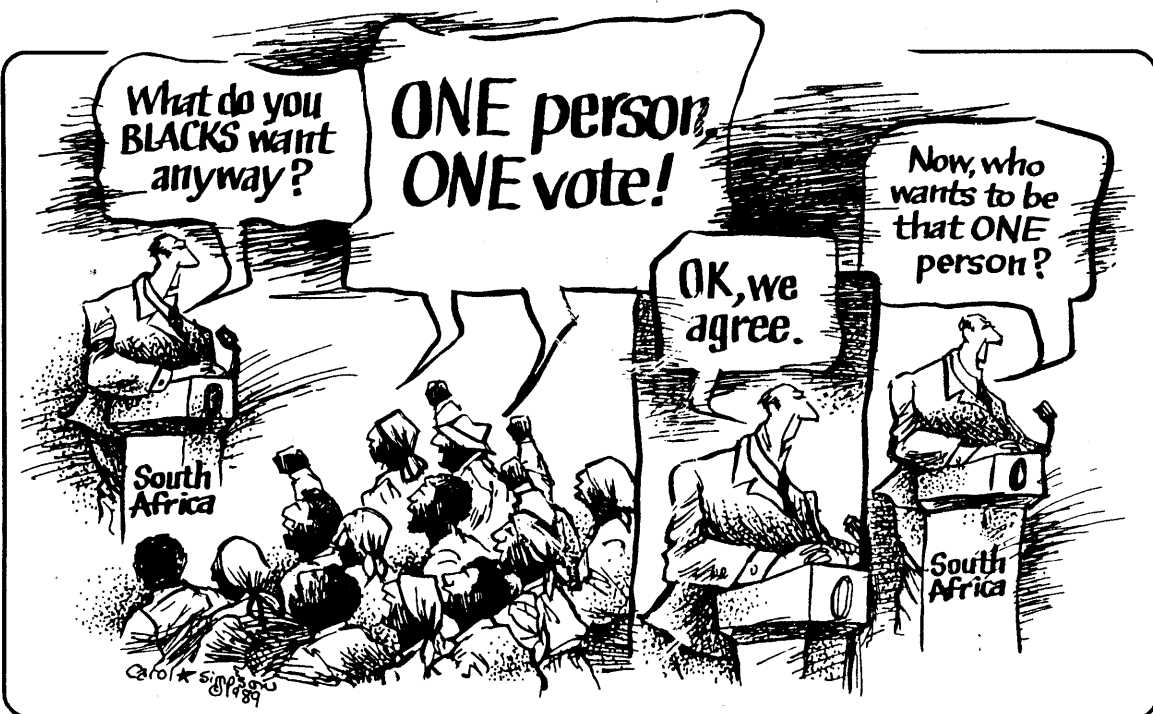
White nationalism in South Africa is for maintaining the status quo—white rule. It's reactionary.

Blacks in the United States are a minority who suffer under institutionalized racism—i.e., national oppression. It is why Black nationalism exists and why struggles for Black civil rights continue to be fought.

Whites who perceive this fight for equality as reverse discrimination are falling into a trap. The problem for white working people, as for Blacks, is the common enemy: the owners of capital who control the vast resources of the country, not Blacks fighting for an end to discrimination.

While the situation in the Soviet Union, a workers' state, is not identical to that in the capitalist countries, the principled stance of Marxists supporting the nationalism of the oppressed remains valid. Russian workers and farmers will not be able to launch a successful political revolution against Stalinist rule without supporting the struggles of the oppressed Soviet peoples of the East and the Baltic states.

The rise of nationalism of the oppressed reflects the crisis of imperialist and capitalist, as well as Stalinist rule. It is progressive and should be supported.



By CARL FINAMORE

The second frameup trial of Mark Curtis

Mark Curtis was sentenced to 25 years in a Iowa prison as a result of a September 1988 conviction for rape and burglary. There was no physical evidence linking Curtis to the charges. His conviction primarily rested on the testimony of the arresting police officer, who had previously been reprimanded by his own superiors for lying.

As an active unionist and member of the Socialist Workers Party, Curtis' name appears in FBI files which have now been made public. He was also active in protesting immigration raids at the Swift meatpacking plant where he worked.

In fact, it was only several hours after Curtis participated in a meeting to protest the abduction of several of his co-workers by the Immigration and Naturalization Service that he was severely beaten and arrested by police officers who called him that "Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Since his arrest, a committee formed to gather support and funds to wage an extensive defense campaign in its uphill battle to free Curtis. The defense committee has begun the appeal process by citing lack of court evidence, the exclusion of important evidence, and numerous court irregularities.

Yet, on April 24 the Iowa Court of Appeals refused to overturn his conviction. The defense committee will now appeal directly to the Iowa Supreme Court. If that loses, Curtis has the right to appeal to the federal courts.

In addition to the appeal process, Curtis supporters have launched an aggressive international effort exposing the political mo-

tives of the frame-up. Money and endorsements have been obtained to sustain the defense committee's legal and publicity costs. Curtis has also filed a lawsuit against the police officers who beat him.

Meanwhile Curtis himself has not remained quiet in prison. He became an active member of the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee discussion group in prison. And he regularly protested efforts to isolate him from other prisoners and to deprive him of political reading material deemed "improper" by the warden.

In the face of a stubborn group of supporters and an outspoken prisoner, the authorities were clearly worried that their web of lies would unravel. This explains the new series of attacks against Curtis and his committee.

Defense Committee targeted

A civil lawsuit has been filed against Curtis by Denise and Keith Morris, parents of Demetria Morris, the alleged rape victim. The trial date is July 9. The Morris' are seeking punitive damages for the "pain and suffering" they say Curtis inflicted on their daughter. The suit also asks the court to assign to them "any monies" received by Curtis "as the result of commercialization of his acts."

This last reference is to the Curtis Defense

Committee, which has now become a target, along with Mark. Stuart Pepper, attorney for the Morris, indicated that he intends to collect any fines imposed by the court from Curtis and his wife, Kate Kaku, as well as John Studer, executive director of the Curtis Defense Committee. Studer has already been threatened with an inspection of his financial records.

Studer told *Socialist Action* that "although the first trial of Curtis resulted in a conviction, it was not politically convincing enough for the prosecution. People walk away from any objective examination of the case and say 'it's a frame-up.' They hope to use the next trial to give more credence to the first conviction, to try to break Mark by imposing a huge financial burden on him, and to launch a new attack on the defense committee. This July 9 trial is really the second frame-up trial of Mark Curtis."

"These are deadly serious threats to Curtis, to the defense committee, and to all those organizations who may need to defend themselves against future government attacks," explained Studer.

In conjunction with the legal harassment of the committee, Curtis was recently transferred on one day's notice to Fort Madison, a smaller prison than Anamosa, where he had been previously held. Studer believes it was "partly because the prison authorities wanted

to slow down political activity at Anamosa and to get a problem out of their hair."

Supporters are encouraged to write to Mark at his new address: Mark Curtis #805338, Box 316 JBC Dorm, Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627. The sender's full name and address must be on the upper left hand of the envelope, with the name signed in full at the end of the letter. Greeting cards are permitted, as are photos, but not larger than 8 1/2" x 11".

Contributions and support to the Defense Committee can be arranged by contacting them at (515) 246-1695 or writing to: PO Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Tax-deductible contributions should be made out to Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.

**International
VIEWPOINT**

International Viewpoint is a biweekly magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International. A one-year subscription costs only \$47. Write to: *International Viewpoint*, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France.

S. African Blacks demand: 'One person, one vote!'

Four months ago Nelson Mandela was freed, yet the apartheid regime—despite some token reforms—remains essentially intact.

Mandela has demanded that in order for genuine negotiations to take place, all political prisoners must be freed, the state of emergency must be lifted, and the repressive apartheid laws must be abrogated. None of this has occurred.

On the contrary, "liberal" Prime Minister F.W. de Klerk has sent in the police to quash anti-apartheid demonstrations in the townships and Bantustans, and to put down the strikes of hospital workers and rail workers. Since Feb. 1, over 300 anti-apartheid activists have been killed by the South African police.

Mandela has also continued to press for total political and economic sanctions against South Africa until apartheid is dismantled.

Meanwhile, de Klerk has pointed to two issues over which he will not budge in any negotiations with representatives of the South African liberation movement: (1) minority or "group rights," and (2) the inviolability of the free enterprise system.

De Klerk is opposed to the demand raised by the Black majority of "One person, one vote in a unitary state." He has insisted that "white minority rights be safeguarded." Specifically, he has demanded that the white minority be able to veto laws passed by the Black majority. One option put forward is the creation of a two-chamber parliament, such as exists in neighboring Zimbabwe.

De Klerk has also rejected any talk of nationalizing industry and putting it in the hands of the Black working class. He has stated that the "democratic future" must be built on "a sound economy based on proven economic principles and private enterprise." (*Cape Times*, Feb. 3, 1990) This, of course, is a reaffirmation of capitalist exploitation.

In the new situation opened up with the liberation of Nelson Mandela, a wide-open debate has broken out among the various anti-apartheid organizations in South Africa over how to approach the negotiations with de Klerk and what a future South Africa should look like.

Little is known in this country about a series of South African organizations that trace their origins to the Black Consciousness Movement founded by Steve Biko in the mid-1970s.

The Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), for example, held its national congress in early March in Johannesburg, with over 7000 people in attendance.

AZAPO, according to one of the resolutions adopted by its congress, "is a mass-based people's organization with a socialist orientation and outlook ... and a flag-bearer of the Black Consciousness philosophy which addresses the national oppression and capitalist exploitation of the Azanian masses."

One of the organizations closely allied to AZAPO is the Cape Action League. Like AZAPO, the Cape Action League puts forward a socialist alternative for the Black masses of South Africa.

We are printing below major excerpts



Thousands of workers gather to launch western Cape division of Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in February 1986.

from a document by Action Youth, the youth group of the Cape Action League, which contains an assessment of the current negotiation process that is shared by a large wing of the liberation movement. It is reprinted from the March/April issue of *Arise Vukani*, the bimonthly magazine of Action Youth. —The editors

Power to the people—or negotiated settlement?

De Klerk's speech of Feb. 2, 1990, the release of Nelson Mandela, and the direct discussions between the government and the African National Congress (ANC) show that the question of a negotiated settlement is firmly on the agenda.

But what does this mean for the oppressed

and exploited people?

Those who claim to speak on behalf of the people say that the transfer of power is their basic demand, the "bottom line." There are three basic and interlinked aspects of power—political power, state power, and economic power.

Political power means "one person, one vote in a unitary state." No double speak about protection of "group rights," accounting for white fears or minority rights, etc. Why the talk of white fears and not Black fears, or workers' fears? Any modification of this demand is not designed to cater to "legitimate fears" but to illegitimate privileges! Is de Klerk prepared to accept this very simple but basic demand?

We must now also ask: Is the African National Congress/Communist Party bloc prepared to accept less than "one person, one vote in a unitary state?"

State power cannot be separated from political power. In simple terms, state power is exercised through government structures, the police, and the army. If talks are to be about a New South Africa, do we expect the Old State to carry out the wishes of the New Government?

The people of Tokoza and Botshabelo, shot and teargassed during recent demonstrations, know very well that the old police force are as brutal as ever, regardless of the "Era of Negotiations." Will the old state be replaced by a new one?

What will the new state look like and whose interests will it serve?

Economic power is concentrated in the hands of about a dozen huge companies—Anglo American, Gencor, Barlows, Old Mutual, Sanlam, JCI, etc. Each of these companies controls resources of billions of Rand, accumulated through the sweat of the masses over more than a century.

The process of exploitation and accumulation goes back to the period of conquest and dispossession of the land. Now the very mention of word nationalization brings howls of protest! The ownership and control

of enormous financial resources is a source of massive power: the power to decide whether to build houses or casinos, to invest money locally or overseas, to pay a living wage or allow workers to die of starvation.

Unless the workers, who produced this wealth, take control of these economic resources, the people will never be free!

What is apartheid?

What does it mean that the creators of apartheid suddenly declare that they are against it?

Apartheid does not only mean laws such as the Group Areas Act, the Mixed Marriages Act, and the Population Registration Act. No! These laws are a means to an end. Basically they are the means to the creation of a huge pool of cheap Black labor, labor needed to feed the farms, the mines, and industry.

Apartheid is the existence of a pool of labor trained to work but not educated as a basic human right, living in vast townships with minimal facilities or dumped in the homelands to hide the chronic unemployment which is part of the capitalist system.

Before the apartheid laws of today, the Vagrancy Acts of a hundred years ago and the Hertzog Bills of 1936 served the same purpose; namely, to oppress Blacks and to exploit their labor.

Apartheid is the existence of millions of unemployed, millions of homeless and under-educated people. The fact that more than 80 percent of Black households have an income of less than R800 per month, while huge companies control assets of billions, is part of the same historical process.

Apartheid and capitalism are linked by more than a century of sweat and blood! Abolishing a few laws and then complaining that there is not enough money to solve the problems of unemployment, housing, education, health, etc., will mean that the system stays the same.

The problems of the people can never be solved as long as resources are allocated on the basis of profit rather than social need.

The negotiation process

You cannot win at the negotiation table that which has not already been won on the battlefield!

It seems as if de Klerk is prepared to make quite dramatic changes to the superstructure of the system. It has seized the initiative by unbanning the ANC and other organizations. In fact the de Klerk government is so far in advance of its previous positions that it has taken everyone by surprise.

But it is also very clear that the state is still very much in power (despite the strength of the mass movement), and it has no intention of negotiating away that power.

At the moment there is every indication that a process of negotiations behind closed doors is being planned. Self-appointed leaders will sit around the "negotiation table" and decide the future of our country, will decide what compromises to make, what to accept, and what to reject. Is the only role of the people to shout the slogans, to wave the flags, and to die in the streets in "illegal demonstrations?"

At the Conference for a Democratic Future (CDF) in December last year, a broad range of democratic organizations raised the demand for a Constituent Assembly! This call of the CDF is now more urgent than ever. The oppressed and exploited masses are their own liberators.

Only the Constituent Assembly, elected under conditions of free association, can negotiate the future of South Africa/Azania. Ultimately even the Constituent Assembly will have to go back to the people for final acceptance of a new constitution. Only in this way can the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people be safeguarded.

- Down with secret negotiations!
- Forward with the Constituent Assembly!

"The Struggle for Socialism Worldwide" International Rally on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky

with: Chris Nteta (South Africa), Carlos Ibañez (Nicaragua), Stefan Wolanski (Poland), Esteban Volkov (grandson of Leon Trotsky), and speakers from Brazil, Haiti, France, Great Britain, the U.S., China, and Cuba.

Saturday, July 7, 7:30 p.m.
First Unitarian Church (Franklin & Geary)
San Francisco

For further information call (415) 821-0458