

Our day in appeals court— Freeway Hall defendants demand constitutional protections

At last! On September 29, after four grueling years, the beleaguered Freeway Hall Case defendants were allowed to present their side of the story to a three-judge panel in the Washington state appeals court. Part of the story anyway—the part about whether the courts should compel them to turn over Freedom Socialist Party documents for outside review to satisfy an ex-member suing for return of a donation made to a party eviction fund.

The lawsuit itself is a meritless, fraudulent, red-baiting witchhunt. Richard Snedigar charges that nine individuals and the FSP swindled and "unduly influenced" him to make the gift. That's how brainwashing Bolsheviks operate, you see. But Snedigar rebutted his own charges in an oral deposition; he admitted he freely volunteered his part of the donation for a real eviction emergency.

Snedigar's deposition dynamited his case. That's when his lawyers, Michelle Pailthorp and Thomas Wampold, went fishing for constitutionally protected information, knowing good and well the defendants wouldn't hand it over. Snedigar and Co. wanted to force default and avoid having the case tried in court.

The defendants were ordered to give Snedigar FSP minutes, membership lists and financial records in 1985. They appealed and won, but then were ordered to turn over the minutes for *in camera* review by a judge who would decide how the documents could be used. They refused because *any* forced disclosure is a patent danger to the First Amendment. Privacy, free association, and free speech are dead letters if an organization can be made to open its internal life even to "neutral" outsiders. Nonetheless, during a three-year roller coaster ride in which the case was bounced from King County Superior Court to the state supreme court and back, the judiciary refused to consider the constitutional issues.

In the spring of 1987, superior court Judge Warren Chan acknowledged that the issues should be heard, but refused to hear them—and then found the defendants in default for their failure to surrender the minutes. Chan

awarded the case to Snedigar without a trial and ordered the defendants to pay \$42,139, the amount of the original \$22,500 gift plus interest.

Worse soon followed. A collection attempt by Snedigar's lawyers led to contempt charges and jail sentences against defendant Clara Fraser and defendant/attorneys Valerie Carlson and Frederick Hyde, three chief defense strategists, for refusing to comply with probes into their personal finances. In January 1988, the McCarthy clones tried to shatter defense efforts by placing Carlson's law practice in receivership.

Dark days, but then, a change in the weather. The receivership was flatly denied in February. In April, defendant Guerry Hoddersen and her sister Heidi Durham put up their home equity as bond in order to stay collection. The contempt charges and jail terms were dropped.

A manifestly unfair arrangement. But it did protect the defendants from continued persecution by Snedigar's bloodhounds.

The way was now paved for appeal of the minutes order and the default.

The power of public support.

There's one point to stress in this tale of defense against witchhunting greed: the tremendous international support in the labor and social movements and among writers, artists, intellectuals, journalists, lawyers and civil libertarians.

Without this support, the defendants couldn't win. They certainly can't count on an impartial judiciary; the fact that Snedigar's case wasn't laughed out of the court after he himself destroyed it in deposition bespeaks a strong anti-socialist bias among judges.

Of course, the judiciary are pillars of capitalist order. But by this token they're alert to the political winds. They can be moved, to a point, by strongly expressed public sentiment.

The defendants are depending on a gale of outrage to make the courts think twice about obliterating the FSP's rights. That's why, from the beginning, they have educated about the implications of the case for everyone's constitutional liberties, linked it to attacks on other organizations, and enlisted the help of community activists in strategizing, publicizing, petitioning judges, attending court, and demonstrating against the jail sentences and receivership bid.

The gale is continuing to gather force. Recent additions to the hundreds of case endorsers include internationally acclaimed writer Adrienne Rich; the Australian socialist group Workers Revolution and the Melbourne branches of Socialist Action and International Socialists; and the Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression, the group defending the Hartford 15, Puerto Rican nationalists framed on bank robbery charges.

The tremendous response has produced results. Judges began to pay lip service to the constitutional issues, even as they shunted the case quickly to other courts. The April bond settlement indicated strong judicial unease over the ugly publicity receivership had engendered.

It is the power of public mobilization that enabled the defendants to clear the path to appeal.

D-Day. September 29. The Washington State Court of Appeals. Hearing the arguments are Judge H. Joseph Coleman, presiding, and Judges Robert W. Winsor and George H. Revelle.

Carlson opened, recounting how Snedigar had launched a political fishing expedition which the lower courts had wrongly gone along with. The courts, she said, should have applied criteria developed by the U.S. Supreme Court for cases where constitutional privilege is asserted. The three-step test requires that information go to the heart of the case, that less intrusive ways of obtaining it be unavailable and that relevance be strictly weighed against possible damage to First Amendment rights.

ty to keep not only their names but their deliberations private, they would proceed to censor themselves...rather than risk having their statements turned over to political opponents, or disclosed to an arm of government—the courts, police, the FBI, etc.—for use against the organization, other individuals, or themselves, as happened repeatedly during the McCarthy era.

...The greatest threat posed by this discovery order, however, is not to the FSP but to the principle of privacy of association enshrined in the Bill of Rights. Any forced production of minutes erodes this principle and threatens the freedom of political expression which the



(From left) Attorney Daniel Hoyt Smith, attorney/defendant Valerie Carlson, case coordinator Karrie Peterson, and defendant/co-counsel Frederick Hyde.

None of these criteria, said Carlson, had been considered. The judges were clearly familiar with the case record and the constitutional test. They grilled Pailthorp on the evidence she and Wampold expected to find in the minutes. Pailthorp responded that they needed the minutes "to build a case" and that "we don't know what discovery would bring."

So much for constitutional considerations!

Judge Revelle next explored whether Snedigar's lawyers had pursued other means of seeking information. Had they, for example, contacted the office of Ivar Haglund, the man who had sought to evict the FSP from their old headquarters? Well, they had "tried," though it didn't show in the record. Nor had they attempted other discovery methods.

In questioning Carlson, the panel focused on whether there is any way to disclose the minutes to a third party without infringing on privacy rights. Coleman acknowledged that even *in camera* review could "partially compromise privacy," but was concerned that without review the relevance of the contents of the minutes couldn't be determined.

Carlson responded that the burden is on Snedigar to demonstrate relevance; the defendants have amply shown how constitutional protections apply to them.

In a document submitted in response to the judges' pre-hearing questions, co-counsel Fred Hyde had answered whether outside review is allowable:

Such disclosure by itself destroys the expectation of confidentiality...basic to the party's...survival as a dissident party. If members could not trust the par-

First Amendment was designed to protect.

Hyde strongly urged the court to set clear standards protecting the privacy rights of not only the FSP but all other voluntary organizations.

On to trial! If the appeals court rules for the FSP on the discovery question, the way is clear for trial on the "merits" of Snedigar's case.

The defendants would love nothing better. Snedigar and Co. must shudder at the thought.

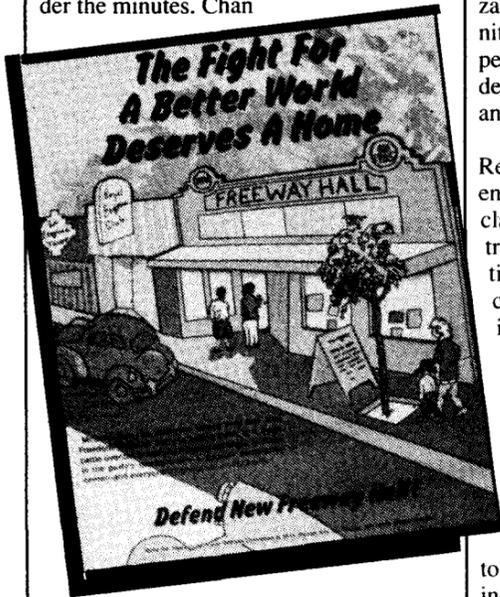
The Freeway Hall Case Defense Committee will continue to take the case public—and quite a bit of the politically active world will be tuning in.

Snedigar's pivotal claim—that the FSP "unduly influenced" him to contribute money—will be exposed as a classic McCarthyite bid to anti-communist prejudice.

The political climate has changed since Snedigar first filed charges in 1984. Because Reaganism was then nearing its peak, he dared to file. Now, in the wake of Irangate and Soviet glasnost, red-baiting has lost some punch. Moreover, angry people are organizing against the myriad assaults on democratic freedoms launched in the '80s: forced AIDS testing, drug testing, you name it. And increasingly, people consider defense of the FSP as central to their own civil liberties battles.

Exhilarating thought: this case could become the rallying point for a movement capable of smashing *all* reaction, in the courts, the streets, and everywhere! □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

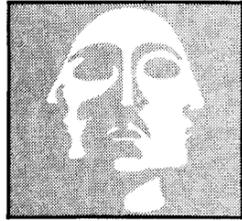


Six-color poster by Chris Brown. Silkscreen, 20" x 26". To order, send \$7.00 per poster plus \$1.50 shipping to Freeway Hall Case Defense Fund, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98118.

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Four hundred angry demonstrators confronted neo-Nazi skinheads face to face in Washington state in December. This, say the demo's organizers, is how fascism must be fought.

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the freedom socialist

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LETTERS

Thanks for FSP aid to Nicaragua

Thank you very much for your generous response to the plight of the Nicaraguan hurricane victims. The situation is really critical and your support is very much appreciated.

...the hurricane went through the whole country and there is hardly any area that was spared. The worst is probably what it did to our ecology and to all the crops that were needed both for revenue and for the sustenance of the people; therefore, recovery will take a long time to reach.

Again, thank you for caring and for your support.

Leonor de Huper
Charge d'Affaires ad interim
Nicaraguan Embassy
Washington, D.C.

Woo arbitration

After months of stalling by the University of California at Berkeley, fired lecturer Merle Woo finally had her discrimination and retaliation grievance against UC heard before an arbitrator. Three days of arbitration ended on November 17, two-and-a-half years after Woo first filed the grievance.

Backed by her union, University Council-American Federation of Teachers, Woo presented the central issues. She explained the nature of her firing: retaliation for having won reinstatement when she settled a discrimination lawsuit against UC in 1984 and won reinstatement; continuing discrimination against her because she is an outspoken Asian American lesbian, unionist, and socialist feminist leader in Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party; and a violation of her settlement agreement, which guaranteed equal treatment with that of any other visiting lecturer and consideration for reappointment.

The most telling moment of the arbitration came when UC attorney Philip Spiekerman, who negotiated Woo's settlement agreement, was

questioned by Arbitrator Leo Kanowitz. Spiekerman admitted under oath that he did not know that Woo was assigned to teach "low priority classes," as UC now claims. Kanowitz pointed out that it appeared to be an "illusory promise by the university" that Woo would be considered for future employment beyond the second year given the dead-end courses she was assigned to teach.

Kanowitz will make his ruling after getting briefs from Woo and UC, due by January 23, 1989. UC's arbitration procedure is non-binding, and the university has ten days after the arbitrator's decision to reject it.

Since the hearing was closed, letters to Kanowitz demonstrating support for Woo's rights are crucial. Write to Professor Leo Kanowitz, 1949 Yosemite Road, Berkeley, CA 94707. Send copies to Chancellor Ira Heyman, 200 California Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720 and the Merle Woo Defense Committee, 203 Arbor Street, San Francisco, CA 94131.

Donations to keep us going also can be sent to the address above.
Nancy Kato, Coordinator
Merle Woo Defense Committee
San Francisco, California

Feminists rip into Operation Rescue

At 5:30 a.m., I and 35 other abortion rights activists linked arms in front of a Sunnyvale, California women's clinic as 300 rightwingers directed by men with walkie-talkies violently assaulted our line and police stood by. This was "National Rescue Day," October 29, when anti-abortionists launched sneak attacks to close down clinics in 30 cities around the country.

Fanatics with Operation Rescue (OR), the fundamentalist anti-abortion group orchestrating this holy war, have gathered widespread media attention by proclaiming themselves "civil rights" crusaders in the tradition of Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr.—a claim that stretches the limits of hypocrisy. These same people have been welcome and enthusiastic guests on "Race and Reason," the Ku Klux Klan's cable TV show.

Feminist response to clinic sieges is rapidly growing. From OR's first raid last May, when the New York Pro-Choice Coalition greeted them with a militant rally 1500 strong, abortion rights forces have steadily counter-organized.

On October 29, the Bay Area Coalition Against Operation Rescue ringed 12 clinics with feminists and dispatched over 200 people to the Sunnyvale clinic. At a southern California clinic, an ad hoc coalition led a demonstration of over 100 in anticipation of an anti-abortion incursion. Reproductive rights supporters have also mobilized in New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Georgia, and Washington.

The cops typically treat OR with kid gloves. Not so with clinic defenders. In September, for example, three feminists—Kathy Seeley, Radical Women Organizer Roanne Hindin and myself—were arrested at an OR rally for "failure to disperse," even though we were attempting to leave the site! The trumped-up charges were dropped only after 3000 people signed petitions and dozens more wrote letters decrying the disparate treatment we had received.

OR is continuing its crusade at the clinics, while their allies in government are simultaneously seeking to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court decision guaranteeing abortion rights.

Let them try their worst. We're organizing and fighting back and they're not going to get away with it!

Kass McMahon
San Francisco, California

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

Dateline Australia

Students insist: "Flunk the Graduate Tax!"

Student activists are back out in force, and their message is loud and clear: education is for all, not just the rich.

Since April 1988, when the Federal government proposed a devastating new tax on higher education, students have held mass demonstrations, occupied campus administration buildings and the Melbourne Stock Exchange, and even sent the Education Minister into hiding after a militant occupation at one of his speaking engagements in Melbourne's workingclass suburbs.

Subsidizing the rich. The growing outrage stems from the Australian Labor Party (ALP) government's decision to impose a "Graduate Tax" on students in virtually all higher education courses. Beginning in 1989, students entering or re-enrolling in higher education courses automatically incur a tax debt of between \$4,500 and \$18,000. Those wealthy enough to pay the tax up front get a 40 percent discount. For all others, payments begin the moment a former student's income reaches \$21,500 per year.

The "Graduate Tax" must be paid whether or not a student ever graduates! And no matter what graduates' incomes are, all pay the same amount.

Hence a graduate corporate lawyer earning \$80,000 per year could pay off a \$6,000 tax debit within four years, but a graduate lawyer who works for a community organization and earns \$25,000 per year could spend 12 years paying off the same \$6,000 debit. The tax would represent 7.5 percent of the corporate lawyer's income, but a massive 24 percent of the community lawyer's income.

Attacks against public education have increased since the early '70s, when the Whitlam ALP government made big reforms such as the elimination of university tuition fees. In 1987, students were slugged with a so-called "administrative fee," and many education institutions face forced amalgamations.

By the year 2001, the Labor government expects the Graduate Tax to raise \$625 million a year—from those who can least afford it. Though the government cites current "hard economic times" as the reason for the tax, it has cut public education funding from 1.36 percent to .99 percent of the Gross National Product since 1975—while increasing grants to private, mainly religious schools by a massive 123 percent in real terms over the last ten years!

Labor's "dead wood." Former Education Minister John Dawkins described his proposal to restructure education in the terminology now standard for Laborites. It was necessary, he asserted, to "clear out the dead wood from the education system, to make the country more competitive on the world market by increasing skills which increase productivity."

Translation: squeeze the education workers and turn higher education into a production line for narrowly trained, regimented fodder in the speed-up world of the high-tech "sunrise" industries and service sector.

Funds to liberal and humanities courses are to be restricted, as are education, welfare, and related studies. But it is precisely these areas that open up higher education to migrants, Aborigines, and disabled people in Australia, and it is these fields in which women are concentrated.

In education, as in everything else, every penny counts for most people. When university fees were abolished in 1974, women's participation in higher education increased by 115 percent, and participation from the poorest of the working class rose by 15 percent. The administrative charge

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Testing the limits of glasnost: Trotsky's inspiring comeback

Front-page headlines in the Western press trumpeting Leon Trotsky's rehabilitation in the Soviet Union are off the mark.

Trotsky has been *semi*-rehabilitated, sort of. *Pravda* now treats him as a human figure, not a demon, and that's progress. But the Soviet organ of Truth still brands him as an egomaniacal schemer whose "anti-Soviet" views justified his expulsion from the world Communist movement in the '20s.

On September 9, *Pravda* published excerpts from a book by General D. Volkogonov that appears to proclaim the definitive Gorbachevite line on Trotsky and Stalin. The struggle between the two, says the general, reflected their "caesarite" ambitions—not an iota of political principle was involved. Well, maybe a shred: Stalin did defend socialism, albeit in a "distorted, vulgar and dogmatic way," against Trotsky.

Not that Stalin wasn't a bad guy. He "perpetrated crimes and errors...which cannot be forgiven." But it turns out that this is Trotsky's fault, too. Trotsky's ambition, you see, turned people off and paved the way for Stalin's victory. Moreover, the dictator's forced collectivization of agriculture in the '30s, with all the attendant slaughter and misery, was merely a leaf stolen from Trotsky's proposed industrialization plan in the '20s.

Even Stalin wouldn't quibble too loudly with the conclusion. Trotsky was a basic nogoodnik, and to hell with him.

Thanks a lot for nothing, Gorbachev.

The irony of it all. Why, in the land of glasnost, where anti-bureaucratism is all the rage, is bureaucracy's archenemy Trotsky still slandered in near-Stalinist terms?

Because real rehabilitation is incompatible with Gorbachev's vision of progress. The Soviet premier would rather have left Trotsky buried. But glasnost means openness, the Soviet people are demanding just that, and he hadn't the option. Ergo the hatchet job.

Glasnost was pressured by the workers' pent-up hatred for the bureaucracy that is choking society, and by Soviet slippage in the international arena. It's obvious to all that the evil is rooted in the shrouded Soviet past; hence the escalating call for a thorough uncovering of Soviet history and coming to terms with the lies and slander against Trotsky.

Are there not salient lessons to be learned in re-examining the life of the Devil in Stalinist iconography?

Trotsky fought unremittingly against Stalin's pernicious notion that socialism could be built in the Soviet Union alone, through peaceful coexistence with Western imperialism. Trotsky sought planned industrialization on the basis of workers' democracy, and an end to the monolithic Communist Party/police rule imposed by Stalin. These bedrock issues formed the nexus of the anti-bureaucratic struggle in the '20s and '30s—and they do so today.

Lessons indeed! Gorbachev would rather take poison.

The Soviet premier, like Stalin, is an avowed believer in single-state socialism. While he would like to excise the conservatives from the ruling caste, he has no intention of excising the bureaucracy from Soviet life, as he made clear by holding firm against any direct challenge to the bureaucracy's grip on state power at the CPSU conference in Moscow in June. The ballyhooed "re-empowerment" of regional soviets—the workers' coun-

cils which constituted the real basis of state power in Lenin's time—was an empty gesture, since the CP remains the sole maker of state policy.

Note the irony of Gorbachev's position. The current restructuring, aimed at reviving the moribund economy through widespread market incentives, is a serious attempt to blast the USSR out of near-terminal stagnation. The Soviet premier has fingered bureaucratism as the problem and uses glasnost to bludgeon the stand-pat conservatives. But Gorbachev wants to reform the bureaucracy,

carried too far, they will act like a dissolving acid on planning, and thereby on the foundations of the state.

Meanwhile, his explicit rejection of world class struggle and virtually all aid to revolutions abroad replays in technicolor Stalin's capitulation to imperialism.

Trotsky concluded in the '30s that the fundamentally immovable bureaucracy, whose policies invited eventual capitalist restoration, must be overthrown by *political revolution*, i. e., removal by the workers and soldiers.

No wonder Trotsky's ideas are baneful

Glasnost plus Trotskyism can remake the world: the struggle of 135 million Soviet workers for control of their own state will re-ignite in workers everywhere the belief that they too can win control of their destiny.

not replace it with workers' power, and he is therefore steering perestroika toward shipwreck on Stalinist shoals.

History lesson. Trotsky long ago pointed out how the notion of socialism in one country perfectly suited the upstart bureaucrats interested in reaping the rewards of their top-down rule. Stalin's betrayal of revolution abroad ensured the continuation of Soviet poverty and isolation—the exact conditions that enabled the Stalinist usurpers of Soviet power to consolidate in the '20s as a caste of policemen who regulate the scramble for necessities in a society of scarcity.

Like all such arbiters, the nouveau bureaucrats skimmed the cream for themselves; Soviet poverty meant Stalinist privilege. And because privilege was anathema to the ideals of the October revolution, Stalin had to smash democracy and install his fiendish police state.

Trotsky examined the consequences in depth. Prolonged isolation and lack of access to world resources allowed development of the productive and cultural techniques essential to a successfully socialized economy. Exclusion of workers from decision-making precluded intelligent coordination and planning of production. Police terror left in its wake a sullen, demoralized and physically decimated citizenry—and a revulsion against the idea of socialism, especially in the West, that has not yet dissipated.

Stalin bequeathed a grim and heartless parody of socialism and condemned the first workers' state to long-lasting also-ran status in the race with imperialism for humanity's future.

And more. In seeking "peace" with imperialism through weakness, he opened up a tenfold danger of capitalist restoration in the USSR.

Conflicting legacies. It is Stalin's legacy that Gorbachev must overcome. Yet the Soviet premier is flesh of the bureaucracy and his blueprints read more like a Stalinist paean to Adam Smith than prescriptions for socialist advance.

He seeks to resuscitate the economy, but never by way of workers' democracy—the only solution to the problems of planning, productivity, and incentive. His alternative, the sweeping introduction of capitalist-style mechanisms into industry, is a dangerous expedient at best, and he seems to promote them unaware that if

to Gorbachev. They may soon hone the knife that skewers the current regime.

Comeback of the century. Glasnost has already ignited political fires in the USSR, such as the uprising by national minorities seeking sovereignty, mounting protests by workers against the harsher measures of perestroika, and the demands of artists and intellectuals for creative freedom.

Meanwhile, the burgeoning interest in Trotsky will mushroom as workers gear for all-out confrontation with Moscow. Soviet workers will discover that their fight against the bureaucrats is at bottom the fight against Soviet backwardness vis-à-vis capitalism, and that victory lies ultimately in socialism's triumph abroad—as Trotsky insisted.

Expect mass gravitation to the "Old Man's" ideas as the shakeup intensifies.

Glasnost plus Trotskyism can remake the world: the struggle of 135 million Soviet workers for control of their own state will re-ignite in workers everywhere

the belief that they too can win control of their destiny. Western workers especially will take their cue from the Soviets and Trotsky; their movements have been hogtied by Stalinist reformism for 60 agonizing years. But inspired by the new Soviet revolution, they will settle accounts with the counterrevolutionary misleaders and topple the capitalist state.

Go get 'em! Glasnost has opened up extraordinary advantages for the world socialist movement and for international Trotskyism. Time now for Trotskyists to repay the kindness.

The Soviet events have triggered shock and bewilderment among all Stalinists not calcified by CP ideology. What better time than now for Trotskyists, who understand the upheaval, to initiate discussions with the many Stalinists willing at least to listen? And broad layers of activists in the movements influenced by Stalinists may now come to an understanding of glasnost, the cancer of bureaucracy, and the original shining promise of socialism.

It can be done. When the Khrushchev revelations shattered the CPUSA in 1956, the U.S. Socialist Workers Party was there to engage the bombstruck Communists in debate. The SWP recruited some, befriended or neutralized many more, and sparked a revival of radicalism in time for the sizzling '60s.

The subsequent degeneration of the SWP does not mitigate the significance of this achievement, nor the fact that glasnost offers international Trotskyists a similar historic opportunity to spearhead a radical renaissance.

In time for the revolutionary '90s! □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

Freedom Socialist Party Organizer Doug Barnes, who visited Moscow in June, recently completed a U.S. speaking tour on his trip. If you would like Doug to speak in your area, call the FSP's National Office, 206-722-2453. He will be touring Australia in January and February. (See box below.)

Special Australian Speaking Tour

Doug Barnes, U.S. photojournalist, unionist, and Seattle FSP organizer, will recount his discussions with Soviet workers. Slide show and Moscow mementoes also featured.

Jan. 21st—Sydney

New S. Wales State Archives,
156 Walton St., The Rocks, 2:00 p.m.
Summer buffet lunch 1:00 p.m.
Call 02-660-7527.

Feb. 4th—Melbourne

YWCA Members' Lounge,
459 Elizabeth St., 7:30 p.m.
Summer buffet dinner 6:00 p.m.
Call 03-386-3452.

To arrange for Doug to speak in YOUR city while he's in Australia, call 03-386-3452 in Melbourne.



Eyewitness to Glasnost: a Trotskyist in Moscow

EDITORIAL

Rally sends Nazi skinheads scurrying

An array of nervous types wanted to let a miniscule cluster of Nazis rally undisturbed on beautiful Whidbey Island in Washington state on December 10.

"Don't confront 'em—you'll cause VIOLENCE. Let them meet and go away!" shrieked the media, some civil rights organizations, and sundry island sheriffs.

But Hitler started small. So hundreds of anti-fascists in the Pacific Northwest decided to protest in force against the Nazis and their leaders. In a bold move fueled by outrage and courage, the protesters rallied at the same time and place that the Nazis were commemorating the death of racist killer Robert Mathews, caught in a shootout with the FBI.

Four hundred demonstrators paraded and the Nazis quickly made themselves scarce. Their grim-faced organizers stayed away until the demonstrators were gone.

And the lesson: we can stop the Nazis. Anti-fascists are many, neo-Nazi skinheads are still few. It just takes unity among people who understand the terrible threat of fascism and who have the moral fibre to stand up to the establishment liberals who are more concerned with keeping class peace than with resisting Hitlerites, and to the cops and federal agents who hate protesters and radicals more than fascists.

Four-day whirlwind. Video coverage of the historic confrontation was shown around the country and the world.

And it was the local media that trumpeted the news that the Nazis were coming. So the Freedom Socialist Party hit the phones to alert radicals and human rights activists to the need for a counter-rally.

Said FSP National Secretary Guerry Hoddersen, "The FSP is an organization of people of color, Jews, gays and lesbians, unionists, the disabled—all of us socialists. We know what the neo-Nazis have in mind for us: concentration camps, ovens, and gang-murder by storm troopers. None of us can stand by while others are picked off one by one. The Nazis won't just go away. We have to show them face to face that we're not afraid of them and are ready to fight them."

Many groups welcomed her call to action. *The Seattle Gay News*, the NAACP, the Guardian Angels, the Stonewall Committee for Lesbian/Gay Rights, Radical Women, and the Association of People Living with AIDS responded immediately, and most then participated in forming the United Front Against Fascism (UFAF). In four breathless days, the UFAF organized a contingent of 400 brave people to directly challenge the Nazis.

Nothing reflected the unity-in-diversity of this protest so much as the fact that its three elected spokespeople and decision-makers were a revolutionary socialist feminist organizer (Hoddersen); George Bakan, crusading editor of the influential *Seattle Gay News*; and longtime

Black leader and journalist for Seattle's *Facts* newspaper Charlie James. Equally noteworthy was the working-class/unionist composition of a large sector of the demonstrators.



Doug Barnes, FS

NO to the naysayers. The UFAF scared hell out of the establishment and its apologists. These included two liberal human rights groups, the Center for Democratic Renewal (CDR) and the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment (which sat on knowledge of the Nazi rally for two months and then publicly opposed UFAF organizing!). Both organizations tried to funnel the impulse for protest into a low-key, hush-hush candlelight vigil on Whidbey held three days before the Nazis' arrival. The vigil was one-third the size of the UFAF rally.

TV anchors and newspaper editors played up the liberal "experts." At a UFAF press conference two days before the counter-demo, reporters harangued the protesters to stage their demo in Seattle, not Whidbey. This was unprecedented for the Pacific Northwest media. Newscasters became overnight editorialists as the public was exhorted and intimidated into boycotting the anti-fascist demo! The media vociferously and passionately intervened on a tactical decision of experienced political activists. Not content with reporting and analyzing the news, they were galvanized into trying to control it!

Ironically, and to the credit of whichever newsroom

person made the decision, both Hoddersen and Bakan were granted in-depth TV interviews before the demo, which helped mightily to clarify what was at stake.

Like the media, most ostensible Left groups—the Marxist-Leninist Party, Workers World Party, Revolutionary Communist Party, International Socialist Organization, Socialist Workers Party, Spartacist League, and Communist Party—either opposed the demonstration as impossible to pull off in such a short time, or refused to help build it. They only joined the protest at the eleventh hour, except for the CP which boycotted it.

But the UFAF held firm, to their credit. By D-Day, the rally had gathered dozens of endorsements from groups and individuals nationwide.

The protest. On Whidbey Island, protesters gathered from as far away as Los Angeles. They were greeted by 150 sheriff's deputies, state police, federal agents, and their fierce Rotweiler dogs—all there to protect the Nazis and harass the protesters. Undeterred, the demonstrators picketed, then rallied at an open mike speakout. Several Whidbey Islanders stepped to the mike, thanked the protesters for coming, and told the Nazis to get out.

George Bakan delivered a strong opening statement to the effect that people of the Northwest can't turn their backs on the fascist threat. "We are here to fight the Nazis. There will be no Aryan Nation!"

Charlie James spoke forcefully to the need for anti-fascist unity. "Today, we let the Nazis know we won't tolerate them. But this isn't about a two-hour demonstration. It's about an ongoing commitment. If we work separately, we won't be able to make change."

Indeed, some moments earlier, the Marxist-Leninist Party defied UFAF policy and tried to initiate a pell-mell physical attack on skinheads cowering down the road. This adventurism would have brought down instant cop truncheons on the demonstrators and allowed the media to paint the protesters as the violent extremists they had warned against. As veteran Trotskyist and Workers Socialist League spokesman Burt Vulliet said to the crowd, "We are here to educate people about the danger of fascism and to build the movement. Once we have full labor movement support, then we'll march against the Nazis and engage them."

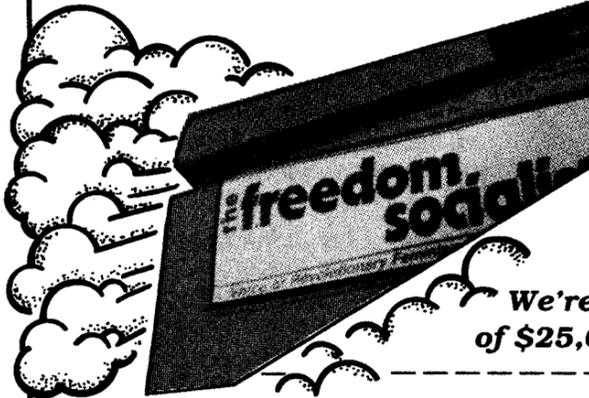
The demonstrators rejected the Marxist-Leninist Party's exhortations, depriving the cops, the media, and the liberals of their chance to bewail the protest.

Nothing worked to ruin this historic opportunity to shut the Nazis down, at least for once. Proclaimed Hoddersen at the end of the rally, "Don't ever let 'em say it can't be done. It can—with leadership, planning and solidarity. They said the same thing about the civil rights movement, but the movement was correct. And it turned this country around! We're not going to let the Nazis take over. Too many millions have died to allow this!"

The FSP, the lesbian/gay movement, and Blacks were the first to react to the fascist re-emergence in the Pacific Northwest. Next time let's hope that support, instead of apprehension, emanates from official labor; and from Jewish, Native American, Chicano, and Asian American organizations; from the liberals, who will get it from the Nazis no matter how carefully they distance themselves from militant freedom fighters; and from the journalists who have so glamorized the vicious fascist misfits.

All hail to the Whidbey Island anti-fascists!

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...Graduate Tax

from page 2

imposed in 1987 has already resulted in a decrease in part-time and correspondence enrollments, largely those of mature-aged women.

Education is a class issue. Student activists and radicals are up in arms over the Labor government's attempt to turn higher education into a hatching ground for "competitive" industry. And they are beginning to make the connections between their protests and those of the myriad other victims of Australia's repressive austerity policies—low-income workers, women, Aborigines, single parents, migrants, and ethnic and racial minorities. The next step is to strengthen these links and deepen the realization that these policies are inevitable under "competitive" capitalism.

A multi-issue and anti-capitalist student movement can ensure that education remains a right, not a privilege—and that the ALP's proposed education policy finds its rightful place on the scrap heap. □

—LINDA WESTE

Linda Weste is a poet and a student at the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Kew, Melbourne.

VOICES OF COLOR

Huerta, brutal cops, and the UFW

On September 14, the Tactical Squad of the San Francisco Police Department attacked an anti-Bush demonstration. They beat several demonstrators severely, including United Farm Workers Union Vice President Dolores Huerta, who suffered broken ribs and a ruptured spleen.

Such brutality is an increasingly typical police response to peaceful protests nationwide. Why? The economy is floundering; times are bad and getting worse. The government has walked out on the people. Little by little, everyone feels their safety net being yanked away: jobs, homes, health care, social security, education... People are angry and getting restless—and the police are there to keep "order."

It's not that people in power are blind to the growing misery. Rather, they understand that if people win demands for equality, a fair share, an end to the status quo, those now at the top are out of business. They pay the police, and buy politicians, to maintain things as they are.

Meanwhile, who is hardest hit by bad times? It's people of color, immigrants, lesbians and gay men, women, the working poor—those who are traditionally discriminated against and despised. They're also the ones hardest hit by police.

These groups are organizing and fighting back against job loss and budget cuts, racism and gay-bashing and anti-abortion attacks. They're headed toward major collision with the system. This is why Dolores Huerta got beaten.

Some still think, despite the growing evidence, that the have-nots can achieve their demands with the aid of "friends" in the establishment, i.e., Democrats. But the poor have no buddies among the powers-that-be; they are on opposite sides of the line because their interests are completely opposed. The powerful never forget it, and the poor must never forget it either.

Sometimes, however, they do.

Soft-pedaling the issue. A case in point is the UFW's response to Huerta's beating. Following the atrocity, a well-attended meeting was held in San Francisco's largely Latino Mission District to deal with the community's shock and anger. Most people wanted to denounce the outrage and organize against police brutality. But the chair, San Francisco Supervisor Jim Gonzalez, and the UFW representa-

tive, Howard Wallace, worked to steer the crowd away from the issue and toward discussion of the UFW's grape boycott.

Gonzalez did promise to investigate "police misconduct"—but later *defended* police at a public hearing!

The message to the police: go and sin again.

The UFW leadership has long oriented toward pacifism, reformism, and friendly relations with the Democratic Party. And they did not want to speak out against the police because this might threaten their courtship of liberal city officials and assorted labor bureaucrats. In the September issue of their magazine, *Food and Justice*, they even claimed that Huerta was not involved in the demo at which she was beaten!

The UFW has fought hard over the years and won many victories for farm workers. And the grape boycott deserves enthusiastic support. But it is self-defeating and ultimately impossible to completely separate the boycott from police brutality and related issues that degrade and destroy the people that the UFW wishes to defend!

Toning down protest so as not to offend Democrats merely impedes the UFW's work. All the smiles in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. haven't kept farm workers from dying of pesticide poisoning or gained for them a decent life.

That work awaits completion. We can speed it along by making San Francisco police accountable for what they did to Dolores Huerta and by demanding a Citizens Review Board, composed of elected community representatives, that will step in against further brutalities.

We urge the UFW to join in this work and in constructing a multi-issue coalition that will work effectively to end police abuse *and* build the grape boycott. What better way to bring farm workers and other cop victims together?

The cops and the Democrats won't like it. What better recommendation is there than that?

¡Basta con la chota!
¡Que viva la huelga!

—MOISES MONTOYA

Moises Montoya is a Chicano gay leader active in San Francisco ACT-UP. He works as an architectural technician for the city of Oakland.



Dolores Huerta speaks at a UFW rally.



Clara Fraser

Some peaks of '88

1. BEST COMEDY RELIEF: The November Election

Even the liberals, and the legions of radicals panting to be "where the masses are," laughed through their tears at this electoral slapstick.

Bush inanely jeered and baited, Dukakis crumpled in confusion, and more than half the voters—the real masses—stayed away from this political-theatre floperoo.

Elections make for great satire, but we've had too many comics in the off-White House. Come on, Labor Movement—give the workers a chance to Vote For You in '92!

2. BEST TRAVEL PAGE EXCURSIONS: A Tie between the UN in Geneva, and a Trotskyist in Moscow

I loved it when Reagan's Diplomatic Rangers wouldn't let Arafat into the country to address the United Nations in November and that moribund body sprang to life, promptly adjourned to Switzerland, and heard the man out on December 13.

I hope the UN bills the State Department for the entire junket, including tips, taxes, and long-distance telephone calls.

The long-distance bill between Seattle and the USSR, when Doug Barnes went to Russia in May, was saved from astronaut-level only because the Soviets don't have enough phone lines and their operators don't like to answer the phone. So we gnawed fingernails while the Seattle FSP organizer gorged on borscht and had a marvellous time in Kremlin City.

How the Old Man (Trotsky) would have relished this historic travel item!

3. BEST CRIME-FRONT NEWS: A Whole Bunch of Us Stayed Out of Jail

The names of sundry activists and radicals were splattered on police blotters up and down the not so Pacific Coast last year. But nine of us that I know of beat the rap.

Roanne Hindin, Kathy Seeley, and Kass McMahan, arrested in San Francisco on September 17 for defending an abortion clinic, won dismissal of their charges.

Lisa Moody and Conan Gale, cited in Seattle for taping Radical Women leaflets on utility poles, were not only cleared on May 10 but helped win a concession from the unctuous City Attorney, who promised to provide kiosks for posting announcements.

Freeway Hall Case attorneys Valerie Carlson and Fred Hyde, and defendant yours truly, were sentenced to jail in perpetuity on a contempt charge last January, which was temporarily suspended pending appeal and later dropped, at least for the time being. We can use the time being.

And David Sohapp, the intrepid Native American fisherman of Cook's Landing, Washington, finally got released after two years in prison for no crime whatsoever. Shalom to the Sohapp clan.

4. BEST POLITICAL/MILITARY DEFEAT: The Contras

Of all the contra-revolutionary, contra-humanist, contra-civilized, and contra-principled desperados festered by imperialism, this crew of ruffians that systematically slaughters the poorest of children and civilians rivals the Nazis in viciousness.

Artificially energized by Pentagon dollars, the Ayatollah, the international drug market, and the Republicrat Congress, the Contras finally outraged too wide a segment of Americans.

And when the dirty money stopped, so did the mercenaries.

May we never, ever hear from them again.

5. AND THE WINNER IS—? Japanese/Arab Purchase of the U.S.!

When fate quirks, it reveals a cosmic irony. Who ever expected this turn of economic events? But we couldn't be owned by nicer folks, I'm sure; as far as I'm concerned, any landlords and bosses would be better than the pale male racists who stress and oppress us now.

And besides, how can a revolutionary oppose Equal Opportunity for foreign capital?!

Happy New Year, everyone, and fasten your seat belts—we ain't seen nuthin' yet.

Richard Fraser 1913-1988

Richard Fraser, 75, originator of the theory of Revolutionary Integration, died of throat cancer on November 27, 1988 in Los Angeles. A 30-year leader of the Socialist Workers Party, he resigned from the SWP in 1966 along with the entire Seattle branch, which went on to found the Freedom Socialist Party.

Fraser's profoundly historical materialist analysis of the Black struggle illuminates the Black Question as a matter of race and class rather than nationhood; Black history is seen as a key to American history, and Black leadership as central to the American revolution.

Dick was a bold and original thinker and organizer with a broad grasp of world history, economics, and politics; he was also a compelling orator, teacher, and writer, and an administrator with singular drive and energy, and a winning public persona.

But like many male revolutionaries, he was ethically contradictory. For ten years I was his collaborator and wife, and he appeared to champion

women's emancipation. But he never actually accepted and internalized women's equality; this led him to indulge in vulgar machismo and I left him.

He refused to let me share our child and rejected a party tribunal's decision approving my right to a divorce and child custody, forcing me into a two-year-long custody case. He accused me of every bad-mother sin: I stayed out late at meetings, hired sitters, worked outside the home, neglected my family, and (gasp) was living in adultery.

But the gallant judge didn't believe that a good Jewish momma could be so depraved, and I won. (Dick retaliated by withholding his \$50.00 monthly child support.)

Fraser left two legacies: Revolutionary Integration, and Jon Fraser, a fine jazz musician. I am proud of my co-creativity on both counts. For the rest, I learned a lot about the Woman-and-Man Question, so I guess he did me a favor in that regard, too. He did all of us a favor.

—CLARA FRASER

1988 National FSP hones strategies



Photos by Jonathan Fox, FS

(Above) 'Tis the final conflict.' Conventioneers rise for the singing of the "International." (Right) FSP veteran Gloria Martin exhorts visitors to take the plunge and join the FSP. (Far right) Bay Area unionist Nancy Kato drives a point home. In back, a banner depicting the revolutionary U.S. rainbow.



There's nothing like a gathering of the clan to recharge the batteries, focus energies, and prepare for the beckoning future. So it was at the Freedom Socialist Party's 1988 National Convention, held Labor Day Weekend, September 2-5.

The convention site, the Quality Bayview Inn outside Bremerton, sits on a bluff overlooking the fir-swathed Kitsap Peninsula in western Washington state. Outside, a forested panorama. Inside, the unlimited political vistas of socialist feminism.

FSP comrades, affiliates, and friends came together from all over the U.S. and Australia to address the state of the world, the prospects for revolution in the '90s, and the role of the party in helping to lead the burgeoning world assault on the profit system.

Discussion centered on the unfolding revolutions in Nicaragua, China, and the Soviet Union. Giant multi-hued banners depicting these revolutions gave added focus and meaning to the discourse. One, a stylized rendering of the hammer and sickle, saluted "The Great Soviet Shake-up." Another radiantly portrayed Leon Trotsky, arch-foe of the Stalinist bureaucracy, who fought unrelentingly for the international triumph of socialism and workers' democracy.

The portrait caught perfectly Trotsky's clear-eyed confidence in the socialist future of humanity—a confidence fully shared by con-

ventioners. And why not confidence? Growing revolts in the workers' states, the roiling Third World, and the faltering imperialist centers signal at last the impending destruction of the capitalist/Stalinist combo that has thwarted the rise of socialism for six decades.

Amidst this upheaval stands the FSP, which has survived the Big Chill of the Reagan era intact, and is more experienced, tempered, and ready for the revolutionary upsurges ahead than at any time in the past.

Reality check. Optimism not firmly rooted in reality is akin to whistling in the dark, of course. The FSP's optimism is of a different kind.

Three major reports, charting the dynamics and vicissitudes of pivotal upheavals, provided a deepened theoretical basis for truly Marxist optimism.

The first report, by FSP National Secretary Guerry Hoddersen on the Draft Political Resolution she co-authored with National Chair Clara Fraser, charted the depths of accelerating and irreversible capitalist disintegration and showed how, out of this collapse, oppressed peoples on six continents are rising to reclaim the earth.

Next, Stephen Durham reported on the document he co-wrote with fellow National Committee member Dr. Susan Williams, "On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State." Durham

examined the character and peculiarities of that state and why this question is key in determining how best to defend and advance the Nicaraguan revolution.

Then, Secretariat leader Henry Noble, who wrote the resolution "Permanent Revolution in China—Buduan Geming" with fellow FSP National Committeeman Robert Crisman, dealt with whether a political revolution is necessary in China.

Details of these reports and ensuing discussions are featured separately on these pages and page 16.

The leadership question. The clear-eyed realism and optimism of the first presentations was also evident in the session on the Organizational Resolution, "A Report Card on Our Progress," which evaluated the current state and prospects of the FSP itself. The document was co-authored by Yolanda Alaniz of the Secretariat and Constance Scott, National Radical Women Organizer. Alaniz gave the report.

At the 1982 convention, the FSP elected its first National Committee and laid plans for the consolidation of the national party across the U.S. "We've come a long way since then," Alaniz said. "The party has not only gone na-

tional, its program has spread internationally with the growth of its Australian affiliate."

If her time were limitless, Alaniz said, she would cover the party's many hard-fought victories, such as Fraser's free speech victory against Seattle City Light and the courageous defense of abortion clinics on both coasts mounted by the FSP and Radical Women. But the party also faced many problems in the Reaganite '80s, and Alaniz focused on the way the organization dealt with them.

She noted that the reactionary pressures which buffeted and disfigured so many Left organizations in these years—McCarthyite political attacks and the sense of political isolation, and the ensuing narcissism and escapism—also made themselves felt inside the FSP. But despite some individual desertions, the ranks of the party withstood these pressures, which ultimately toughened the party overall.

Alaniz pointed to the party's main accomplishment in this period: its creation of a leadership that is collaborative, confrontive, and strictly accountable to the membership—in short, the opposite of dreary top-down honchoism.

Problem and cure. This hasn't been achieved without a battle. Bad leadership models abound in the dominant culture. Alaniz poked fun at a few such types: the bossy bureaucrat, the superstar, the note-taker. "We've seen them all," she said, "but the difference is that in the FSP, members and leaders call bad leadership by its right name, demand change, and usually get it. Leadership is a relationship, and leaders aren't untouchable gods in the heavens."

Alaniz paid special attention to relations among FSP comrades—a bottom-line touchstone for measuring the party's political health. She stated that respect and trust have been painstakingly built among comrades of color and white members—"a magnificent achievement given the pervasive racism in society." She also credited male comrades for grappling with the problems of creating new leadership models for socialist feminism and with providing an alternative definition of what a man is and can be. Not an easy task in a society that glorifies its Rambos and wimps.

Conventioneers enthusiastically applauded Alaniz' report. And while they criticized poor leadership incisively, the tenor of their remarks reflected immense pride at how the party has dealt with the leadership question. Several comrades expressed appreciation to the Secretariat, the FSP's top leadership body, for initiating a frank, self-critical discussion that helped move the party forward.

Alaniz summed up by delineating areas in which the party needs to pick up the pace in order to stay on track: education, recruitment, regroupment, and fundraising. Marxist education, she said, "helps balance us out. It gives us the theoretical perspective and understanding we need to carry

Not yet time for political revolution in China

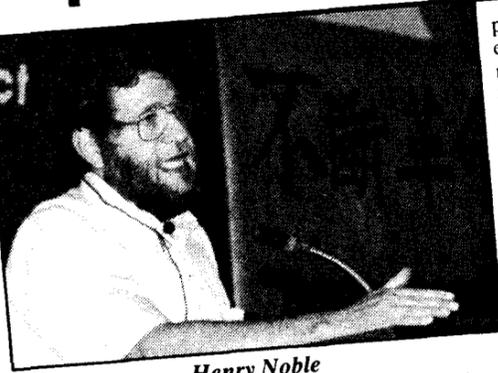
A summary of the report on the FSP draft resolution "Permanent Revolution in China—Buduan Geming" by Henry Noble and Robert Crisman.

Henry Noble began his report by tracing the development of the Chinese revolution from its initial efforts to consolidate a workers' state to the current reforms of Deng and Co. He emphasized that despite Deng's capitalist-style economic reforms, China has not yet suffered capitalist restoration: economic planning and the state's monopoly of foreign trade, signature aspects of a workers' state economy, remain intact.

However, capitalist restoration is a danger, compounded by the Chinese leadership's bureaucratism and their idea that China can build socialism alone. This is impossible given capitalism's dominance of global resources and technology.

Chinese bureaucratism, often reminiscent of Soviet rule, has led many Trotskyists to conclude that a political revolution—forcible workers' overthrow of the bureaucracy—is required in China. Noble rejected this conclusion, cautioning that political revolution means bloody civil war. He stressed that Trotsky refused to call for political revolution in the Soviet Union until it had become clear that it was impossible to reform the bureaucracy, whose policies would inevitably lead, sooner or later, to capitalist restoration.

This isn't the case in China, Noble stated. Stalin built a monolithic police regime in the Soviet Union, through physical destruction of the



Henry Noble

political opposition. But the Chinese leadership, divided by factions since the beginning, has been unable to consolidate in the Soviet manner. The rule of the bureaucracy as a whole is accordingly more tenuous. For example, no one faction can claim control of the armed forces or police; consequently each must vie in some degree for popular support.

Though no formal democracy exists in China, workers and students have long been able to press both economic and social demands via strikes, demonstrations, public debates and public criticism of the regime. Noble cited a well-publicized victory during the 1956-57 Rectification

Campaign in which workers at the Beijing Tram Company won the rights to control management and financing, plan production, elect directors, and decide wages and benefits! And he cited recent explosions among students, including a December 1986 demonstration in Shanghai, in which demands were raised for press freedom, the right to demonstrate, democratic city elections, and release of political prisoners.

The students forced release of prisoners in Beijing, and lived to march another day—not because of bureaucratic good will, but because of the inability of China's leaders to impose a monolithic regime.

Noble concluded that it may yet be possible for China's people to force reforms that pave the way for workers' democracy there. Nothing, he said, is written in stone. And unless and until the bureaucracy congeals as an impassible barrier to socialism, political revolution is not the way forward for China. □

Convention theory and for the coming upsurge

'Tempered, toughened and together for the challenges of the '90s'



this significant regroupment, and cited the untold opportunities that the accelerating disintegration of Stalinism presents to a revived and united Trotskyist movement.

Going international. Up for this endeavor was teacher Alison Thorne, Melbourne activist and organizer who reported on the dynamic FSP affiliate in Australia and the party's worldwide activities. During the last six years, Thorne said, FSP emissaries have traveled to Europe, the USSR, China, Cuba, the Philippines, the Mideast, Mexico, and Canada, and laid the basis for fruitful collaborative work with contacts around the globe.

Thorne identified FSP's main international tasks as regroupment with Trotskyists outside the U.S. and the

continued building of the Australian

affiliate. She expressed enthusiasm for plans to broaden the global perspective of U.S. comrades by sending them to Melbourne for extended visits.

Speakers from the floor agreed wholeheartedly with her sentiments and predicted an explosion of interest in socialist feminism down under.

Building better Bolsheviks. Party conventions offer a unique opportunity for far-flung comrades to swap experiences and exchange expertise and perspectives. Participants in this one made the most of six workshops on the mass movements and ten on skills-building.

Veteran activists led sessions on the labor, feminist, people of color, lesbian/gay, campus, and antiwar movements. Skills inculcation was handled by pros in writing and media outreach, education and training, team-building, finances, and political organizing.

One workshop focused solely on defense work in the Freeway Hall and Merle Woo cases. Both are landmark fights for the First Amendment and due process rights of radicals targeted by repression and redbaiting. (Please see article page one and letter page two.) On the last day of the convention, FSPers and friends generously answered a fundraising appeal for the Freeway Hall Case with more than \$4,000 in contributions.

Highlights. Where to begin? The entire four days of the convention were jam-packed!

Greetings were sent by Workers Socialist League and the Internationalist Socialist League; also by Leon Goodman, a founder of U.S. Trotskyism, and by Ramona Bennett, internationally recognized Puyallup Indian leader and former tribal chair who saluted the FSP for "getting the truth out."

One of the most anticipated highlights was the election of 16 full National Committee members, all of whom had served as full or alternate members of the previous NC. Four new alternates were chosen.

Then, there was the acceptance of eight new party members and affiliates.

Recruiter Gloria Martin urged other convention visitors, who hailed from California, the Pacific Northwest, and Mexico via Seattle, to take the plunge and join!

On the last afternoon, convention organizer Luma Nichol received a ringing ovation for her superb work. Also thanked were the event's area

coordinators and the Nominating Commission, who had developed the NC slate.

Evenings were a time for comrades and friends to feast, to socialize, and relax. At the sumptuous Sunday night banquet, Guerry Hoddersen presented each FSP branch and affiliate and members of the case legal teams with awards for "meritorious work in the Belly of the Beast." She also presented a lifetime achievement award plaque to party founder Clara Fraser.

Poetry, a roisterous sing-along, hilarious skits depicting branch life, and post-banquet

dancing to a live band rounded out the convention's social and cultural scene.

The FSP bookstore, transported across Puget Sound from New Freeway Hall, was also a big hit. With everything on hand from convention t-shirts to gorgeous picture books of Trotsky, sales were brisk.

Leon Trotsky wasn't the only absent comrade whose life and ideas were commemorated. The FSP paid special tribute to two of its own warriors, Murry Weiss and Karen Brodine, with vibrant displays featuring their writings.

Weiss, often referred to as the Dean of American Trotskyism when he died in December 1981, found his home in the FSP after leaving the SWP in the '60s. Brodine, a gifted poet, organizer, and critic who died in 1987 at the age of 40, was an inspiration to all her comrades.

With attendees' social, intellectual, and political needs all taken care of, what remained? The physical! That too was provided for, with an aerobics regimen offered first thing every morning. True to stereotype, only members of the California contingent managed to show up!

Aerobics or no, FSPers left the convention in better shape; ready, in the words of the socialist anthem, "The International," to do their duty and do it well. □

—ANDREA BAUER

Political Resolution

'The human race is fed up with tyrants!'

A summary of the report and discussion of the Draft Political Resolution, "Towards the '90s: Approaching the Final Conflict," by Guerry Hoddersen and Clara Fraser.

Guerry Hoddersen took convention delegates on an exhilarating trip around a world in the midst of a gigantic explosion. She first dissected the global profit system's inexorable plunge into ruin, and then outlined the forward motion of revolutions and revolts on six continents.

She paid special attention to the driving forces and objectives of upsurges in the Third World, the workers' states, and the U.S. capitalist heartland, offering in the process a veritable short course on the parameters and prospects of permanent revolution in our time.

Hoddersen started by holding up a series of newspapers with screaming headlines proclaiming Wall Street's Black Monday in October 1987. "This is the good news," she stated. "Capitalism is cracking up. After the Iran/contras scandal and the stock market crash, it's no longer business as usual."

Capitalist crisis is insoluble, Hoddersen said. Attempts to fix any of the economy's misfiring parts exacerbate problems elsewhere in the gestalt. "If unemployment goes down, inflation goes up." Yet, "any move to control inflation through high-interest—tight money—policies could bankrupt heavily indebted industries and unleash a world trade catastrophe."

Inflation or tight money: the cure is as bad as the disease. Depression threatens workers' lives, from the poorest Third World nations to the advanced capitalist superpowers.

Everywhere, political firestorms are breaking out as economic and social miseries increase, Hoddersen said, especially in Latin America and Asia. The Western Hemisphere is aboil from Mexico to Argentina. Revolts in the Philippines and South Korea presage the end of the U.S. empire in the East. Meanwhile, as Africa sinks into starvation, South Africa's Black liberators hurl themselves against the remnants of white colonialism.

Revolt in the workers' states continues to spread, said Hoddersen, from Poland to the USSR and beyond. Huge anti-Stalinist demonstrations in Czechoslovakia marked the anniversary of the USSR's 1968 invasion.

"The human race," declared Hoddersen, "is fed up with tyrants."

But propping up the entire capitalist/



Hoddersen: No more business as usual!

Stalinist network of tyranny is the *middle caste*, "that vast, obnoxious layer of mass movement leaders and slightly left-of-center politicians" whose message to the frustrated people of the world is "trust us to make the system work." Trembling and clutching their wallets, they caution their groups to be quiet and wait for a break in the weather.

But the middle caste can no more conjure away imperialism and its deleterious effects on workers than business kingpins can stop the economic slide. And their influence is waning accordingly.

"It's not the '60s," Hoddersen noted. "Masses of people aren't in the streets. But political consciousness is even greater today—especially about the interconnections of racism, sexism, homophobia and the oppressions of other groups. The fight for a multi-issue approach is all but won in some circles." The battle is now an unencumbered struggle for anti-capitalist, pro-socialist politics.

The Reagan years meant rough sledding for labor and leftists, Hoddersen observed. The '90s, however, are a brand-new ball game in the ascending struggle for socialism.

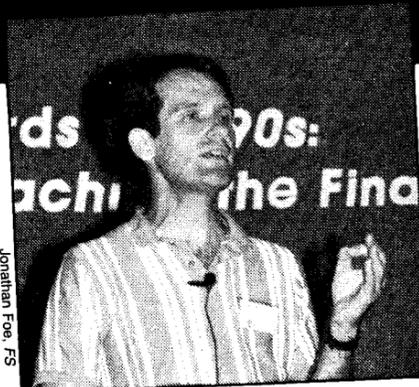
In discussion, delegates stated that their experience in the mass movements confirms Hoddersen's analysis that the position of the middle caste is eroding. The reformists are

flip-flopping under the pressure of the conservative climate and the simultaneous grassroots upsurge.

Further radicalization, said speakers, will push some of these leaders to the left. Others will be neutralized or completely exposed and isolated, providing the opening for socialist leaders who truly speak to the needs and demands of the times. □

Co-author Fraser





Jonathan Fox, FS

Stephen Durham

Nicaragua's contradictory revolution

A most peculiar capitalist state

A summary of the report and discussion of the FSP draft resolution "On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State" by Stephen Durham and Dr. Susan Williams.

In his report, Stephen Durham stated that "the Nicaraguan revolution is a profoundly *democratic* one. But what kind of democracy, bourgeois or proletarian, has the revolution achieved? In other words, what kind of *state* exists in Nicaragua today?"

The question of the state is crucial in assessing the Nicaraguan revolution, he said. Marxism defines the state as the instrument of class rule over society, the means by which the ruling class establishes and maintains a particular economic system in its own interest. States in the imperialist era are either bourgeois or workers' states. Since states express the *irreconcilability* of class conflict, no two-class, hybrid state is possible.

Obviously, he said, a correct appraisal of the state is key in determining who holds sway in Nicaragua, workers or capitalists, and, in light of that, how best to defend and advance the revolution.

The character of the state, he continued, is to be found in its relations to the economy. Investigation must proceed through examination of property relations, the state apparatus, Sandinista policy, and the interrelations among these factors. After careful study, the authors concluded that "Nicaragua remains a *capitalist* state where bourgeois property relations, encompassing 60 percent of production, still rule and where governmental structure and policies aim to preserve them." He cited as evidence the retention of much of the old Somocista bu-

reaucracy and the FSLN's avowed intent to maintain private production within the framework of "mixed" economy.

"But Nicaragua is a most *peculiar* capitalist state," Durham observed. "The Sandinista government—the regime as opposed to the entire complex of state institutions—is a *workers' and farmers' government*. The Sandinistas took power at the head of a people's insurrection. They instituted unheard-of political freedoms and have rallied Nicaraguans against counterrevolution for eight long years. As such they stand as the representatives of Nicaragua's democratic and anti-imperialist aspirations."

The Sandinistas, said Durham, refuse to break with capitalism. But the U.S. and Nicaraguan capitalists are determined to destroy them and the revolution. This is proof that democracy "is wholly incompatible with continued capitalist hegemony. And in the event of impending counterrevolutionary victory, the Sandinistas may yet be impelled, if only to save their popular support and their lives, to spearhead a direct assault on capital."

"Such actions would signal the beginning of a workers' state in Nicaragua."

Delegates concurred with Durham and Williams' assessment of the state. But some disagreed that the regime should be called a workers' and farmers' government, contending that since

the state is capitalist, the workers and peasants don't rule.

Other speakers responded that this disagreement stemmed from confusing the government and the state. The bourgeoisie in Nicaragua exercises class rule through control of the economy. But they do not hold sway *politically*; that's why they launched a counterrevolution. The Sandinistas run the government, by virtue of workers' and peasants' support.

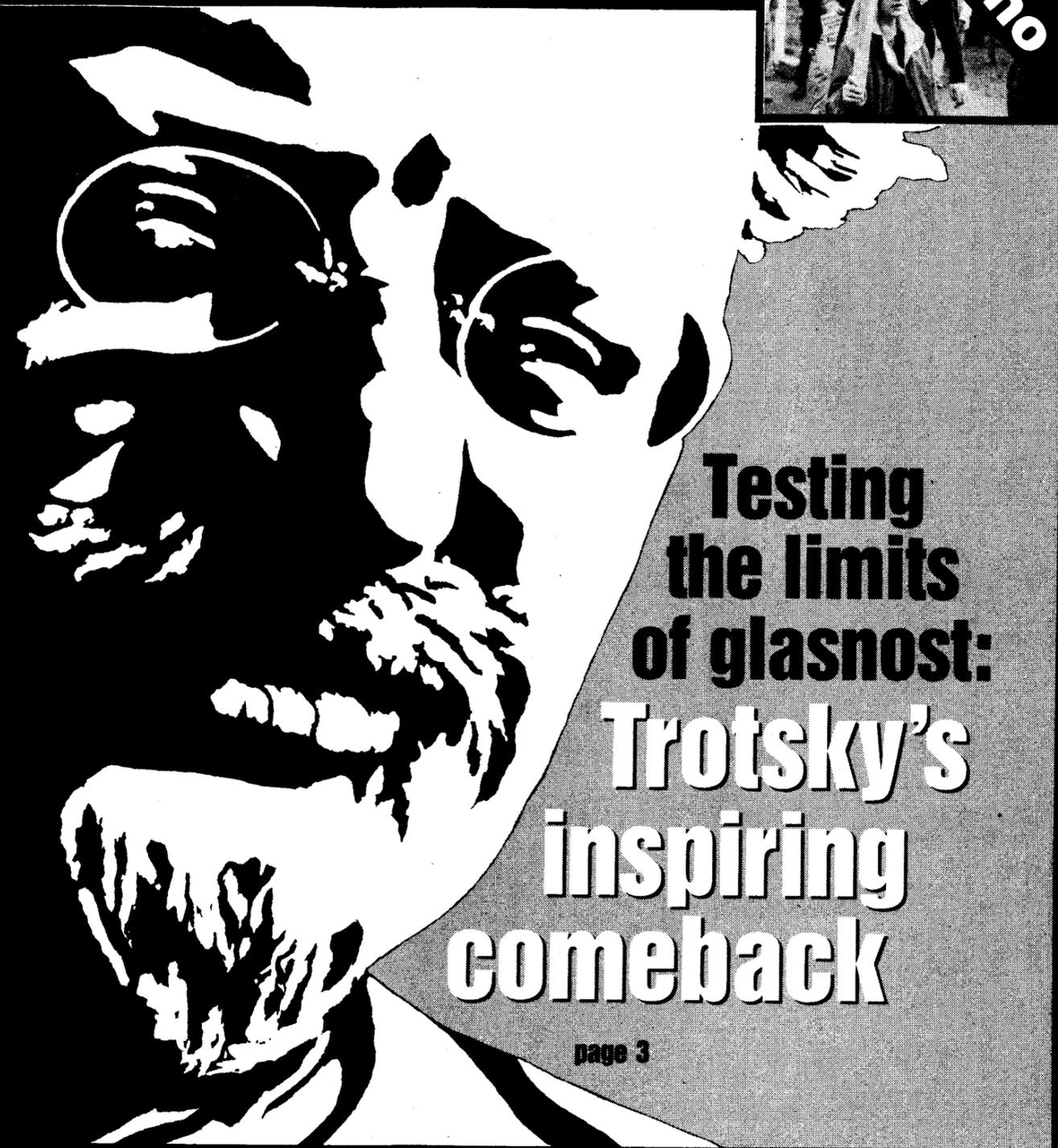
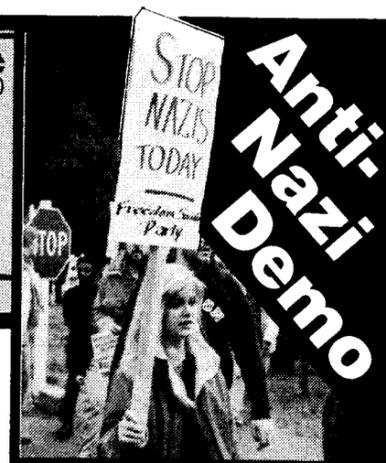
The Sandinistas will rise or fall with the objectively anti-capitalist Nicaraguan revolution. The job of revolutionists, delegates concluded, is to exhort them and the Nicaraguan people to advance the revolution and create a workers' state. □



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