

# The Forge

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, OPPRESSED PEOPLES AND NATIONS, UNITE!

APRIL 1983

## To our readers

# What future?

In accordance with a decision by representatives of The Forge, the executive of the Quebec District and two members of the central leadership, the article by Donald and Bernard was to appear alone, presenting their explanation of what had happened to the WCP, the situation in the organization and some perspectives for the Forge.

Subsequently a general meeting of the Forge Journalists and production staff attended by Quebec District and central leadership representa-

tives, decided by majority vote to simultaneously publish a response to this article, and to present both as opinions in the current debate.

The April 7 meeting of the Quebec District executive considered that this decision overrides the unanimous position of the executive.

At the April 9 meeting of the full Quebec District Committee, it was agreed that it is the task of The Forge and the leading bodies of the organization to encourage expression of the various currents in the debate.

As you know by now, The Forge has not published for the last several months because of the political and financial crisis in the old WCP.

The party congress held in January decided to formally put an end to the old WCP and continue functioning as a revolutionary organization while summing up the experience of the WCP and clarifying our political positions for the future. It also decided to continue publishing The Forge, within the limits of our material capabilities, as a necessary part of this process.

Since then, difficulties in reorganizing as well as continued financial problems have delayed resumption of publication, even in this new, less expensive format.

With this issue we hope to resume regular publication, though not on a weekly basis as before. As well, at least for the near future, the paper will be produced in this duplicated, smaller format in order to save money.

Many former WCP members have left, and the hand-to-hand subscription network has to a large extent broken down. We have lost contact with many subscribers. So while we will make every effort to get this and future issues to you, if you discover that you have not received your copy, or if you know other people in this situation, please inform us by sending your name and address to: The Forge, P.O. Box 364, Place d'Armes Station, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 3H1.

For the next issue we suggest concentrating on three subjects: unemployment; the Québec national question (for June 24), and the question of Marxism. We await your contributions and suggestions.

Send your articles before May 1, typed, double-spaced. Any help is appreciated.

## Viewpoint

The WCP as it existed since 1979 with its political program and statutes no longer exists today.

Following fundamental criticisms from workers, forces of the left, ex members, sympathizers and friends of the organization, the WCP entered into a period of acute political crisis in the fall of 82. What we understand of this crisis today is that it is not just a passing thing, nor an unfortunate moment in our history.

In our opinion, it is part of a profound crisis facing progressive and revolutionary forces internationally: certain questions related to the nature of socialism (evaluation of existing socialism today and projects for socialism in the future); the path of revolutionary change in an advanced capitalist country; the crucial questions concerning new relationships between men and women and the understanding and use of Marxist theory in the latter part of the 20th century.

Within the WCP this crisis manifested itself particularly in criticisms of our positions and past practice concerning democracy, workers' power in a revolutionary organization, developments in the feminist move-

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## Reply

We welcome the initiative of Donald and Bernard in launching the debates on the demise of the WCP and future perspectives for The Forge and we would like to take this opportunity to explain our disagreements with their views.

The basic facts of the past six months are not in dispute. The WCP as it existed is no more. Briefly, the party was hit by a severe crisis, the product of serious errors in program and practice. These errors include chauvinism towards women and nationalities, especially the Québec nation, elitism and disdain for workers within the party, sectarian attitudes towards other forces on the left, and so forth (there is not space to elaborate here).

At the same time, our difficulties are closely linked to broader problems in the world revolutionary movement and the left-- the historical experience of socialism, and especially the stagnation of Marxism in the advanced industrialized world. All this has raised fundamental questions about socialism and the road to revolution in Canada, the role and place of women, workers and oppressed nationalities in

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## Quebec Common Front: unprecedented attack on democracy

# 'It's not the time to collaborate

"We needed a general strike by all Common Front workers, with real support from the whole Quebec labour movement. That was the only way to force the Quebec government to back off and to beat its anti-Common Front legislation," says one Quebec teacher.

Yet despite the unprecedented anti-union attack of Quebec laws 111, 105 and 70, despite the determination of the union rank and file and the example given by the teachers' strike, there was no general strike by Quebec's Common Front of public sector unions. Why not?

True, the Parti Québécois government had been preparing for this confrontation for a long time. But above all, it had help in the collaborationist approach of the top Quebec union leadership. As well, no organized political alternative able to represent the interests of Quebec working people presently exists.

### THE PQ STRATEGY

More than two years ago the Quebec government decided to recover large sums of money out of the wages of its public sector employees. Using the excuse of an unprecedented budget deficit, its spring, '81, budget announced \$640 million worth cutbacks in Quebec health care and education. At the opening of a Parti Québécois convention in December, 1981, Premier René Lévesque announced his intention to reopen collective agreements in the province's public sector. This was followed up in practice with the Parizeau budget of May, 1982, and a series of laws (68, 70, 72).

Rumour has it that the Quebec government, anxious to maintain its standing on the international money markets, had offered its assurance that wages would be cut in Quebec's public sector as a sort of "loan guarantee." But the government's strategy goes further than that. The cutbacks, the reopening of contracts and the decrees in the public sector are part and parcel of the government's plan for getting out of the current economic crisis, a plan developed in concert with the private sector and aimed at the Quebec labour movement as a whole. The govern-

ment's economic policy paper, Challenges for Quebec II, illustrate its approach, mixing high technology and education "reform with cooperation between classes and a new social contract.

Hence the need to get rid of the union's Common Front in the public sector once and for all. This regularly reoccurring obstacle shows up every three or four years, calling for better working conditions and wages as well as higher quality education and health services. So the government was aiming for both short-term economic gains -- recovering millions of dollars in wages and maintaining its standing on the money markets -- and long-term political gains of immense importance. The idea was simple: to alter fundamentally the way negotiations go on in the Quebec public sector and break the Common Front once and for all. This in turn would hit hard at Quebec labour as a whole, breaking any militant tendencies and allowing private sector bosses to successfully continue their cutbacks and shut-downs. The PQ hoped to eliminate any opposition to its blueprint for getting Quebec out of the crisis -- and to its vision of a society where disputes just don't happen.

Looked at in this light, law 111 -- meant to bring Quebec's striking teachers to heel -- is no accident. Nor does it mark the end of the government's strategy. Already Lévesque is talking of eliminating totally the right to strike in Quebec's hospitals. Already Quebec Chamber of Commerce President Serge Langlois is calling for changes to the labour code to favour private enterprise. The Quebec construction industry, the paper companies, Provlgo, have announced their intention to question wage increases already agreed to in signed collective agreements.

The government took on an early lead in this dispute, and didn't waste any time! It orchestrated a propaganda campaign aimed at what it called "privileged" and "egotistical" public sector workers. It did all it could to divide workers among themselves -- public sector vs private sector, low-wage earners vs the higher-paid. This campaign made itself felt even within the unions. And when the time came,

the government brought out the big stick, ranging from fines (26,176 cases are before the courts, including 25,880 against rank-and-file unionists) to law 111 itself. The government did not hesitate to attack democracy and fundamental civil rights by by-passing both provincial and federal charters of rights.

### LEADERS COLLABORATE

The PQ government had an important advantage on its side in all this, and that was the ideology of class collaboration pushed by the top union leaders and many among union paid staff. The single main reason why there was no general strike in the public sector, and no political strike by the labour movement, was the capitulation and even sabotage of the leaders of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), the QUEBEC Federation of Labour (QFL) and the Quebec teachers' union, the CEQ.

Rather than counter the government propaganda campaign against the public sector workers, the top union leaders preached moderation and cooperation. In the press, ex-CSN president Norbert Rodrigue spoke of the need for public sector workers to present a "self-criticism." In the days following the 50,000-strong demonstration in April, 1982, against cutbacks and the reopening of contracts, the three union leaders could find nothing better to do than to take part in the Quebec City economic summit, which looked at the creation of the permanent tripartite bodies proposed in Challenges to Quebec II.

At the CSN convention in May 1982, the union's leadership pushed through acceptance of the idea of "national negotiations" -- at the very same moment that Finance Minister Parizeau was bringing down his budget and confirming his intention to eliminate wage increases agreed to in the collective agreement. During the same period the QFL and the Montreal Teachers Alliance were talking about establishing a "solidarity fund" to help out businesses in trouble. And in January of this year, with common Front walkouts about to occur, the three labour leaders were at another economic summit meeting in Quebec.

# with the government'

by Richard Desrosiers

City.

There was no general strike because the union leaders had neither the willingness to fight nor a plan of attack. There was no general strike because the union leaders' strategy, and that of a good number of union staffers, is based not on confidence in the working class, but on tripartism and class collaboration with the government and the bosses. While great and growing determination was developing among the rank and file, along with concrete strategies for the strike from the leadership came a constant push for cooperation with government and business.

As a result the leadership did not build unity between public and private sector workers. Nor did it try to amass the strength and support needed on the workers' side. It did not denounce the PQ government's strategy for getting out of the crisis, nor attempt to build a political struggle against the government. Instead it did all it could,

to push "national negotiations," even squabbling over who should lead such negotiations (i.e. who should be the government's number one partner). It took advantage of the labour movement's fears of losing members and dues money, and grabbed at every chance of collaborating that the government held out to it. To top it all off, the leadership didn't hesitate to ignore union democracy in its attempt to counter rank-and-file militancy—decisions were ignored or reversed, strike votes were retaken endlessly until the workers became discouraged, workers were ordered to return to work in the hospitals, etc.

When the government brought out law 111, the strike movement began to gain momentum and support began to roll in, but rather than lead this movement and fight back, the leaders gave in. Meanwhile postal workers' president Jean-Claude Parrot was calling for organized support for the teachers.

The Common Front struggle was a fight by rank-and-file union militants against the government, despite their own leaders. People were prepared to fight, but their determination was outmanoeuvred by the leadership, whose class collaborationist policy now threatens to lead to defeatism and disillusionment.

## VACUUM ON THE LEFT

This situation was also affected by the political vacuum to the left of the Parti Québécois. In Quebec today there is no solidly organized left, nor is there an active workers party involved in the class struggle. Presently the tendency among the various forces on the left is more towards questioning than unity. The WCP was no exception to this in the recent period, going through a profound internal crisis on the basis of much questioning of past positions. The Mouvement socialiste has also

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# Women and the Common Front

The Common Front conflict concerns women more than anyone else for a number of reasons:

- two third of the workers involved are women
- 225,000 women are affected by the government decrees, which represents close to 20 per cent of women on the Quebec labour market,
- women are also the first ones to suffer from a work stoppage in the public sector, because they are the ones who have to take care of the children who can't go to school or to their daycare centers, and they are the ones who take care of the sick who did not stay long enough in the hospitals, etc.

The women Common front workers who went out on strike had to have good reasons for doing so...and they did. Besides the serious setbacks to their union rights and working conditions, there were the setbacks and the deterioration of public services in Québec. This is of great concern to women because these services are usually extensions of what used to be housework, and which lightened the

burden of women in society as they were developed.

For example, before homes for the elderly were set up, women were the ones who cared for the elderly. Before special institutions were set up for handicapped children, women took care of them, and before specialised services for handicapped children developed, like physiotherapy women took care of them.

If the Quebec government succeeds in imposing its present policies, women will be obliged to take on or pay for services which will no longer be dispensed as public services, whether it be the care of the ill who will not be hospitalized long enough, or helping children with learning disabilities because specialists in the schools will have been eliminated.

With its attacks on the largest group of organized women in the province, the Lévesque government has demonstrated its anti-woman character.

In the CEGEPs one woman in two will be affected by the government

proposals, and the proportion of woman teachers will probably be cut in half, to 16 percent—the same level women were at when the CEGEPs were first set up.

While women make up 66 percent of the workforce in the public sector, they represent only 32 percent of CEGEP professors.

The elimination of hundreds of women from college teaching posts carries the risk of a resurgence of the old "masculine" education that kept women out of higher levels of teaching.

Women were traditionally excluded from the teaching of philosophy, history and the sciences: with the result that women were also absent from the content of these subjects as they were taught. Their presence and their contribution to history, the arts, and to production and culture was effectively denied. The emergence of junior college programs that deal with the feminine experience is a very recent phenomenon.

# B.C. Native fishermen charged

VICTORIA B.C. (Forge Correspondent)

In simultaneous raids throughout the lower mainland, a large number of Fisheries and RCMP officers served summons against 129 Native Indian people for the "illegal" sale of fish last January 12.

The summons were served at four A.M. by armed officials, accompanied by the press who had been tipped off about the raid. People were dragged from their beds and handed the summonses. Also trucks towed away 54 vehicles (under the particular offence people were charged with, any vehicles, boats, equipment, etc., can be confiscated. During the raid, many people were intimidated and harassed and in a few cases beaten up. One Native Elder, on crutches, in an attempt to avoid the tow trucks, bumped into an officer and was clubbed over the head and knocked to the ground.

Why were these people charged? What terrible crime had they committed to warrant an early morning "commando" raid? The 129 Native people charged with "illegality" selling fish for their own consumption, face large fines and jail sentences if convicted.

Five months ago, two "retired" RCMP officers set up a front operation to buy "illegal" fish. Those charged were people who allegedly sold the fish to the RCMP officers. But why were the 129 Native people charged and only one non-native charged?

One Native leader commented: "Perhaps the charges are part of the big business government's attacks against the rights of little people like us. We thought that the law people were supposed to protect us and our property. I guess we were wrong. The system does not work for us." And a United Native Nations leader had this to say: "Racism, pure racism. We have been bartering fish for thousands of years and never wasted fish. Now when we sell fish they arrest us, beat us up and steal our cars and trucks. Hell, the government does not say boo to the Ku Klux Klan or other such groups. Just us."

Native Indian people in our society live under severe oppression. A high unemployment rate, low life ex-

pectancy rate, poor health care and racist education, characterize the average life of a Native Indian living in Canada. The minimal rights they

enjoy are constantly under attack by big business and government.

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## Support for Quebec workers

TORONTO [Forge correspondent]—Picketers from several major unions marched outside Québec government offices here March 14, to protest "the most repressive anti-labour legislation in decades," in the words of a flyer handed out to rush-hour passers-by.

The legislation in question is the Lévesque government's Bill 111, the heavy-handed law that strips bargaining rights from 75,000 teachers and imposes new contracts complete with wage rollbacks and loss of acquired rights.

"A lot of people who don't necessarily support unions are appalled by the law just on the grounds of civil liberties," said Janice Newson, chairperson of the York University Faculty Association and one of the organizers of the picket line.

She thinks Bill 111 is especially dangerous because it not only rolls back wages, but completely guts the collective bargaining process by imposing non-negotiable contracts backed by harsh penalties.

She also maintains that the Québec government's attempts to exert control over the content and structuring of education is part and parcel of a generalized move by governments across the country.

For example, she explained, Ontario also imposed public sector contracts (although not as severe) with its Bill 179, and is trying to restructure education so as to centralize more power in its hands with Bill 127.

Newson said there have been many expressions of support and financial donations from teachers' unions in Ontario to their counterparts in Quebec. She will be one of the

Newson said there had been many expressions of support and financial donations from teacher's unions in Ontario to their Quebec counterparts. She was one of the featured speakers at a March 28 support rally, organized by the Coalition of Concerned Teachers with the backing of the Metro Labour Council. Other speakers included Yvon Charbonneau, Rosette Côté, Roger Lecourt and Remi Dion from the main Quebec teachers' unions.

Asked if she had any message for Quebec teachers, Newson said, "Hang tough."

"The teachers were the one group that stood up," she explained. "I think that will put some back bone in groups here fighting on similar issues. We have to give them encouragement and support to continue the struggle."

Position of the executive of the district of Quebec concerning the publication of The Forge

As a result of a long debate on the question of publishing The Forge, the District committee proposes the following articles for the first issue:

(1) The article by Bernard and Donald which explains the past and looks ahead modestly to the future. This, for us, is the most important article because it permits to find our way in the future and situates us in respect to the left.

(2) The articles on the congress: the

facts, debates, and different positions...

However, the executive judges that it would be preferable not to publish the other articles for two reasons

—First, the absence of a political line and a level of reflection still too embryonic on the question of a revolutionary newspaper means that the organization could reflect too greatly the WCP.

—Secondly, we think that it is necessary to situate ourselves in relation to the national question and the feminist movement before writing comments or opinions on these subjects.

## REPORT FROM CONGRESS

Over 150 delegates from across Canada and Quebec crowded into a Montreal hotel for the long awaited congress of the Workers Communist Party held January 22-23. On the line was the fate of the crisis-wracked WCP.

The eight months leading up to the congress had seen a profound questioning and harsh criticisms of almost all aspects of the WCP's ideological and political line and practice. Two-thirds of the party's forces in Quebec had left, most party structures were paralyzed and the former leadership was almost completely discredited.

The congress provided the first opportunity for all sections of the WCP to meet together to advance their positions and debate the options.

Out of the two days of often intense and emotion-packed debate emerged a new organization with minimum basis of unity and new leadership made almost entirely of rank-and-file members.

The congress got underway on Saturday morning with the adoption of the procedures and agenda. To permit the greatest democracy, three tables were set up on the floor, one for women, one for oppressed nationalities and immigrants and one for men.

A report of the WCP's forces showed that overall it had lost half its members and no longer had a presence in several towns and areas of work in Quebec.

Next, the delegates voted to formally revoke the WCP's Central Committee. Only 10 of the 16 original members were at the congress. During the fall there had been a split within the CC, with five Quebec-based members deciding to quit the organization, and they did not turn up for the congress.

### Workshops get underway

At 3 PM Saturday afternoon, the major part of the first day got underway as the delegates split up into five workshops in which simultaneous translation was provided.

For the next six hours delegates exchanged criticisms and views on the actual situation and sum-up of the WCP, on whether or not to continue the organization and if yes, on what

basis and with what structures.

Almost all the delegates came out of the often-heated debates agreeing on the need for a revolutionary organization. The split came, however, over whether it was desirable to form a revolutionary organization made up of former members of the WCP.

Among those who wanted to continue within a revolutionary organization, delegates debated what should be the minimum basis of unity. Several propositions were on the table, including an expanded version of the basis of unity adopted by a conference of 200 delegates from the Quebec district held last November.

### Continue as revolutionary organization

Sunday morning began bright and early with a report on the previous days' workshops. A vote was held with a large majority reaffirming the necessity of a revolutionary organization. A vote to continue as a revolutionary organization passed by a vote of 81 for, 39 against and 17 abstentions.

A plenary session then got underway during which several resolutions were presented.

The major part of the debate revolved around a proposition by a Quebec-based caucus to transform the WCP into an organization of revolutionary militants "who look to Marxism as their ideological basis."

The goal of the organization was to be the creation of "a real party of the working class fighting for socialism and succeeding in a revolutionary struggle as the WCP had not." It proposed a new congress in six months.

Other resolutions presented but not voted upon, for a lack of time, were nonetheless supported by the overwhelming majority of delegates and reflected the growing role of women and the nationalities. These included:

- the setting up of a women's commission elected by the women at the congress as well as the autonomous organization of women at all levels
- the setting up of a commission of nationalities to ensure that the needs of nationality and immigrant members were answered
- the complete autonomy of the Quebec district both politically and

organizationally.

The Quebec district conference in November had already voted upon the need for Quebec's autonomy within the organization and the right to have a separate newspaper if desired.

### Caucuses set up

At lunch time on Sunday, several caucuses, regrouping dozens of members, met to discuss the weekend's events and to plan interventions from the floor. These included a women's caucus, the Quebec district caucus and a Marxist-Leninist caucus.

The establishment of these caucuses on a more or less permanent basis, along with the caucus of nationalities and immigrants which had met earlier, allowed an important exchange of ideas and signalled a desire of rank-and-file members to group together to seek common solutions.

After lunch, the critical financial situation of the WCP was debated. The WCP had important debts to individuals to repay and the congress decided to accept the proposition of the financial committee to cover these debts. (See page 8 for more details.)

It was then decided to put to the vote the proposition from Valleyfield, Quebec. It was accepted with amendments by a vote of 112 for, 7 against and 14 abstentions.

Since many delegates were obliged to get ready to leave in order to make it home for work on Monday, it was decided to push forward the vote for a new leadership and this got underway at 4:45 PM.

It was proposed that the new leadership committee be formed of 16 members, half men and half women, with workers in proportion at least equivalent to their proportion in the organization. There was to be an equal number of Quebecois and English Canadians and representatives of the national minorities and immigrants.

It was proposed and accepted that a woman be elected with the specific task of representing women members and the question of developing the line on women's affairs, with the consequence that there would be a majority of women in the leadership.

The final composition of the new leadership committee was eight working class members, six petits bourgeois, with six Quebecois, two English Canadians, and six from

# Text of resolutions passed

More than a hundred resolutions were submitted to the Congress, many of them arriving with the delegates at the opening or written during the Congress. They were translated and distributed as rapidly as possible. The resolutions that reached a vote are presented below.

Two general resolutions presented to the Congress based on discussions in the workshops.

1. BE IT RESOLVED that we reaffirm the necessity of a revolutionary organization (adopted by a large majority)

2. BE IT RESOLVED that we continue as a revolutionary organization (81 for, 39 against, 17 abstentions)

A third amended resolution on a minimum basis of unity presented by a delegate from Valleyfield:

1. That as of now we transform into an organization of revolutionary militants who look to Marxism as their ideological base as defined in the basis of unity adopted by the Quebec conference, published in *The Forge* and debated in several regions before the congress.

2. That the goal of this organization (which includes completing the WCP's work sum up and starting to rectify our errors in practice) is principally to work together and with people outside (those who have left, and militants in the union, women's and national movements and in the independent left, etc.) with the objective of creating a program and statutes to serve as the foundation of a new and real party of the working class fighting for socialism and succeeding in the revolutionary struggle as the WCP did not.

3. That we take as our working document part of the text *Elaboration of the minimal basis of unity*, with the understanding that we can develop and modify this basis in debates...

4. That the organization continue to develop a practice with the masses and that the organization of this practice be debated and defined within the committees in the different domains of work.

5. That we maintain for our use *The Forge*, published according to the financial means of the organization.

6. That we maintain as a minimal form of organization;

A. That each nationality and national minority begin a process of debates on their future in the organization and communicate their debates and positions throughout the organization and that this process lead into district conferences which recognize the decisional power of the Quebec nation and the national minorities on their respective questions.

B. That the districts determine their forms of organization (cells, units, committees, caucuses, conferences, general meetings, etc.)

C. That the congress elect a leadership committee that reflects the national, class and sexual elements of the organization.

D. That for the next year the mandate of this committee be to organize debates and distribute the results, to find ways with the different sectors of work to produce an analysis of the economic and political situation, and to assure an orientation for the work of the organization.

E. That the lower levels of the organization up to the district conferences hold meetings of women and worker comrades to exchange results and positions in order to develop structures and functioning that will permit democracy in the organization.

7. That the organization hold a congress in six months.

(112 for, 7 against, 14 abstentions)

Two resolutions on the composition of the new coordinating committee

a. That the coordinating committee be formed of 15 members, half men and half women, with workers in proportion at least equivalent to their proportion in the organization, and equal number of Quebecois and English Canadians and representatives of national minorities and immigrants. (unanimously accepted)

And, finally, a resolution regarding the ex-members of the Political Bureau:

— That the congress clearly and publicly demarcate from the bourgeois line developed by the old PB as an important cause of the party's pro-

blems internally and with the masses and the left in general.

- That in consequence the congress suspend the ex-members of the PB from the organization and that a referendum be held among the rank and file to decide their status within the organization.

(48 for, 44 against, 4 abstentions)

## Report

Cont'd from page 5

oppressed nationalities and immigrants. Altogether there were eight women and six men. (Manitoba and Saskatchewan decided to elect their representatives in their regions.)

The new leadership, the majority of whom had been rank-and-file members of the WCP, received a warm standing ovation from the delegates.

As the congress drew to a close, a vote was held to suspend the ex-members of the Political Bureau.

### Work closely with left

As the delegates headed off to their various regions, people were generally satisfied that a new transition organization had been created. At the same time they realized that

the essential political debates had hardly begun to unfold.

Major questions concerning the sum-up of the WCP and the reasons for its demise, the need to advance Marxism and to adapt it to the Canadian reality as well as the task of creating a revolutionary organization which could play a role in the struggle for socialism had not yet received an answer.

At the same time they realized that what the WCP had undergone was not an isolated phenomenon and that the problems faced by the new organization are being faced by the entire left in Quebec, Canada and elsewhere.

Delegates stressed that the new organization will be working closely with the progressive movement and the working class to find the answers to the new situation we all face.

# Should the organization continue?...

There were a number of debates on the floor of the last Congress, which was held during January. For the benefit of those who were not able to take part, here are a few people's accounts and impressions of what took place, as given to us during the Congress itself and in the days which followed.

## ...For

After serious reflection, it's obvious that we need a revolutionary organization. After having understood and fought against the effects of imperialism, national oppression, women's oppression and so many other issues important to all of us, I am not ready to give up.

The past experience of the WCP is quite shameful, but as the former leadership explain so nicely in their stereotyped self-criticisms: 'there are not only negative aspects.' It's true, there is at least one positive point; I became more politicized due to the WCP.

Since last January's congress, many people have given up, very few have stayed, but all of us are waiting to see what will happen. With the present economic crisis, the capital-

ists as well as the government are taking advantage of every single day to exploit workers, the latest example being Bill 111 in Québec.

Has the bourgeoisie stopped its oppression? Strength comes through unity and we must fight against imperialism in all its forms together. Instead of waiting and criticizing the coordination team we elected last January at the congress, join our ranks to see what we can do to be more effective. Democracy takes working at, and we must not forget that positive criticisms are helpful as well. Our negative lessons can become a positive asset in the future, if everyone of us pitches in. The future is ours.

Can we simply discard the years of work done by our comrades?

Elise

## ...Against

I've been deeply involved with the WCP for the last 4 years. I worked very hard because I thought changing the society was possible, even though it won't happen overnight. In the coming months, we must think over certain questions.

All around the world, the commu-

nist parties are falling apart. We have to take the time to analyse why this is happening.

As far as I am concerned, we can't apply Marxism-Leninism to the letter. The capitalist system has developed and may be much stronger than we thought originally. Despite its periodic crises, the end of this system is still a long way off. We need a lot of study and time to reflect on our goals.

We can't produce a newspaper and keep on with the organization at the same time without losing energy needed elsewhere.

I know too well how difficult it is to produce the newspaper. It takes money, journalists, editors, typesetters, etc. I don't think such a newspaper could adhere to any definite ideology. If the people still in the Party are honest, they cannot be Marxist-Leninists, nor claim to represent the working class, or the left in Quebec or in English Canada.

We have to consider ourselves as people looking for the path that will take us to socialism. Only after, will we be able to propose solutions for change.

An ex-comrade

# Should the ex-leaders be expelled?...

## ...For

I am for the expulsion of all the members of the former Political Bureau for several reasons. In my view, they are all responsible (even if to different degrees—it remains to be seen), for what has happened: the development of a Stalinist party and line with all its consequences for women, workers, the national question, etc.. All this happened simply as a result of this line.

And further, they did nothing either before or during the crisis in the party. If these people had had the slightest links with the people, comrades would have had confidence in them and they could have, or could have tried, to make changes in the WCP before things fell apart.

I am sure that they saw the forms of chauvinism that had developed in the party, and a longtime before the crisis of last fall. For me, the most important thing is to draw the lessons of a Stalinist organization, of what happens when power is centralized in

the hands of a "gang" who flout democracy, and in the final analysis, to be consistent with the enormous responsibilities that this small "leading centre" had in the development of the crisis. Neither before, during or after the crisis did they show any real confidence in the members of the organization.

Some will say that I am defending a Stalinist position. There is nothing Stalinist about wanting our organization to profoundly correct its errors of the past and to warn the revolutionary movement of the great responsibilities of its former leaders. This is no way makes presumptions about the future of these individuals and their future contribution. It only clears up responsibilities in the history of the WCP.

Micheline Foisy

## ...Against

We think that to suspend or expel from the organization's ranks people identified with political views, now under fire, would be a perpetuation of

the very Stalinist approach to contradictions in the Party that is now being so fervently attacked.

It is simply doing to others exactly what we accuse them of having done to us, except that yesterday's buzz words -- economism, right opportunism, liberalism, ultra-democracy -- have been replaced by new ones -- Stalinism, sectarianism, dogmatism.

Eliminating 'wrong' views by eliminating those people who propagate them is an easy way and a poor substitute for real debate. It is simply replacing old taboos and preconceptions with a new set. It is extremely damaging to the process of thorough and principled debate needed today.

Furthermore such a move would set an extremely dangerous precedent. Are people, in the future, going to be nervous about taking strong stands lest these someday fall out of favour and result in their expulsion? Perhaps our leaders in the future will have to be more careful to keep their noses clean, maintain links with all sides and groupings, skate skillfully

See page 8

# Enormous financial difficulties

The budget prepared by the Finance Committee, and adopted unanimously, brought out the enormous financial difficulties that the organization faces given the debts accumulated in the past. This huge financial burden is due mainly to the incorrect conceptions of the (former) leaders of the WCP on how to manage financial affairs. The situation was not made any easier by the fact that the political crisis within the organization had a devastating effect on the last fundraising campaign.

As a result of the financial errors committed in the past, a number of individuals, including members and former members who have given years of service to the organization, are now in serious difficulty. In an effort to provide some protection for these people, a special support fund was created by the Quebec District Conference which took place last December, and this decision was later endorsed by the congress.

As of now, however, despite the scale of nearly everything that the organization owned, and the fact that 89% of all money being received by the organization is going into the support fund, there is still not enough to cover the debts left over from the past.

We consider it our collective political responsibility to ensure that all such obligations are met and that the legitimate claims of each of the individuals involved are properly satisfied. For this purpose, extra donations are badly needed at this time.

From a political point of view, there are two reasons why this need is so urgent:

On the one hand, there is the very real risk that the deficit of the organization (the difference between the value of its assets and that of its debts) will end up being borne by its former employees, most of whom are women who have no previous experience in the job market. In political terms, this is serious enough in itself.

On the other hand, some members of the organization are having to spend large amounts of time and energy in dealing with this situation. This amounts to an expenditure of human resources which is of little or no value in terms of helping to bring about the political consolidation

which the organization so badly needs in its present fragile condition, in light of its continuing political crisis and the organizational, ideological, and political weaknesses that go along with it. These obligations left over from the past, must be dealt with quickly and correctly, so that the organization can turn its full attention to rebuilding and working toward the future.

For these reasons, we are now making an appeal to all those willing to make donations to the support fund. Contributions can be sent to the Special Support Committee.

Up until recently, The Forge did not have sufficient funds to allow it to publish. The current issue was produced thanks to a special fund established for this purpose. Until such time as the financial situation improves and stabilizes, we expect

The Forge to be published on a monthly basis, in the rather modest format that you are now looking at.

We remain fully convinced that a press serving the interests of working people and of the other oppressed groups in the country is a necessity. This press is also important, especially in the present period, as a means of giving of our own debates and of exchanging with other progressive groups and individuals.

In order to ensure that the newspaper is able to continue, we are asking for contributions of any kind. Financial survival is obviously one of the most important considerations, and it is expected that monthly publication between now and the time of the next Congress will require about \$15,000. We'll have more on this situation in future issues.

## ...Expulsion

Cont'd from page 7

around controversy and learn to dippy doodle agilely and avoid getting their asses caught in the sling.

In short the proposed suspensions smack of the worst aspects of 'inner party struggle' à la Cultural Revolution and Soviet-style purges, and can only lead to bourgeois politics at its worse.

Turfing out three or four individuals will not bring us closer to understanding the mistakes of the past. Moreover, it is a distortion of the past, creating the impression that all our past errors and problems can be laid in the lap of these three or four individuals, and that we have only to exorcize the devil and purify the organization.

Of course, it is important to look at individual responsibilities for past errors, and without question those who were instrumental in developing and elaborating our political positions and methods of functioning must bear a significant part of the responsibility for the mess we're in now.

However, the most important task now is not to assess blame but to sort out right from wrong, decide which political concepts we wish to retain and which we want to modify or throw out, and try to figure out where to go from here.

The former members of the PB can and should make their contribution to this process. And should be given the opportunity to do so.

Regardless of how 'wrong' people consider them to be, or how serious their past errors were, they should be given the opportunity to learn and change along with the rest of us.

Toronto, Rail Cell.

## Native people...

Cont'd from page 4

The mood of the accused Native people as they await their trial was summed up by one leader: "If our people are sent to jail or these attacks continue against us, we will defend ourselves. We do not want violence, all we want are the rights that have been ours since time immemorial. We are not the destroyers of fish. We are not the ones who dammed the rivers, nor did we dump pollutants into the rivers."

To support those charged and help defend Native peoples' fishing rights, send resolutions of support or to obtain more information, write to the addresses below.

Musqueam Band Office, 6370 Salish Drive, Vancouver, V6N 2C7; Native Brotherhood, care of Ed Newman, president, 788 Beatty St., Vancouver, V6B 1A2.

# Major issues women want debated

Here are the main questions women want to deal with and develop:

**Patriarchy:** The origin of women's oppression. A major question is what is the link between the women's movement and the class struggle: What link should be developed? What kind of organization do we need— a women's party? What autonomous structures within a mixed party? Should there be women's structures on all matters or on questions specific to women? Can we work with men? If yes, what measures must be taken to ensure women's emancipation?

**Private life:** At the women's caucus at the congress, one delegate brought up the question of private life, and the necessity of a committee to deal with complaints concerning this question (eg. beatings or verbal abuse of women). Many women still do not dare bring up their private life in public.

**Abolition of the family:** I brought up this point, because I am convinced that it is in some ways the key to male-female relations. As well, a good part of our demands depend upon our positions on the family.

**Violence against women:** The final and not the least form of chauvinism. It is very clear that chauvinism must be directly dealt with by men. As long as men don't take up their fight against their chauvinist conceptions, I remain extremely skeptical about the possibilities of working together. It isn't up to women to fight against

chauvinism, it's up to men. They should meet together and discuss their behavior. There are books on the subject, but I think that the main thing is that the attitude towards chauvinism should change.

We must all develop new ways of relating. Women should learn to de-colonize themselves, and men should learn to give up their colonizing attitude.

Simone

## National minorities' concerns

A striking feature of the Congress was the active role played by the national minorities caucus. This was perhaps the first time that Native people, Acadians, Franco-Ontarians and immigrants had met together on a revolutionary basis to discuss the crisis in the WCP and the different situations within their own national minorities.

Caucus members were clear on the need to fight all forms of great nation chauvinism, including Québécois great nation chauvinism. This element came as something of a surprise to many members, particularly québécois who had seen themselves as immune to chauvinism towards national minorities.

In recent months the WCP had in fact held a meeting of national minority members. But the meeting was not really run by them, but rather by the leadership: they talked to us about our oppression and how we should fight it.

The caucus was a motive force at

the Congress. It took a unanimous position in favour of maintaining an organization and discarding the old wrong lines and methods of the WCP. Because of the role it played several minority nationality members were elected to the new leadership.

The caucus called on the organization to convene a conference of the national minorities within three months to discuss a number of questions such as the definition of a nation, the question of «reserves» in the revolution, economic development and backwardness, etc. Members also want to discuss our attitude to the English Canadian nation, to examine the various forms of chauvinism and racism that have existed within and outside our ranks, and similar questions.

One idea that has emerged very clearly from the caucus is that the national and immigrant movements have their own dynamic, they will not accept being considered as reserves, but are independent and integral components of the revolution.

## Common Front...

Cont. from page 3

been going through a period of debate, and has intervened little in the struggle apart from a few declarations to the press and some recent activity to support the repeal of law 111.

No organized left-wing political force was able to carry out necessary education, a force union militants could have counted on. No socialist program was proposed and no autonomous workers' political organization existed.

This lack of a political alternative was a great help to the PQ, contributing as it did to the confusion and hesitation of some militants, who were afraid to carry their struggle out to the end for fear that the PQ government might fall only to be replaced by

the Liberals. The labour movement was unable to organize independent political action of its own.

## THE FUTURE

Where is the Quebec labour movement today? The struggle is far from over. The fight against laws 111, 105 and 70 should and will continue. But how should this be done? Many activists are asking how the union movement should be reoriented.

We can expect the union leaders to come back to the fore with their plans for collaboration: summit meetings with government and employers, national negotiations, solidarity funds, and so on. As before, they will pretend that negotiations are possible with the government in this crisis

period! This position comes down to begging the government for scraps, and it can only lead to setbacks and concessions, to "dealing away" workers' rights.

What is the unions job? Defending workers or collaborating with government? Is paying fines all the unions can look forward to for the next three years?

"It's hardly the time to collaborate with a government that has just declared war on us," in the words of Honoré Jean, a teacher at Vieux-Montréal junior college. "On the contrary, we should be reorganizing to defeat laws 70, 105 and 111 and, if necessary, defeat the PQ along with them."

Cécile Tremblay, a union activist at

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**Viewpoint...**

Cont. from page 1

ment and the Québec national question. Confronted by this situation, the members of the old leadership either resigned or were totally incapable of organizing the debates following the criticisms of the rank-and-file. In this context of paralysis more than half the members (two-thirds in Québec, the large majority of women and workers) left the WCP in Sept. 82 and following the congress in Jan. 83.

Forge readers will find in this issue complete coverage of the congress. But before going on, it is essential to state clearly in our view the political crisis is far from over. The major questions and contradictions which led to the breakup of the WCP continue to be present among us.

Let us be clear. Those who decided to continue consider themselves at present a modest organization of revolutionary militants. If for our part we are continuing to be active it is because we are in agreement with the Marxist ideological basis of unity as affirmed at the congress, and because we believe that the majority of members remaining are able to contribute to a revolutionary transformation of our society.

One of our tasks, that we understand as part of our responsibilities, is to draw vital lessons from our experience of the past seven years. We wish to advance, on the one hand through a break with the past, and on the other

hand, towards progressive answers for the future. This task will be difficult because, even if the WCP no longer exists, the dogmatic and Stalinist conceptions remain to different degrees depending on the persons and political line. We realize that we are only at the beginning of the process and that we will not be able to go very far without the help of other revolutionary militants, feminists, rank-and-file trade unionists and large numbers of ex-members of the WCP.

We do not wish to be trapped by the past. Above all, we wish to put forward questions for the future including: in this period of ferocious attacks of the bourgeoisie against our rights, how to advance with the maximum of people with revolutionary goals? What strategy will correctly unite the struggle for political power of the nationalities, in particular the Québec nation, and the struggle for the fundamental interests of the working class? How can different forces on the left develop and be united? How can the working class play a predominant role in a revolutionary organization? How does feminism radically question our concept of power and organization in the struggle for socialism?

It is in this context of deep questioning and debate linked with our militant practice and that of other forces that we publish *The Forge*.

For our part, we wish to resolve as quickly as possible the question of

a Québec Forge bureau with Québecois journalists, and elected representatives of the District of Québec. The present situation, with the majority of journalists being English-speaking Montrealers, must change rapidly.

Also we do not foresee a newspaper following "a line", but a paper open to contributions from other groups and individuals on the left. The articles should be signed and represent the views of their authors and the tendencies they represent, whether they are members or not.

To proceed in this frame of mind will be to contribute in a modest fashion to the emergence of common publications and exchanges with the Québec and Canadian left, therefore we believe that it is time for "a correct line" and Stalinist conceptions of Marxism to be rejected. Each movement, group, union, etc., must bring a part of the solution to the cancer of capitalism.

Our newspaper and our organization must reflect the different components of our society. For too long, we defined ourselves in opposition to those forces and we remained closed within ourselves. We said we were Marxists but we proceeded in an anti-Marxist manner.

This issue of *The Forge* does not pretend to be the beginning of new times. This first issue in 1983 is a reflection of where we are, no more, no less.

Donald Cuccioletta, Bernard Normand

Cont. from page 9

Montreal's Notre-Dame hospital, says: "We should oppose this class collaboration with a position that defends the interests of the working class. To do this we'll have to build a strong opposition movement within the unions."

Such opposition forces have a lot of work before them. They must develop a new union strategy that puts forward a solid working-class perspective while recognizing the reality of the economic crisis. They must determine what areas of struggle are best suited for winning both economic victories and political gains, including a better understanding of the system we live in and the need to change it. They will have to oppose ruling-class propaganda, and build class unity against inter-union divisions. They will have to fight for a radical improvement in union democracy (for example, control by the rank and file and

respect by the leaders of their mandates) and for a renewal of the union leadership. They will be faced with the need for independent political action.

In the short term, the aim should be to get the labour movement involved politically. This would include greater attention to the struggle of the unemployed, including the fight against evictions and repossessions, and the march of unemployed planned for this spring. It would include the struggle of women against rape and sexual harassment, against discrimination and chauvinism. It would include fighting alongside all Québécois working people against national oppression. In all these cases it will be important to build stronger links with various popular organizations with the aim of establishing an anti-capitalist united front that can wage the political offensive for a better society.

"We will have to build a political

alternative," continues Tremblay. "Inside the unions this means developing a program of struggle for the right to health care and education, for example. Building a political alternative could mean favouring independent worker's candidates in elections. Some people are asking whether unity of the left could be encouraged through left-wing coalitions. Whatever the answers, we have to get involved in the debate over the creation of a workers political party."

**Pornography...**

Cont. from page 14

drugs and chemical products, monitors construction and firearms, in spite of the inconvenience this may cause to individuals.

In the area of pornography, as in so many others, we cannot leave regu-

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## Reply...

Cont. from page 1

Marxist parties, etc.

Given our errors and the problems of the international movement, the crisis was bound to explode sooner or later in the party. But we do not think that this crisis, profound as it is, should have naturally or inevitably led to the collapse of the WCP, as Donald and Bernard imply.

What brought about our demise was the **response or attitude** to the crisis. Many revolutionary parties have made errors whose consequences are far worse than ours and survived to tell the tale. In the thirties, the Chinese Communist Party lost 90 percent of its members killed due to fundamental errors. The disaster raised far-reaching questions about the applicability of Marxism to the very different conditions of feudal and colonial China. Nevertheless, the attitude of Mao Zedong was not to blame Marxism and throw in the towel. He struggled to make a sum up of both the **negative** and **positive** lessons of the Chinese revolution, spurring the development of Marxism and preparing the way for the liberation of one quarter of humanity.

Mao's scientific attitude stands in sharp contrast to the response within the WCP. At the risk of simplifying a complex dynamic to space limitations, suffice it to say that one group of the party's leadership failed to understand the depth of the crisis and break with the errors for which they were in good measure responsible. Meanwhile, another leadership group, under the slogan "all power to the rank-and-file",

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lation up to market place mechanisms. The market and the quest for profit does not take into account the harm than the production and distribution of any goods can cause to non-consumers, nor does it take into account the harm which may be caused to consumers themselves or to society as a whole."

Under the proposed Quebec legislation Bill 109 on cinema and video, the powers of the existing cinema surveillance board would be all but eliminated. The Common Front is demanding on the contrary that the board's powers be widened within a new mandate of democratic control.

played on the real problems and anger of members to accentuate the bedum, in the party, and then abandoned ship crying liquidate the "100 percent reactionary", "fascist" WCP.

In the complete organizational breakdown that was greatly aggravated by the response of the leadership factions, genuine democratic debate was impossible and many members left, in many cases frustrated and fed up with the chaos and hysteria, while others left rejecting the WCP.

Following the party congress, those who remain are committed to start the debate to clarify the different options for the future. The outcome of this debate depends in large measure on the sum up of the history of the WCP. In this regard, we feel that Donald and Bernard's exclusive emphasis on the errors of the WCP and making a complete "rupture with the past" is dangerously unilateral to say the least. Is there nothing positive that can be the starting point to rebuild a revolutionary organization? If our Marxist analysis of the major contradictions in Canadian society and in the world are so completely erroneous and our work in the labour movement so negative, how come the WCP attracted more men and women workers than any socialist group since the CP in the thirties?

It is not a question of whitewashing our grave mistakes, but of taking a dialectical materialist approach to the WCP. If we don't, we will end up throwing away Marxism along with what is anti-Marxist.

We also do not believe that making a "rupture" with the past means we should turn **The Forge** into another "left" paper, instead of a paper which is the voice of an organization with a definite political and ideological standpoint which we hope will come out of the next congress in six months time. (Such a common standpoint is clearly not possible during this transitional period.)

To break with the sectarian, monolithic attitudes of the past we fully agree that the paper must be open to a broad range of opinions of progressives. This is a vital element to confront ideas and develop orientations for the future. But at the same time, we still hold strongly to the view that **The Forge** must play its role as the expression of a particular political outlook, a Marxist-Leninist current within the left.

We do no service to the revolution

ary movement to pretend we are other than that, and our readers come to the paper precisely because that is what we have to offer: news, debates, yes, but also the analyses and orientations our organization has to offer to the struggle. At the same time, **The Forge** must respect the autonomy of Quebec, which means right away working to develop a Quebecois **Forge** team and eventually a separate edition of the paper for Québec.

Despite our errors and our pretentious claims to hold a monopoly of the truth in the past, we do not agree with Donald and Bernard that it is not possible to use ML to develop a line that proves **correct in practice**. Making a rupture with the past does not imply for us adopting the reformist view that "each movement, group, union, etc., must bring a part of the solution to the cancer of capitalism", as Donald and Bernard put forward.

Whatever the precious contributions and advanced ideas generated by the various components of the left, many of which we have often refused to recognize, they do not and cannot spontaneously generate a coherent revolutionary strategy. Saying this in no sense means we are against taking part in coalitions or parties of the left that we hope will develop on the left in Québec or elsewhere.

We recognize the criticism of feminists and other progressives that ML is outdated on some issues, poorly applied, wrong or partly wrong on other questions. Instead of assimilating and synthesizing new revolutionary ideas to develop Marxism to meet the conditions of our time (the approach taken by Marx, Lenin, Mao and others), we tended to look backwards and uncritically and mechanically accept "models" with the definitive answers.

Nevertheless, while struggling to break with our errors, we still believe that Marxism-Leninism overall provides the most scientific approach to making revolution. We also think that the key to dealing with Marxism-Leninism's problems is to be found within the best traditions of ML itself.

In conclusion, we wish to announce that ML caucuses have been formed in various regions, made up of members who want to develop clear positions on our future.

Phil Evans, Richard Desrosiers, Elise, Michèle Drotton, Pierre Fontaine, Pat Alexander, Daniel Morel, Jack.

## Pressure on U.S.

# World peace movement

BY PHIL EVANS

Anti-nuclear activists of the Green Party have invaded the West German parliament, this time not with placards, but to claim 27 seats won in the recent elections.

The election of the Greens is one indication of the growing impact of the European peace movement and its bid to stop deployment of a new generation of Cruise and Pershing 11 missiles, a campaign that is shaking even America's staunchest NATO allies.

Beyond the furor over Euromissiles, the peace movement has made the larger issue of the nuclear arms race the focus of a major public debate on both sides of the Atlantic.

### 'GREENS IN, ROCKETS OUT'

The grass-roots Green Party made Euromissiles a central issue of the campaign. Both superpowers were concerned enough about the outcome to intervene openly on behalf of their respective candidates, Moscow backed the hapless Social Democrats while U.S. President Ronald Reagan touted the re-election of Christian Democratic Chancellor Helmut Kohl as a vote of confidence in NATO and plans to install Cruise and Pershing II missiles in West Germany starting in December this year.

But even with the pro-American Kohl in power, the NATO rockets still face a rocky road. Many analysts argue that the decisive issue in the Christian Democrat victory was not a vote for Euromissiles but over the economic crisis, with the Social Democrats, who held power for the past decade, taking the rap for the record 2.5 million unemployed.

On the issue of Euromissiles, polls show 60 percent of West Germans are against their deployment, and this view is shared by a majority of Kohl's Christian Democrat supporters. Under pressure to counter the growing sympathy for the anti-nuclear stand of the Greens, Kohl was forced to backtrack on earlier wholehearted support for Reagan's "Zero Option" during the campaign. And immediately after the elections, Bonn

launched a diplomatic campaign to pressure Washington to show flexibility in its negotiations for an accord with the Soviets on medium-range missiles.

To take the heat off, Kohl like other European leaders (including Reagan's closest ally British prime minister Margaret Thatcher) desperately want some kind of agreement with the Kremlin that would mean at least part of the 572 Cruise and Pershings would not have to be sited. Talks are blocked, they feel, because of Reagan's refusal to negotiate seriously anything but a total withdrawal of all Soviet medium-range rockets from Europe (SS-20 and SS-5), in return for which the U.S. would drop plans to install its new missiles.

As many commentators have pointed out, if Reagan persists in his hardline approach and no agreement is reached before the December D-Day for deployment, he will have driven another wedge into the already cracking Atlantic Alliance.

### REAGAN'S NEW DEFENCE BUDGET

Reagan's new 84 budget made it clear he is sticking to his guns. Despite the worst economic slump since the thirties with some 12 million Americans out of work and a deficit close to \$200 billion. Reagan upped the defense budget by another \$25 billion with a projected spending of \$1.8 trillion over the next four years.

To pay for the biggest military buildup since the last world war, Reagan is taking yet another whack at the poor, cutting back spending on jobs, welfare and education six to nine percent. The money will be spread among the contractors of the military-industrial complex that employs one-fifth of all American scientists and engineers and consumes one-third of all funds for research and development.

However the budget was no sooner presented to Congress than it was under attack. Politicians under pressure from constituents increasingly concerned by Reagan's buildup have already pushed aside Reagan's "densepack" plan to deploy the MX missile



in Wyoming.

The burgeoning peace movement that mounted a million-strong protest against nuclear weapons in New York last June and won nuclear freeze referendums in 9 states, has now been joined by Catholic bishops who roundly condemned war as immoral. Opinion surveys show that the so-called "foreign policy consensus" to rearm America which Reagan exploited to win power, is now breaking down. The nuclear freeze option which came within two votes of winning a majority in the House of Representatives last August is expected to be successful in an upcoming vote.

Within the American establishment opposition to Reagan's policies

## growing

are mounting. George Kennan, former architect of U.S. foreign policy has charged Reagan is acting as if the U.S. were "already in a state of undeclared war with the Soviets, a policy that anticipates a real war now considered inevitable."

While Reagan takes most of the flack for his military buildup, Soviet leader Andropov has been skillfully scoring points, appearing flexible with his assorted disarmament proposals.

It is understandable that the peace movement should focus on Reagan's drive for strategic superiority. The Euromissiles, the MX, and now the ultra-sophisticated Stealth cruise missile currently being developed, all represent a qualitative new step in the arms race, bound to fuel a Soviet counter buildup, pushing us one more step towards a global holocaust.

However, within the peace movement there is much disagreement about the source of the war danger, and consequently, the kind of disarmament needed.

Several currents favour bilateral or disarmament starting with the two superpowers, demanding that the Soviet SS-20 missiles, with their first-strike capability, also be scrapped.

Others like the Greens argue that by getting rid of all nuclear weapons from German soil without demanding a reciprocal response from the Soviets, they will protect their country from nuclear war. They also demand that Germany should withdraw from NATO without proposing any alternative defense policy except the formation of guerilla units to repel a possible Warsaw Pact attack.

The Greens like many peace activists are understandably skeptical about Pentagon exaggeration of Soviet military superiority, but does that mean that the Soviet Union does not pose a dangerous threat to peace in Europe and the world?

As the debate within the peace movement unfolds, it would be worthwhile remembering Moscow's refusal to publish details of its military budget and the weapons and forces it has. If the Soviets are behind the U.S. what do they have to hide?

# Ottawa determined to test cruise

by Patrick Foley

Early in February, the Trudeau government signed an umbrella agreement with the U.S. which could allow unarmed Cruise missiles to be tested over Alberta.

Despite the cry of outrage mounted over the last year by thousands of Canadians - leaders of the six major Christian denominations, scientists, doctors, artists, workers, women's organizations and even an impressive collection of MPs from every party - the government seems determined to go ahead with the tests.

## GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO NATO STRATEGY

The reasons for the government's hard-line position can be surmised from a talk delivered by Defense Minister Gilles Lamontagne to the Conference of Defense Associations in January.

Lamontagne explained Canada's "Full support" for the NATO decision

to deploy the Cruise and Pershing 2 missiles in Europe and its commitment to NATO's strategy of a "flexible response to meet any aggression with the degree of force needed to stop it."

"Although the initial NATO response to a conventional attack could well remain at the conventional level, if necessary to stop aggression NATO's strategy leaves open the door for an escalation of response to the nuclear level."

Threatened by superior Soviet conventional forces in Europe, NATO plans a possible nuclear response to an attack by Soviet tank forces.

Gordon Edwards, Chairman of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility made the conclusion, "That is what the cruise missile and the Pershing 2 missile are designed for: to blur the distinction between conventional war and nuclear war. If these missiles are ever to be used the chances are great that nuclear war will engulf the entire planet."

# Marches planned

Peace activists are saying that if the government allows the Cruise tests to go ahead it will represent a clear break with Canada's past commitment to playing a "non-nuclear role in NATO." In fact many think that perhaps that is why Reagan is pressing Trudeau to allow the tests on Canadian soil. After engaging in such tests, what is to stop Canada from increasing its role in the production of parts for nuclear weapons and engaging in further nuclear weapons tests

And how could Trudeau reasonably return to the United Nations to talk about his "strategy of suffocation" and the banning of the testing of

new and more deadly nuclear weapons?

Although in his speech Lamontagne accused the peace movement of possibly increasing the war risk, peace activists have no intention of toning down their opposition to the Cruise tests or their campaign for a nuclear freeze.

Plans are underway for a Women's March for Peace on Mother's Day, May 8, 1983 on Parliament Hill. And a call has been launched by the Alliance for Non-Violent Action to build-up for massive Canadian participation in an International day of protest slated for next October 22.

## WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

**Women against pornography****How to fight!**

By Marie Boti

Women's groups across the country were stirred into action recently when pay TV brought pornography into our living rooms. Telegrams and petitions representing three million Canadian women were sent to the government demanding that Playboy programming be blocked.

Protests such as these have made pornography an issue of public debate, obliging Canadians to re-examine their attitudes to this form of so-called "adult entertainment."

Pornography is one of the most painful issues confronting feminists, because of the hate and degradation of women involved. It represents a powerful force, as part of the dominant anti-woman ideology in our society, and because it is a \$500 million industry in Canada, and a \$5 billion industry in the US.

Should pornography be censored? Opinions differ both among the public at large and within the feminist movement itself.

**Pornography is harmful**

When protests against Playboy programming on Pay TV began early this year, many people saw it as a tempest in a teacup: a do over relatively harmless adult entertainment.

Some of this misconception was dissipated when a group of Ottawa programmers already available in the US - and squirmed in their seats at scenes of violence and rape. These were not overly-sensitive viewers, but the same people who tittered in the House of Commons when the subject of wife-beating came up.

Playboy magazine itself is not harmless entertainment.

Women are photographed spread-eagled across the pages, genitalia exposed, and not uncommonly, in poses suggestive of whippings. This is not to mention the pinups of pubescent girls and the jokes and cartoon on rape and incest.

All this fits the feminist definition

of pornography: the representation of sexual behavior which gives a degrading and demeaning portrayal of the human female as a mere object to be exploited and manipulated sexually.

The wide distribution of images such as the above, (Playboy is one of the widest-circulating magazines in the world) is bound to influence their readers' perception of female sexuality.

Even adolescents are affected. School nurses have remarked that adolescents exposed to pornography are losing their sense of 'normality'. They say that it is not uncommon for young boys to ask, for example, whether girls have to be beaten or raped to reach orgasm. (From the Quebec government's *Gazette des Femmes* October 1982).

**Freedom of choice**

Some say that pornography should be available for those who want it that it is a question of freedom of choice.

The question is, where does the right to freedom of choice for one person end, and the rights of another begin? The pornographer's right to freedom of speech undercuts women's right to freedom from danger, says Lise Dunnigan.

"The mass of pornographic material which presents coercion and torture as an appropriate means for men to obtain sexual satisfaction, or as an appropriate response to women's sexual needs, constitutes an incitement to crime; it contributes to forming a social climate which undermines the safety of women in general." ("La pornographie et l'érotisation de la violence." a study by the Quebec Council on the Status of Women, November, 1981)

Bonnie Klein, one of the producers of the anti-porn film *Not a Love Story* told the McGill student newspaper: "What is pornography is pretty clear. It is stuff that is not being put out for any other than commercial reasons. It's not people expressing a political point of view, which is what freedom

of choice is originally about, and it's not people expressing their own eroticism." Feminists are not against eroticism, or against sexual stimulation in films or other media. What they cannot accept, is the degradation of women in these exercises.

**Censorship**

When it comes down to censorship, however, not all feminists agree. Some feel that censorship would be used against women, rather than to protect them.

Robin Morgan, a well-known US feminist writing in the excellent collection *Take Back the Night*, says: "a phallogocentric culture is more likely to begin its purges with books on pelvic self-examination for women...nor do I place much trust in a male-run judiciary," she says.

Feminists have good reason to be wary. In the US, the book on Female health, *Our Bodies Ourselves* banned in some states, and here in Canada, *Not a Love Story* was banned in Ontario.

Evidence such as this leads some feminists to believe it is best to circumvent censorship, and to concentrate on hurting the purveyors instead. In Ontario and Quebec, feminists have launched a harassment campaign against Eaton's, one of the main shareholders of First Choice, the Playboy channel.

Diana Bronson, of Montreal's Feminist Coalition against Pornography, believes that unless there is some form of state regulation, women will be obliged to wage countless individual battles. "We could take one producer to court, but there would be nothing to stop him from making new porn movies or publications."

Bronson agrees, however, that present methods of censorship do not inspire confidence. "Censors are not answerable to anyone. We need some power of recall of these people, and at least men-women parity on boards."

Feminists like Bronson speak of democratic control, rather than censorship per se.

"Democratic control is already exercised through a number of means: legislation, regulation, and surveillance boards," according to the Common Front Against Pornography's brief on Bill 109.

"Our country has given itself laws against racism, discrimination, libel; it limits the freedom of polluters, drug dealers, automobile drivers and many others. The state oversees the production and distribution of food,