

A Socialist ACTION



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Mass actions counter U.S. drive toward war

Apartheid's death toll multiplies

By GEORGE CRANSTON

South African police conducted a bloody celebration of the 25th anniversary of the infamous Sharpeville massacre. They fired without warning on a crowd of 3000 to 4000 Blacks who were marching to a nearby town to attend the funeral of three Blacks killed 10 days before by the police.

Just 25 years earlier, apartheid's cops had murdered 69 Blacks protesting apartheid in Sharpeville. That year, the South African government was being rocked by both an uncertain economic situation and an upsurge of protest by Blacks against the apartheid regime. The apartheid government survived the crisis thanks to savage repression, on the one hand, and, on the other, the continued and increased support it received from the United States.

Today there is once again an upsurge of worldwide protest against South African apartheid. Inside South Africa, Black workers have organized unions and have even been able to launch general strikes, as they did in the Transvaal region Nov. 5. On March 20 over 40,000 Black miners went on strike at the largest gold mine in the world.

The response of the Botha government is the same as that of his predecessors: Enact token reforms while relying on increased repression to keep the Black majority powerless. The events outside of Uitenhage—the police murder of 18 Blacks and the wounding of 29 others in a funeral march—are the real

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Police threaten striking workers in South Africa.

Protests on April 20 set example

Thousands of protestors will be demonstrating on April 20 in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Houston. They will be marching in support of four demands: No U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; Freeze and Reverse the Arms Race; Jobs and Justice, not War; and End U.S. Support to Apartheid/Overcome Racism at Home.

The recent killings of Black protestors in South Africa, the Senate and House votes approving funds for the MX missiles, and the declarations of Nicaraguan *contra* leaders indicating their involvement in the assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero—to mention but a few of the latest developments—should underscore the urgency of mobilizing in support of the four coalition demands.

The demonstrations are the result of six months of organizing efforts in

Beyond April 20 See Forum pp.9-12

dozens of cities throughout the United States. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have been reached in this educational campaign. These efforts already stand as an important achievement and a worrisome obstacle to the warmakers in Washington.

Periodic nationally coordinated mass actions helped to end the Vietnam War. Our chances of building a powerful opposition to the government's war policies are even greater today.

Millions of Americans remember the experience of Vietnam and are not willing to allow the government a free rein to embark on another adventure.

Millions of others who were silent during Vietnam are now experiencing a serious erosion in their standard of living as a direct result of the war-bloated economy. They will not be satisfied by administration rhetoric used to justify war spending while the cuts in social spending continue to jeopardize their right to a decent life.

Our task must be to educate and mobilize this potential force into a visible, independent political movement even more powerful than the movement that helped put an end to the Vietnam War.

In several cities—San Francisco is a

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What drives Star Wars madness?

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as Star Wars, is clearly a major step toward Armageddon—despite President Ronald Reagan's "peace" rhetoric.

The Star Wars program would outfit the nuclear "doomsday machine" with a more delicate hairtrigger—not to mention immeasurably greater destructive force—and make it even more susceptible to accidental detonation.

Few informed persons in the scientific and political world believe that the alleged goal of an effective shield against nuclear attack is within the realm of possibility. It is virtually

impossible, in any case, to draw a distinction between "offensive" and "defensive" weapons.

At the very least, as one commentator noted, "An aggressor with a good shield might be tempted to use his spear, confident he could deflect the weapon of his opponent."

Star Wars is a long-term crash program for development of qualitatively new weapons systems to be primarily deployed in space orbit. It has three main components:

1) Lasers that shoot multiple beams of high-intensity radiation, such as X-rays, that can simultaneously destroy a number of incoming atomic warheads. (One such laser contrivance would

require activating the enormous power of an atomic-bomb explosion.);

2) A qualitatively more powerful radar system in orbit that has the resolution required for pinpointing incoming decoys and real warheads, directing the laser beams to knock them out;

3) A new generation of super-computers and miniaturized mobile components that can be programmed to carry out the multiplicity of split-second decisions required to guide the search, find, and kill phases of the proposed space weapons system.

In addition to these main components, a variety of other weapons for knocking out nukes are in the most pre-

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All out for April 20 antiwar marches!

Fight back!

"Rural America is in agony"

By JAKE COOPER

Mass demonstrations like we haven't seen since the Great Depression of the '30s have hit the Midwest farm belt. Over 100 legislators from South Dakota traveled to Washington, D.C., and demonstrated in the streets. Their buttons and signs read: "Rural America is in agony."

They told America: Bankruptcies are up 65 percent from 1981 to 1984; farm assets have declined by \$1.6 billion since 1981; debts have increased by \$1.3 billion. They asked for a 50-percent advance on loans for spring planting and a 90-percent loan guarantee. They asked for a meeting with Reagan. He would not meet the group.

All over the Midwest—in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska—mass rallies of thousands of farmers are taking place. They are demanding a moratorium on foreclosures; state loans for seed, fertilizer, and fuel; and emergency aid for the stricken farmers and their families.

Some of the factors that have so dramatically mobilized the farmers of America are the 58-percent drop in farm income from 1978 to 1983 and the grain embargo against the Soviet Union. Farmers in Europe are underselling the United States on the world market, and many Third World countries, former customers, can no longer afford to buy.

The prospects for farmers were summarized by Cy Carpenter, president of the National Farmers Union, in the Feb.

26 *Minneapolis Tribune*: Within the next year 400,000 farmers may be forced off the land; 200,000 bankrupted; hundreds of rural towns abandoned; 1,000,000 rural jobs lost; and 35,000 banks and related businesses may fold.

History repeats itself

The farmer was in much the same situation in the 1930s as he is now. A pamphlet by Everett Luoma, "The Farmer Takes a Holiday," was quoted in *The*

New York Times of Sept. 4, 1932:

"The drop in farm prices has wiped out farm securities, impoverished the farmer, and decreased his purchasing power. The farm towns have less and less trade. Mortgage holders and financial institutions have in many cases become frozen and insolvent. Farmers are losing their farms, which they acquired after generations of toil and thrift."

This sounds like a story *The New York Times* could print today.

The struggle of the farmers in the 1930s was one of the great battles that has taken place in the country. It involved hundreds of thousands of farmers. The farmers' struggle of that decade was a forerunner of the fights of the Teamsters in Minneapolis and in the entire Midwest. It showed the way for the Hormel strike in 1933 and other fights that followed.

The farmers' struggle was led by militant revolutionary thinkers. Among

them was John Enestvedt, a long-time member and supporter of the Trotskyist movement.

The primary organization in the 1930s was the Farm Holiday Association. It got its name by declaring a farm holiday on all farm products going to market. It also organized to stop all farm foreclosures by putting pressure on county officials and by instituting the penny-bidding system. Under this system, everyone was forbidden to bid more than pennies at auctions for whatever was sold.

By mass action the farmers stopped almost all farm products from going to the market. They blocked roads, halted trucks, and finally forced the national government to aid the farmers with a farm mortgage moratorium and financial assistance.

In their statement of principles in 1933, the Farm Holiday Association and the Farmers Union noted, "As organized farmers we make common cause with our organized brothers of industry who are in shops, factories, and on the railroads. We are both exploited by the capitalist owners of the means of production and distribution."

How has the U.S. government answered the clamor of the farmers for help today?

They offer a temporary halt on foreclosures. They offer sales tax-relief on farm equipment. They offer aid for spring planting. They offer reduced interest rates.

As one article said, "This is like throwing a rock to a drowning victim."

To top this off, Reagan vetoes all that is offered, saying it is inflationary. There seems to be plenty of money for guns, none for farmers.



Farm auction in Hastings, Neb., in 1938

Jake Cooper was a packing-house worker in the 1930s and a leader of the Minneapolis Teamster strikes of 1934. He is a member of the National Committee of Socialist Action.

A letter to our readers: Join Socialist Action!

Dear readers,

We hope you find *Socialist Action* enlightening and valuable. We urge you to subscribe. But we also want you to become a member of Socialist Action and help in the work of building a mass, revolutionary organization in the United States.

Socialists recognize that in order to have a humane and decent society, a revolutionary change is required. That change is the elimination of the profit system and its replacement with a system based on human needs—socialism.

Profit destroys lives throughout the world by fostering and promoting wars, poverty, racial hatred, and sexual inequality. The United States is the richest society in the history of humanity, yet food in this country is destroyed while African children die of starvation.

Nuclear weapons are stockpiled while dreaded diseases kill thousands. Small countries struggling to determine their own destinies are subjected to military attacks by U.S.-backed terrorists while social services such as education here at home are slashed.

Nicaragua, struggling for self-determination against the world's mightiest military power, is an inspiration to all who love freedom. Socialist Action supports the revolutionary gains of the Nicaraguan people. If a small, poor country can make such strides as it begins to put human needs before profit, imagine what could be done here.

Clearly, the capitalist system is more than outmoded. Its continued existence is a threat to the future of humankind and the planet earth itself. We can be optimistic about the future though, because there is a force capable of organizing society for the benefit of all its inhabitants. That force is the working people themselves. They are the majority.

The *Socialist Action* masthead signi-

fies that we stand for a socialism that is democratic. In fact, without democracy there can be no socialism. This is the essence of the struggle of Polish Solidarity—for a socialism that puts the workers themselves in control.

Workers have the numbers, the know-how, and the ability to lead the United States out of its role of world cop and into a future of plenty, democracy, and justice. They can begin this process by establishing their own party—a labor party which can fight for the interests of working people and their allies.

Such a step could quickly lead workers to the understanding that the solu-

tion to the most pressing problems of their lives requires that they take the reins of society by establishing their own government.

We in Socialist Action act upon this optimism. We aim to help bring about this future. Our members are active builders of the antiwar movement. We are active unionists. We are fighters against racism and for sexual equality. We are also part of a long history of building an American and world working-class revolutionary organization with proud roots in working-class struggles.

Please join us.—The editors

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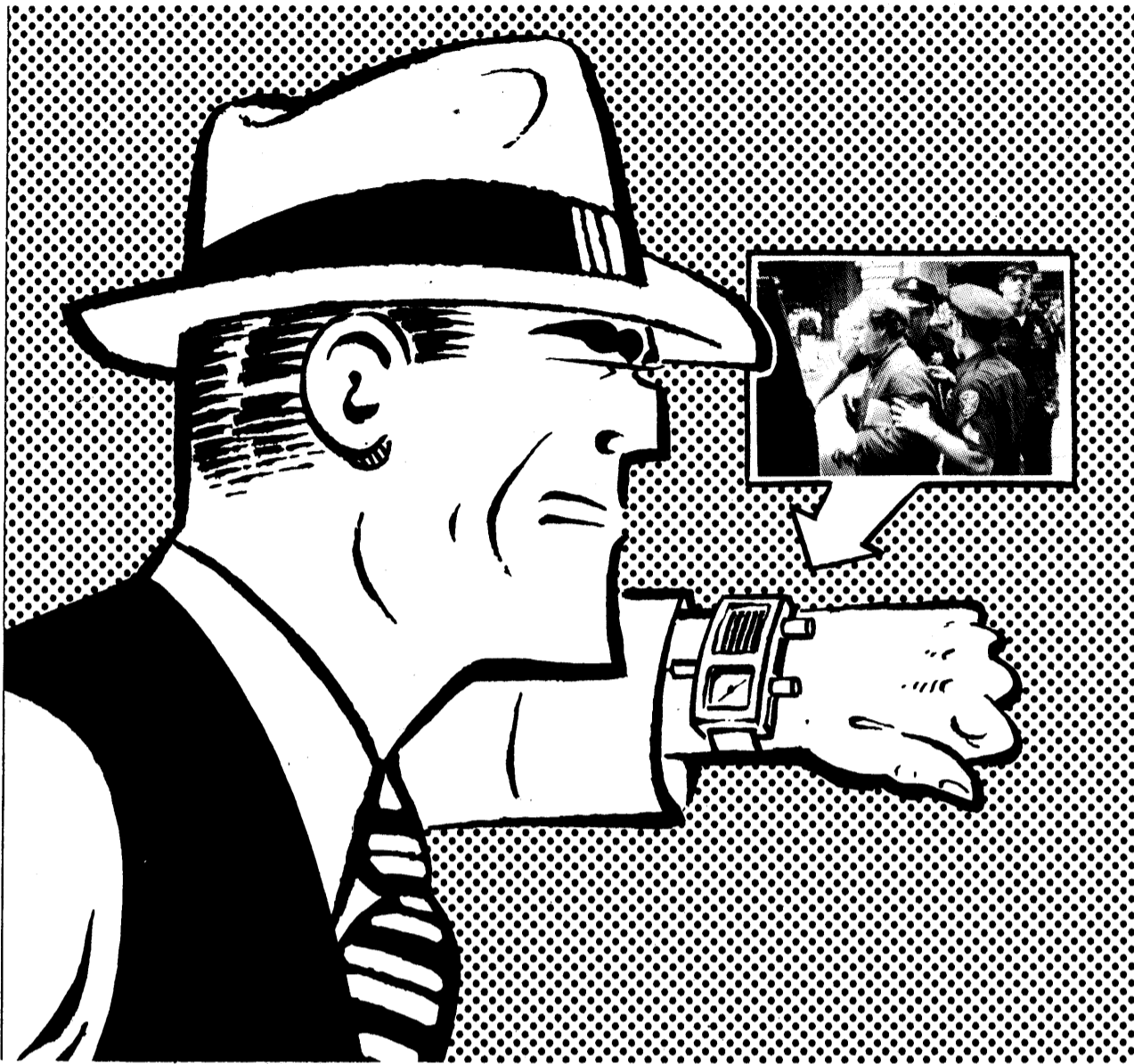
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Socialist Action

Goetz case stirs crime debate



By MARK HARRIS

When Bernhard Goetz discharged his gun on a New York subway last December, he triggered more than the shooting of four Black teenagers who he claimed were threatening him, demanding money. The incident has sparked renewed debate over the issue of "street crime."

The Goetz story has given the mainstream media a golden opportunity to whip up racist hysteria and promote increased right-wing "vigilantism."

The big-business, law-and-order campaign has also fueled demands for more cops, greater police powers, and less legal protection for defendants.

As for Goetz, his remark that he regrets not blowing out the brains of one of his victims has somewhat tarnished his "folk-hero" status. But regardless of Goetz's temporary notoriety, the furor generated by this case does reveal that crime is an issue of genuine concern to working people—mostly to Blacks and poor people, who are the most frequent victims of crime.

Consider this simple statistic: 100,622 people were murdered in the United States between 1979 and 1983. Consider too that homicide is the leading cause of death among Black males aged 15 to 24. A Gallup survey in the late 1970s, in fact, found that the United States had the highest crime rate of "all major Western industrial nations."

Moreover, according to a recent study by the Eisenhower Foundation, the United States imprisons a higher percentage of its citizens than any other Western industrial nation. Still, the advocates of a "get-tough" policy clamor for more prisons, more executions, and fewer civil rights. And they are getting their way.

Prisons: a growth industry

In 1978 there were 7.2 court commitments to prison for every 10,000 adults. In 1983 that figure jumped to 10.1. The incarceration rate has, in fact, doubled in the last 10 years as a result of the law-and-order campaign supported by both major parties.

The result? Today over 644,000 people are locked up in prisons and jails in the United States—a rather ironic statistic for an administration that claims to want to "get government off our backs."

Prisons are definitely a growth industry. From 1980 to 1982, state spending on prison construction and expansion jumped from \$133 million to \$800 million. The National Moratorium on Prison Construction estimates that more than 800 jails and

prisons are being or will be built at a cost of \$6 billion. And in the true spirit of free enterprise, privately run "prisons for profit" are becoming increasingly common.

Attorney General Edwin Meese cites statistics showing that a large proportion of those entering prison are repeat offenders, often committing new crimes while on probation. Meese's solution is quite simple—lock them up even longer. And if annoying civil rights laws interfere with that task, then too bad for civil rights.

But the facts Meese cites actually say a lot more about the brutalizing and inhumane conditions inmates suffer in prison, where human beings are ground down and spit out in worse shape than before, and where the cycle that initially led to prison begins again.

That, of course, is of little concern to Meese and the law-and-order crowd, whose brutish policies will continue to place growing numbers of people in the direct custody of the state.

An old argument

The Reagan administration likes to believe that the legal system unduly favors criminal defendants. Ronald Reagan is not known for his original mind, and here too, he simply echoes a theme repeated ad nauseum over the years by the advocates of greater police authority.

During the 1920s, for example, police could routinely hold suspects incommunicado, often extracting confessions through use of various methods of torture. When a state court excluded in one case a defendant's confession because it had been obtained through use of the third degree, a Chicago police official complained that the ruling would invalidate 95 percent of his department's work.

President William Howard Taft argued in 1909 that a criminal trial is like a game of chance, with "all the chances in favor of the criminal."

Herbert Hoover's 1928 presidential campaign denounced legal procedures that "unduly favor the criminal."

President Gerald Ford whined in 1975 that "for too long, law has centered its attention more on the rights of the criminal defendant than on the victim of crime."

But it is not for lack of imagination that our erstwhile leaders give the same speech year after year. They all share a similar motivation. The complaint that we are losing the "war against crime" actually reflects a more fundamental kind of war—one between the tradition of democratic rights that finds

its lifeblood in social protest, and the inherent tendency of the state, representing the interests of the ruling rich, to expand police powers at the expense of constitutional liberties.

The source of crime

Andrea Gonzalez, writing in the Jan. 25 issue of *The Militant* newspaper, states, "One view of what causes crime which is often presented as Marxist is the idea that capitalism causes poverty and poverty causes crime."

Gonzalez argues that this view portrays the working class, rather than the ruling class, as the source of crime. Moreover, "The view that poverty per se is the cause of crime leads to supporting the call for more jails, more cops, and more restrictions on the rights of the working class today—since poverty does exist."

Poverty per se is not the cause of crime. The degree of "white-collar" crime testifies to that. And there are certainly nations poorer than the United States with lower crime rates.

Yes, the ruling rich, who preside over a system based on the exploitation and oppression of the working-class majority, are the source of crime.

But can anyone believe that discrimination, hunger, and despair, which so often define poverty conditions, have nothing to do with the degree of crime in this country? Why should such a view lead one to demand more cops and jails rather than the elimination of the social system that promotes poverty and social inequality?

The social programs designed to ameliorate the more extreme aspects of poverty have never offered more than bare-bones survival in the United States. Couldn't this also have something to do with the extraordinary frequency of petty acts of crime and violence?

Criminality at the top

The problem of "street crime," of course, has to be kept in perspective. How do we judge a social system that sentences William Rummel, a Texas man who passed three bad checks in 10 years, to life in prison as an habitual offender, while another habitual offender, Richard Nixon (Korea, Vietnam, Watergate), has never spent a day in jail? Mr. Nixon, we might add, also lives at state expense, but in a much grander style, rest assured, than Mr. Rummel.

How do we judge a system that licenses government-by-death-squad in El Salvador, but sentences Wallace Richard Stewart of Louisville to 10 years in



prison for stealing a pizza? Will any executives of the Manville Corp. spend even a day in prison for exposing thousands of unknowing workers to cancer-causing asbestos?

Crime is endemic to a class-divided society, but a class-divided society is not endemic to human nature. As Mark Twain once said, "There is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress."

It is the capitalist system, which Congress represents, that is profoundly criminal in nature. But unlike many of those rotting in prison, the capitalist class is incorrigible.

Working people will eventually pass sentence on a system that breeds desperate acts of petty crime at the bottom rung of the social ladder and acts of calculated criminality at the top. The jury may be out but the verdict is certain—the antiquated social relations and fundamental inequality that define American capitalism will have to give way to a society where working people govern in their own interest.

I made \$12 an hour at the steel mill until I was laid off.



So, I took computer classes and now I earn \$6 an hour.



Soon a more sophisticated computer will eliminate my job.



I've achieved state-of-the-art unemployment!



Carol Simpson ©1984

Affirmative action under attack:

Women confront obstacles in non-traditional work

By ANN MENASCHE

The refusal of federal and state government to monitor and enforce affirmative action regulations is impeding further progress by women into higher-paid, non-traditional blue-collar jobs.

This was the conclusion of Bobbie Kierstead, director of Tradeswomen, Inc., in a recent interview with *Socialist Action*. Tradeswoman, Inc. is a non-profit grassroots organization of over 600 individual women and affiliates nationwide that does peer support and advocacy for women in non-traditional blue-collar jobs. The organization publishes a monthly newsletter, *Tradetrax*, and a quarterly magazine, *Tradeswomen*.

"As a result of the government's tacit opposition to affirmative action and its disinterest in enforcement," said Kierstead, "contractors have developed a cavalier attitude. Contractors are not hiring women and not caring about not hiring women."

Though the number of employed women has risen by about 80 percent over the last 20 years, the overwhelming majority of women workers remain segregated in so-called "women's work"—low-paying secretarial and service jobs. Partly as a result of this job segregation, college-educated women working full time still earn only 55 percent of the income of their male counterparts.

The small number of women who have broken through the sex barrier are forced to work in isola-

tion from other women and often face sexual and other forms of harassment from male bosses and co-workers. Tougher affirmative action regulations and enforcement of those regulations already on the books are essential for achieving a qualitative improvement in the status of working women.

But the government has not only refused to enforce present regulations, it has attempted on a number of occasions to seriously weaken them. At the beginning of his first term in office, President Reagan proposed a complete revision of affirmative action regulations that would have gutted affirmative action nationally. Concerted protests by women's and civil rights organizations resulted in this proposal being tabled.

More recently, the Reagan administration, through the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (OFCCP), developed a National Self-Monitoring Reporting System (NSMRS). This system would have allowed major employers to establish and monitor their own affirmative action program with few compliance requirements.

Before protests put a halt to this program, secret NSMRS agreements had been negotiated with American Telephone and Telegraph Co., General Motors Corp., International Business Machines Corp., and Hewlett-Packard.

Similar attacks on affirmative action have occurred on the state level in California where Joint Apprenticeship Committees (JACs), co-sponsored

by unions and management, have a dismal record in meeting affirmative action goals. In 1983, out of 455 JACs, only 62 met their goals for women apprentices.

California's dismal record

The Division of Apprenticeship Standards found that 231 JACs had not even made a good faith effort to meet these goals. These include, among others, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, plasterers, and workers in the sheet metal, sprinkler filter, steel erector, and tile trades.

In 1984, representatives of JACs proposed a plan allowing lowering of affirmative action goals. At a conference on apprenticeship held last spring in San Francisco, this proposal was approved with only three dissenting votes.

A loud and organized outcry against this proposal, largely led by Tradeswomen, Inc., resulted in the California Apprenticeship Council tabling the proposal. However, new efforts are now underway to reduce goals for women in apprenticeship.

The participation of many unions, particularly in the building trades, in these moves to weaken and dismantle affirmative action not only hurts women and national minorities, but weakens unions as a whole.

"While changes in the law have been blocked for the time being," noted Kierstead, "the Reagan administration's atmosphere of non-enforcement of affirmative action has almost as devastating effect on women and people of color as changes in the law would have."

Tradeswomen, Inc. is presently preparing for hearings in April, sponsored by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, regarding the extremely low representation of women in non-traditional city jobs. Blue-collar women who work for the city will be challenging civil-service testing procedure, widespread sexual harassment in the workplace, and sex discrimination in promotions.

In addition, Tradeswomen, Inc. will be involved in hearings on implementation of the Carl Perkins Vocational Educational Act. The act sets aside more money for the vocational training of women and girls than ever before. Tradeswomen and other women's rights advocates want to assure that the program is actually used to benefit women and girls.

Kierstead emphasized that women in blue-collar jobs not only have to work 40 or more hours per week doing hard physical labor, but often have to take courses at night and suffer the additional stress of working in a frequently hostile work environment. This often leaves little energy for political work. Blue-collar women are in great need of allies.

Clearly, the fight to defend and extend affirmative action cannot be the task of blue-collar women alone. The feminist movement as a whole and the labor movement must also take up the banner.

Tradeswomen, Inc. can be contacted at P.O. Box 40664, San Francisco, CA 94140. (415) 821-7334. ■

By SUSAN ANN SCOTT

OLYMPIA, Wash.—"New directions for the Eighties" was the theme of this year's celebration of International Women's Day at The Evergreen State College (TESC). The event was sponsored by a coalition of student groups that included Third World Women, the Women's Center, the Lesbian/Gay Resource Center, and Students for a Humane Foreign Policy.

The celebration of IWD opened with a presentation by Evergreen faculty member Joye Hardiman. She is the subject of a recent PBS documentary, "A Soul Comes Home," which chronicles her experiences as a teacher and her



Diane Lutz

Women's meeting maps new direction for '80s

decision to use her skills in the Black community.

Hardiman set the tone for the day's events when she emphasized the need for all people to overcome the fragmentation that has hindered the struggles for racial and sexual equality: "We must learn from the past and recognize, as my mother used to say, that 'problems are opportunities in work clothes.'"

TESC faculty members Artee Young and Maxine Mimms, director of the TESC Tacoma campus, pointed to the failure of the women's movement to address the concerns of women of color. Stephanie Coontz, TESC professor of history, argued that the women's movement has been marred by racism but stressed the leading role Black women played in the 19th century in providing direction to the women's movement and linking it to the Black movement.

Unions and the women's movement

The panel discussion on women and changing roles in society included speakers on the subject of women re-entering the job market, women in non-traditional careers, and the role of unions in women's work. The panelists all agreed that while the ideology of women's roles has changed to allow

women more opportunities for education and employment, women's primary role is still within the family.

The "liberation" of women has increased the economic role of women without decreasing her traditional duties. For many women, this has led to greater oppression.

Diane Lutz, staff organizer with the Washington State and Federal Employees Union and member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, emphasized the important role of unions in addressing the dual oppression of women. "International Women's Day has its roots in the labor movement," she argued, "and the labor movement in turn must sink its roots into the international women's movement."

Lutz emphasized that not only do unions need women, but women need unions. "Unions have been focusing on a number of issues addressed here today," she continued. "We are fighting for the right to childcare and, perhaps most topical, unions are leading the fight to institute comparable worth."

The final panel discussion, entitled "Women in Struggle," featured Susan Morales from Seattle's El Centro de La

Raza; Native American activist Nylak Butler; and Pilar Martinez, a Salvadoran woman now living in Seattle. Martinez is one of the refugees who was arrested earlier this winter in the attack on sanctuary.

In the best-attended presentation of the day, Martinez spoke about her experiences in El Salvador as an advocate of the rights of workers and peasants. She talked about her continuing fight against oppression here in the United States and urged all who were present to recognize that the struggle against oppression is an international struggle that we all must join. "If we do not," she concluded, "life is meaningless." ■



'Do you think they should have found that woman guilty of being raped?'

What strategy for the labor unions today?

The following are edited excerpts of a trade-union resolution, "Revolutionary Strategy in the Unions Today," adopted by the first national convention of Socialist Action in November 1984. The full text will appear in the forthcoming issue of the Socialist Action Information Bulletin.

Nixon's August 1971 announcement of a wage freeze signaled the beginning of an intensified ruling-class assault on the wages, benefits, and working conditions of the American working class. The era of slightly improved living conditions without any real fight had definitively ended.

Initially, the attacks were directed against the weakest, least-organized components of the working class. Attacks on unemployment benefits and other social services set the stage for the current assault on the organized working class.

The necessity of capitalism to extract ever greater concessions from the working class has laid the basis for a changing mood among workers. It's one of increased combativity and willingness to fight back.

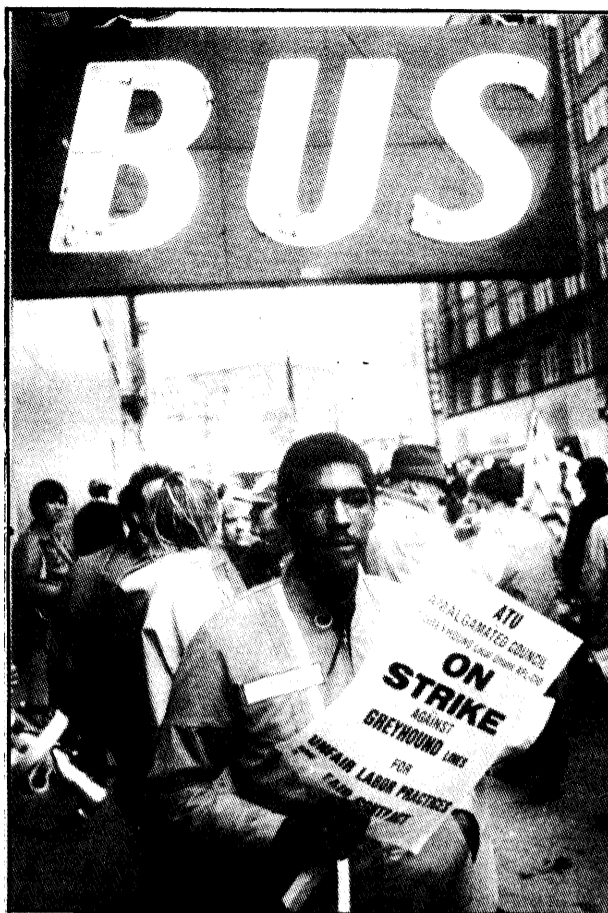
At first, many workers believed the argument that concessions were a necessary temporary evil to save jobs. Now they see that the unions which granted the largest concessions have seen the biggest job losses. They see that the only result of concessions was higher profits for the bosses.

Although there hasn't been any nationally coordinated fightback, there have been increasing isolated skirmishes.

In December 1983 the Greyhound strikers demonstrated a tremendous willingness to fight. We've seen a similar combativity displayed since then by United Auto Workers members at McDonnell Douglas, Oil Workers union members in the California refineries, culinary workers in Las Vegas, copper miners in Arizona, and UAW members at AP Parts in Toledo. In all these cases, striking workers reached out for and received support from other area workers.

Crisis of leadership

One unfortunate common feature is shared by the Greyhound, McDonnell Douglas, and California oil strikes. In each case the union bureaucracy pressured the workers to accept concession contracts at the



very time they were beginning to apply serious pressure to the bosses and pick up considerable support.

All these strikes were on the upswing when concession contracts were rammed down the workers' throats. In each case the membership was willing to fight, but the labor bureaucrats short-circuited the developing fightbacks.

The union leadership does its best to minimize the active participation of the ranks in the life of the unions. Negotiations between labor "statesmen" and company officials are put forth as a strategy.

The UAW, for example, canceled a demonstration called in support of striking AP Parts workers when the company agreed to return to the bargaining table even though two shifts of scabs were working at the

plant. In addition, safety problems and grievances are removed from the shop floor and handled by "experts" with little, if any, worker involvement.

Labor's giant upsurge

Job actions, ranging from formal protests to stop-work meetings and strikes to enforce the contract and to stop speeded-up assembly lines, were the normal method of asserting worker control over the workplace in the years of the big labor upsurge of the 1930s and '40s.

The Toledo Auto-Lite strike of 1934 took place in the context of a series of serious labor defeats as strike after strike was broken by court injunctions, scabs, cops, and company goons.

But the important difference between this strike and others at the time was the leadership and the program of union democracy involving the ranks; solidarity among workers—particularly the unemployed in Toledo; and the refusal to allow the strike to be derailed by court injunctions and government mediators.

Union democracy is key in actively involving the most conscious members of the union. It also serves to highlight the need for independence from government intervention in the unions.

Despite the efforts of the companies and union leaders to convince workers that their interests coincide with those of "their" company, the appeal of union solidarity is also strong.

The unions must embrace the demands of all the oppressed. Every attempt to divide the working class by pitting whites against Blacks and Hispanics, men against women, old against young, documented against undocumented, and employed against unemployed, must be firmly opposed.

In the process of the struggle in strike picket lines, rallies, and demonstrations, it will become ever clearer that the courts, legislature, and mediation boards are never impartial—they always favor the bosses.

Just as the boss cannot be trusted to represent our interests on the shop floor, the Democrats and Republicans cannot be trusted to represent our fundamental interests. The unions must break with these two parties and build a labor party.

Socialist Action will be part of the increasing skirmishes and will be a component of future campaigns to run independent working-class candidates based on the unions in local and national elections.

Such campaigns would take the developing working-class struggles into the political arena and would in turn provide an impetus to the struggles as workers begin to see the importance of exerting their own independent political muscle. ■

By JAYNE BURRIER

Editor's note: As we go to press, Pan American World Airways has reached a tentative settlement with the Transport Workers Union, which represents the 5800 workers on strike since Feb. 28.

Some union leaders, however, announced on March 24 that they would recommend a rejection of the proposal at a forthcoming membership meeting. Although approved by a large majority of the union's bargaining committee, a membership ratification vote is necessary before the strikers go back to work.

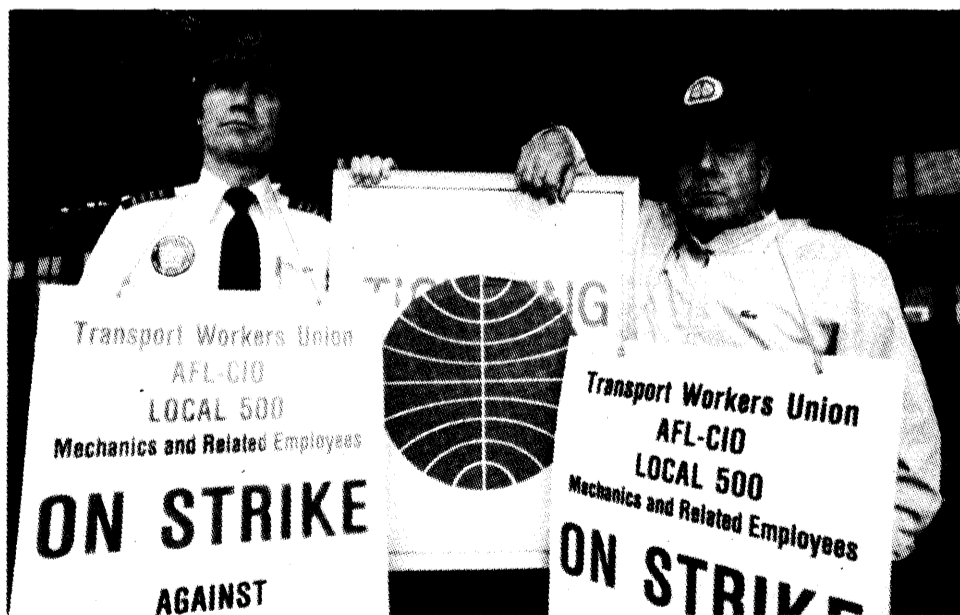
According to company spokespeople, the tentative agreement contains mostly concessions from the workers with little in return in terms of wages.

Despite the strike, Pan Am has been able to function at 36% of its normal capacity. The decision by the airline pilots and later by members of the Independent Union of Flight Attendants to cross the picket line has greatly hurt the strike.

Pan American World Airways is on strike. On the surface the issues are the usual wage and benefit packages. It's hard to find the details in the daily newspapers, which only ask, "How will this strike inconvenience you, the public?" And, "How do the Pan Am workers have the audacity to turn down a 20% wage increase?"

What is at issue in this strike? In 1981 Pan Am employees "granted" their employer \$300 million in concessions, including a three-year wage freeze, giving up an expected 14% increase. This 14% was supposed to "snap-back" to the employees on Jan. 1, 1985. But Pan Am refused to pay this until a court of appeals ordered them to do so.

Pan Am strike ends in contract concessions



So the "unbelievable" offer of a 20% pay increase includes the 14% already owed. This leaves a 6% pay increase over the next three years.

Pan Am has offered a one-time bonus of \$1200 for mechanics and a \$900 bonus for other Transport Workers Union members. That is approximately two weeks salary.

There are also the amorphous "work-rule" changes; hiring part-time workers and establishing a two-tier system will mean less money, less benefits, and no job security for new hires. Pan Am also wants to introduce cross-crafting, or, in the words of management, "more flexibility in assigning work."

The unions have some powerful ammunition on their side. Pan Am is a grossly mismanaged company. A report by Lazard Freres and Co. confirms what the unions have been saying. While the report points out that the unions must share in the blame (of course!), it details the sloppy and hazardous policies of Pan Am. The Lazard report states that "by far the most significant failure has been Pan Am's inability or unwillingness to confront its own problems."

Workers are angry that with \$300 million already granted in concessions in 1981, Pan Am still lost \$220.2 million pretax on revenues of \$3.3 billion last year. Losses of \$188 million are pro-



jected over the next two years. But despite these losses, Pan Am still boasts a \$440 million "cash balance of reserves" to weather the strike.

The strike has been seriously weakened by the decision of the pilots to cross the picket line, backing away from their initial support for the strike. This underscores the need of the unions not only to solidify support within their own ranks but also to reach out to the public at large with their side of the story.

Management has been flying and fueling the airplanes, loading and unloading the baggage, but who is making the repairs? That is the question the public should be asking. What are the unions fighting for? Are Pan Am flights safe? The unions need to mount a propaganda offensive around these questions to generate the kind of support needed to win the strike.

But Pan Am management banks on the willingness of an ill-informed public to fly on the basis of ticket price alone, as experience with Continental Airlines and People Express has shown.

Consider what Edwin L. Colodny, chief executive officer of US Air, says. "There is an inherent conflict between competition and safety improvements."

The public should understand that safety improvements have "got to come out of the ticket price."

The unions need to inform the public that this is how the airline industry works. The Pan Am workers are not only fighting for a better contract but safer skies. ■

The following are excerpts from a speech by Al Lannon, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 6 and a co-chair of the San Francisco April 20 Spring Peace Mobilization. The speech was given at a Feb. 21 Socialist Action forum in San Francisco on "Labor's Role in the Antiwar Movement."

When the Vietnam War began, there was strong labor support for U.S. policies. Despite strong reservations in some circles, the labor movement was officially on record in support of its government. It assumed that its government told the truth. It assumed that the Gulf of Tonkin incident did happen. And the labor movement, of course, was opposed to communist regimes.

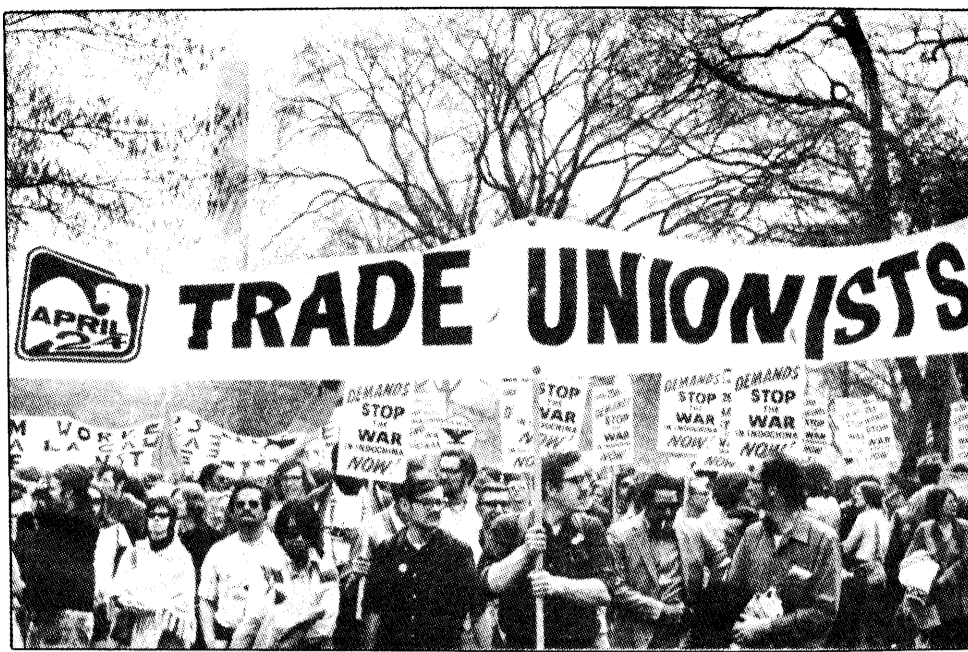
The ILWU, specifically its longshore division, was an early and outspoken opponent of the war. Harry Bridges, the president of the ILWU, even called the money that the longshoremen were earning "blood money."

Yet union members continued loading war material for Southeast Asia.

That showed a contradiction. The union had taken a stand against the war, but was not willing to do anything in practice to oppose it because support for the leadership's position did not exist among the rank and file. The rank and file of the ILWU gave the leadership a lot of leeway when it came to taking political positions as long as contracts were being negotiated and enforced.

Rise in antiwar sentiment

That core of dissent against U.S. policies in Southeast Asia existed within the labor movement, but so long as there was a consensus of support for the war, that dissent was muted. For instance, in 1964, when I was a rank-and-file member of the union, I spoke up at a Local 6 meeting. Some escalation had happened that day—I don't remember exactly what—and the next day when I went to



Al Lannon: Labor learned from Vietnam War

work somebody had scrawled "punk commie" on my time card.

The leadership was very upset that I had raised the issue of Vietnam. Not that they disagreed with me—they just felt that it was rocking a boat that did not need to be rocked at that point.

But then things changed. In 1968 more than 450 Bay Area labor leaders placed an ad in *The Chronicle* and *The Examiner* which condemned the continuing U.S. involvement in the war. It had a big headline: "We've had enough."

In Washington, D.C., where I was based, a similar ad came out in *The Washington Post*. Its headline was "A

rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

On that ad, *The Washington Post* was so nervous that it insisted on printing the signers' addresses as well as their names—which made us nervous.

At that point a variety of labor people had come around Martin Luther King's Poor People's Campaign and had formed a labor support committee for that. A natural outgrowth of that coalition, as tentative as it was, was National Labor for Peace. A lot of unions were able to plug into it, although not necessarily officially.

Eventually National Labor for Peace came together with unions representing

millions of members.

However long it took, a substantial section of the labor movement did come to a clear antiwar position. The major thing that helped this happen was the growth of the peace movement. The visibility of people in the streets demonstrating for peace, marching for peace, gave impetus to those sentiments within the labor movement.

It gave them the wherewithal to raise legitimate questions within their unions on the peace issue. In my opinion, without that peace movement outside the labor movement there never would have been a peace movement within the labor movement.

A new generation of labor leadership has come out of that peace movement and out of the civil rights movement. They are not strangers to marching in mass marches as well as on picket lines. They are not strangers to working inside coalitions with people whose views they may not share beyond the goals of that particular coalition. And they know full well today that the labor movement must work in coalitions with others if it is going to win the battles before it today.

Some people say that we will not have a peace movement in this country until we have body bags returning with the sons of the American people in them. I don't think that is true and I think that it is a cynical view.

I think that people have learned a lesson from Vietnam. A generation of labor leadership has internalized a lesson and is determined not to see us repeat mistakes. Fifteen years ago the head of the AFL-CIO would not have gotten up, as Lane Kirkland did several days ago, and said he opposed any increases in the military budget at the expense of social programs. That declaration was a direct result of the election of a new generation of unionists to union office. ■

Bay area coalition gears up for April 20

By CARL FINAMORE

SAN FRANCISCO—The San Francisco Spring Mobilization committee continues to attract important endorsements and financial support from the unions, churches, and peace and community organizations. Senator Allan Cranston (D-Calif.), the California Teachers Association, and the Sisters of Mercy are recent additions to the hundreds of endorsements that fill the reverse of the leaflets publicizing the April 20 march and rally.

A majority of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors are also supporting the coalition. They have indicated that they will make an unprecedented exception and will vote for a permit allowing the demonstration to march down Market Street, the major downtown thoroughfare.

Almost half of the \$50,000 budget has been raised—much of it due to the impressive financial commitments by the trade unions, who have already kicked in over \$5000. Attractive three-color posters, buttons, and T-shirts have been produced, and 100,000 leaflets have been distributed.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of commuters will see large display ads in subway stations and in 200 buses all over the Bay Area.

The coalition has tried to attract sectors of the public who have not yet actively protested government policies. A wide array of materials and events have been planned to help accomplish this goal. Leaflets in Spanish and Chinese have been printed, and numerous special events such as fund-raisers, slide shows, a Latino speak-out, a Labor speak-out, and several student rallies

have all sought to appeal to a wide cross section of the population.

The recent tragic deaths in South Africa of dozens of young Black protesters at the hands of the apartheid police have added an even greater sense of urgency to the mobilization efforts. Bay Area labor leaders are scheduling a picket for April 11 at a South African trade office to protest U.S. government support to the racist regime. This initiative by leading unionists is also intended to publicize the April 20 demonstration.

A fund-raising reception by the Spring Mobilization for leaders of the Bay Area Free South Africa movement has been organized to help highlight the demand of "No U.S. Support to the Apartheid Regime."

There will also be a brochure pro-

duced on this issue to help forge links between the anti-intervention and anti-apartheid movements.

Reports from Santa Clara, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, Marin, Contra Costa, and the other surrounding areas of San Francisco indicate a larger response to April 20 than for any other recent event. Buses and trains are being organized by three AFL-CIO Central Labor Councils in these areas in

cooperation with the Nuclear Freeze and other peace and community groups.

Excited by what has been accomplished so far, coalition supporters are not letting up in the final push to make April 20 as large as possible. But even before the demonstration, and regardless of its actual size, most activists feel that the broad coalition put together in San Francisco can and should be repeated in other cities. ■

Canadians condemn complicity with U.S. militarist policies

TORONTO—Over 1600 people demonstrated on March 17 in Quebec City to protest the highly publicized visit of Ronald Reagan to Canada. Reagan came to this provincial capital to meet with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

The themes of the protest included opposition to U.S. nuclear arms buildup, to the testing of cruise missiles, and to the U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean.

Reagan's visit was marked in Toronto on March 16 as over 300 people picketed the U.S. Consulate. The protest, organized by the Toronto Association for Peace and co-sponsored by the Toronto Disarmament Network and the Toronto Anti-Intervention Coalition (TAIC), demanded that the federal government break with U.S. military and foreign policy.

The TAIC is a broad-based, mass action-oriented movement formed to protest U.S. intervention and Canadian complicity in Central America and the Caribbean.

A multi-faceted Week Against Intervention is planned for April 13-20. Films, religious services, educational and cultural events will precede the mass march and rally at Toronto's City Hall on April 20.

Demonstrations against U.S. policy and Canadian complicity are also

planned for Ottawa; Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Vancouver, B.C., to coincide with demonstrations in the United States on April 20.

If you'd like to work on any of the five subcommittees building the April 20 demonstration in Toronto, contact TAIC at 99 Tyndall Ave. Apt. 706, Toronto, Ontario M6K 2G2 or call (416) 535-8779.—BARRY WEISLEDER ■

Support widens in Seattle

By GREG STARLING

SEATTLE—The Spring Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice Coalition, which is building the April 20 demonstration in Seattle, has received a large number of endorsements from labor, church, and community organizations.

Since December, 50 activists, representing solidarity groups, unions, socialist and peace organizations, have been meeting regularly to build the April 20 march and rally in Seattle.

General meetings are scheduled for April 1 and 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Postal Workers Union Hall in Seattle.

For more information call (206) 282-4540 or 525-4540. ■



Diane Burneo, executive secretary Local 616, SEIU, addressing March 21 Labor Speak-Out for April 20 Spring Mobilization in San Francisco. Over 150 people turned out to hear prominent Bay Area union leaders speak on the issues of peace, jobs, and justice.

Student recounts tour:

Education suffers in El Salvador

Lois Miller, a student at San Francisco State University, visited El Salvador Jan. 15-25, 1985, as part of a delegation of students from seven U.S. universities. The tour was conducted under the auspices of the United States Student Association, at the invitation of the director of the National University of El Salvador. At the university, which was reopened in May 1984 after a four-year closure, the students met with the General Union of El Salvadoran Students (AGEUS).

The following interview was conducted in San Francisco by Millie Gonzalez.

Socialist Action: What was the purpose of the meeting of the U.S. student delegation with AGEUS at the University of El Salvador?

Lois Miller: The visit was designed to build concrete international ties between the University of El Salvador

"We inquired without results about the political prisoners."

and universities in the United States and to put pressure on the government of El Salvador to restore funding to the university.

The university is constantly being harassed. For one thing it is denied a decent budget. The university is only being funded at a quarter of its original budget. This does not include any extra money for reconstruction of the San Salvador campus, which has sustained an estimated \$30 million dollars worth of damage.

The law-school and medical-school programs, which before 1980 provided services for the poor, are no longer functioning because of the budgetary cutbacks and the damage to the buildings. The clinic was destroyed. The hospital is now being used as a military hospital. They can no longer provide services for the people. The budget now is only enough to provide a few faculty and administrative salaries.

S.A.: Is AGEUS analogous to the Associated Student Bodies in the universities of the United States?

Miller: AGEUS has many similarities to Associated Student Bodies. Its mem-

bers work as representatives of the students on campus and act as go-betweens between the administration and the student body. The big difference is that AGEUS is not officially sanctioned by the government of El Salvador or by the university.

And it does many things that Associated Students wouldn't do. For instance, it provides material aid to the students. It also conducts fund-raising to buy materials for the university departments, as well as to provide medical supplies and material aid for refugees and people outside of the university. So it is not only supplying the needs of the campus but it also recognizes that, as students, they have a responsibility toward the larger community.

S.A.: How does the low budget affect the operations of the university and the kind of activities that AGEUS engages in?

Miller: One of the ways in which AGEUS helps is to organize work crews. The students, faculty, and administrators all participate in helping to rebuild the university—putting up walls, sweeping up messes. This kind of volunteer work allows the money that they have to go to faculty salaries.

But there was so much destruction that the money is also desperately needed for things like microscopes. The only recognized school of medicine in El Salvador has only four microscopes.

The university, which was free before the closing, has had to impose small fees on the students. This has cut down on the enrollment quite a bit, since the people of El Salvador are very poor. The



Students rounded up by security forces during closing of National University in San Salvador on June 26, 1980

Lois Miller

quality of education has also dropped, since the university cannot even afford to buy materials for teaching.

S.A.: That is almost analogous to the federal cutbacks that Reagan is imposing on students in this country.

Miller: Yes, you can definitely see parallels with what's happening in the United States. In the United States more and more people are being cut out of the opportunity to go to school. The ironic part is that one of the big reasons for this is the fact that more and more of our money is going for a defense budget that includes sending money to regimes—such as the one in El Salvador—which use the money to oppress the people, not to fund higher education.

S.A.: Did you do anything else besides visit the universities and meet with students and faculty?

Miller: We visited the prisons where many students who are considered "subversives" are being held. We visited Mariona prison, which is the men's prison, and Ilopango. In both places we were allowed to visit the political prisoners. They gave us testimonies that often included stories of how they had been tortured.

We spoke to the vice minister of justice, Dr. Dino Castro Callejos. We asked her about students being harassed and about political prisoners being held without charges. She claimed that this was totally false—that every person being held had been charged.

When we pressed her about the justification for the closing of the university she said that the national security of El Salvador required it. In regard to the



damage to the university, she claimed that it was the students themselves who had vandalized the university and had set fire to the buildings.

She also maintained that most of the destruction occurred when an earthquake struck the poorly constructed buildings. This is totally untrue because the last earthquake that hit El Salvador was in 1962 or 1963.

We inquired—without results—about political prisoners such as Claudina Calderon, a psychology student at the University of El Salvador who was disappeared along with her young son. She has not been seen or heard from since she was taken to the city prison in San Salvador. But political prisoners in Ilopango and Mariona told us that they had heard from Catholic social service people that she was still alive.

S.A.: How can American students foster ties with Salvadoran students and show support for them?

Miller: We can get organized and start educating other students. We can do teach-ins. We can get involved in solidarity work. We can do little things like write letters to the editor of our local newspapers. And we can get involved with big actions like the April 20 mobilization.

We can send newspaper articles to El Salvador about April 20 to let the Salvadorans know that people in the United States do oppose Reagan's policies and that they're acting on it. This will build an international solidarity so strong that it will help carry them through their revolution. ■

Cleveland meeting builds April 20

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

CLEVELAND—On March 3 the Peace Action Coalition of Northeast Ohio (PACNO) sponsored a town meeting at Cleveland State University to help publicize the April 20 demonstration in Washington, D.C. Over 300 people attended. Sixty also attended a fund-raising reception before the meeting.

Leon Lynch, United Steelworkers of America international vice president, discussed the negative impact U.S. foreign policy has on jobs. He said, "Peace doesn't just mean not being in a shooting war," and explained that he considers unemployment, plant closings, and cuts in social services as well as nuclear freeze and non-intervention to be peace issues.

Lynch also described his personal involvement in demonstrations against South African apartheid. He said he'd been arrested at the South African embassy and would continue to speak out on the issue which he called an abomination aided, abetted, and sup-

ported by the Reagan administration.

He announced his attempts to obtain a visa so he can travel to South Africa to meet with trade unionists there. He discussed the successes in Pittsburgh. After numerous pickets, the South African consulate in that city closed. Pressure forced the City Council to enact legislation prohibiting financial support to apartheid by investment of city funds. He urged other local coalitions to press for similar gains.

Lynch expressed his support to PACNO, saying that the goals of the coalition can only be achieved through action. He announced his plans to participate in the April 20 demonstration in Washington, D.C., and promised his help in trying to actively involve the Steelworkers union.

Helen Seidman, field coordinator of the Ohio Freeze, described the dangers of the U.S. military build-up. Roberto Vargas, counselor for labor and cultural affairs of the Nicaraguan Embassy, discussed the escalating U.S. threats against Nicaragua. Sister Cindy Dren-

nan reported on the recent attacks on the sanctuary movement.

Following the speeches, Carl Edelman, one of the five PACNO coordinators, presented a proposal for a March 30 outdoor rally to focus on opposition to apartheid and U.S. intervention in Central America. Meeting participants enthusiastically voiced their support to this idea.

Support for April 20 is picking up in other northern Ohio cities. The Toledo

coalition has already filled one bus and has plans for one or two more. At least three buses, including a large contingent of Palestinians from the November 29 Coalition, will leave from Youngstown.

The Youngstown Peace Council also plans to send a bus to Cleveland on March 22 to participate in the weekly Friday picket lines held outside the South African consulate. Over 500 students attended a debate on apartheid at Oberlin College. ■

Philadelphia buses will roll

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

PHILADELPHIA—An initial 20 buses have been chartered by the April Actions Coalition for Peace, Jobs, and Justice of the Delaware Valley for the Washington, D.C., demonstration on April 20—and more are expected to roll. Last month nine local trade-union presidents signed a letter to labor activists urging support for April 20, and several locals will be sending their own buses to Washington.

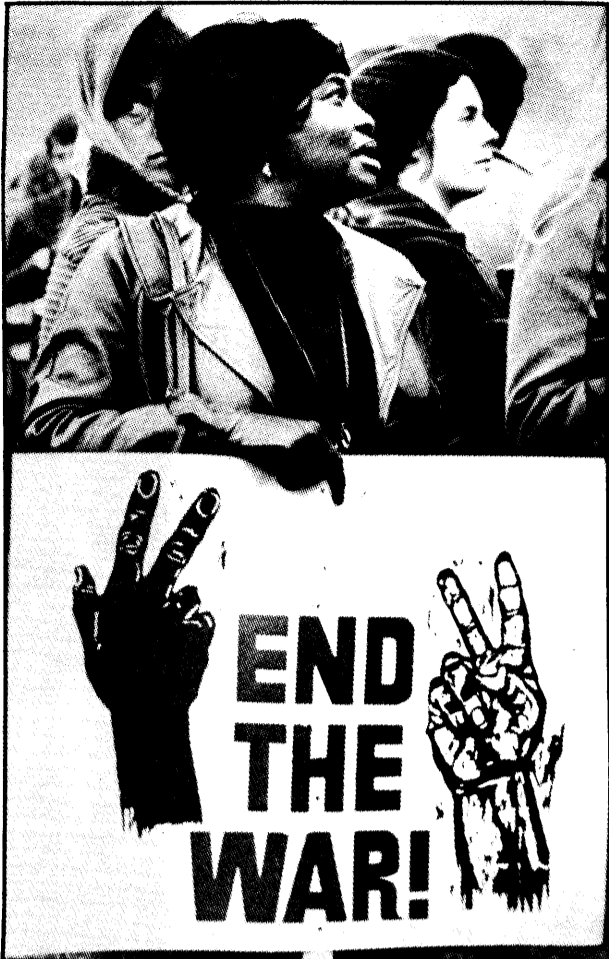
The April Actions Coalition, which includes practically all the major peace-oriented groups in the city, is located at

1425 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, and may be contacted at (215) 854-0177.

Meanwhile, on April 13, the issue of U.S. foreign policy versus full employment will be discussed at an educational conference at the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Hall, 45 S. Fourth St., Philadelphia.

Speakers include William Lucy, international secretary-treasurer of AFSCME; Dave Dyson, coordinator of the National Labor Committee for Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador; Henry Nicholas, president of the National Union of Hospital Workers Local 1199; and Juliet Schor, a labor economist at Harvard University. ■

How the Vietnam War was stopped



By ASHER HARER

The American antiwar movement of the 1960s and early 1970s arose in response to the U.S. government's "dirty war" against the people of Indochina.

It was a war that lasted for 15 years—from 1959 until 1974. Vietnam, especially the South, was virtually destroyed. More bombs were dropped on Vietnam—and later Cambodia—than in all previous wars combined. Vietnam was the first "television war"—showing all the brutality of the U.S. military machine.

All in all, 3 million U.S. soldiers served in Vietnam. Sixty thousand died; 46,000 of them in combat. And how many Vietnamese were killed, maimed, and burned to death? Perhaps millions.

The movement of the '60s was antiwar all the way. It was not the old-style pacifist movement that opposed war until it began—only then to become gung-ho patriots. That leadership was bypassed.

This antiwar movement was the first mass antiwar movement in this country that opposed a war while it was going on and that played a decisive role in stopping it.

It united students, workers, Blacks, Latinos, Asians. Yet most of those who marched were Democrats or Republicans, not socialists—although the leaders were radicals.

The movement, however, was successful because certain political and organizational questions were fought out and approved before every big action. These included the following:

- 1) Non-exclusion. No red-baiting.
- 2) Political autonomy. No endorsement of political candidates. This would split the movement.
- 3) A nonviolent, mass-action approach aimed at youth and GIs. Organized civil disobedience was not excluded but was strictly secondary and individual.
- 4) A single-issue, i.e., "Out Now" approach. The "multi-issue" people wanted to combine such things as community organizing with support of so-called Democratic Party "peace" candidates.
- 5) Democratic decision-making. One activist, one vote. No secrecy.

How the movement arose

The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)—in the process of breaking with the right-wing Social Democrats—took the lead. In 1965, on April 17, SDS organized an antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. Twenty thousand came, mostly youth. There had been demonstrations before, but not of this size.

Then came the "teach-ins."

The first one was held at Ann Arbor, Mich., on March 24-25, 1965. Over 3000 students and teachers, denied the campus during daytime, met from 8 p.m. until 8 a.m. They discussed the war, debated government spokespersons, and learned the truth in this process.

Asher Harer was the executive secretary of the San Francisco Bay Area Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the early 1960s and a leader of the anti-Vietnam War movement from 1964 to 1971.

Then came the Berkeley, Calif., teach-in of May 21-22, 1965. In the course of 36 continuous hours, 30,000 attended.

The first big march and rally in the San Francisco Bay Area took place on April 15, 1967. About 75,000 people marched up Market Street to Kezar Stadium. It was a broad coalition, including many young Blacks who marched behind a banner, "The NLF-Viet Cong never called us Nigger!"

Seven thousand unionists marched, many of them behind their union banners—especially those of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Very little official union endorsement or support had developed at that time, however. Union leaders were generally solidly behind AFL-CIO President George Meany, who was "All the way with LBJ."

The war escalates

The year 1968 opened with a major setback for the U.S. military in Vietnam—the Tet Offensive. On Jan. 31, the lunar New Year holiday known as "Tet," the National Liberation Front launched a counterattack the length and breadth of South Vietnam. The NLF occupied the U.S. Embassy in Saigon for one day.

For a few days the NLF held almost every major city in South Vietnam. Their success, which came as a complete surprise to the U.S. military, showed that the population was behind the NLF. The U.S. Army held only its own bases.

The United States responded with massive carpet bombings of the cities. Thousands of civilians died. Over 500,000 were made homeless by B-52s from Guam. Vietnam, a beautiful country, once the "rice bowl" of Asia, was turned into a wasteland of bomb craters.

The Tet offensive and the U.S. military's savage, inhuman response, was fully recorded by the press and TV. It convinced additional Americans that the war was morally indefensible and unwinnable.

This was the turning point for the antiwar movement, which grew rapidly and became more and more an international movement.

In 1968 the demonstrations were not concentrated in two or three cities but took place all over the United States. Several hundred thousand marched. There was a march to the Pentagon of 100,000 people, led by Vietnam veterans. Over 600 demonstrators were arrested.

Time magazine's cover featured a photo of a banner, "Bring Our Boys Home Now!" This magazine went all over the world—including to Vietnam, to the GIs fighting the "dirty war."

The GIs saw that the movement was not against them. It wanted them home, where they also wanted to be.

The U.S. Army became more and more demoralized. It was reported that GIs were questioning authority, refusing to follow orders to advance if they considered the situation dangerous.

In 1969 came the huge marches and rallies. *Life* magazine called the Nov. 15 marches "a display without historical parallel, the largest expression of dissent ever seen in this country."

"Millions learned the truth about the 'dirty war' in Vietnam."

Vietnam veterans and active-duty soldiers participated. There had been widely publicized cases of GIs refusing to go to Vietnam, such as the Fort Hood Three and the Fort Jackson Eight.

Just before the Nov. 15 marches, the story of the massacre at My Lai in South Vietnam broke in the newspapers. Eighteen months earlier, on March 16, 1968, My Lai had been occupied by American troops.

There had been no resistance. None of the villagers bore arms. Still, their homes were destroyed and the villagers—men, women, and children—were lined up and machine-gunned. In total, 799 people died. Buried under the bodies of the dead, 132 villagers lived to tell the story.

This event, probably one of many, was covered up for one-and-one-half years. The American people were revolted.

The "unwinnable war" continued. Now it could be seen openly as a genocidal war to destroy the rural population, considered the base of the Viet Cong. It became necessary "to reduce the population," as one American general put it.

The infamous "body count" became the index of how the war was going. Some Americans, not even radicals, found themselves rooting for the Viet Cong—a strange turn of events.

Larry Rottman, a Vietnam vet, expressed this sentiment in a poem:

"Ask what kind of war it is/Where you can be pinned down/All day in a muddy rice paddy/While your buddies are being shot/And a close-support Phantom Jet/Who has napalmed the enemy/Wraps itself around a tree and explodes/And you cheer inside?"

The campuses explode

The power of the antiwar movement was based on the indignation of millions who had learned the truth about "the dirty war" in Vietnam.

When on April 29, 1970, the United States invaded Cambodia, the antiwar coalition immediately called for a demonstration on May 9—only one week away.

The campuses exploded. In one most unlikely place, Kent State, Ohio, there was an antiwar rally. It was fired on by the National Guard and four students were killed. Within a few days 350 universities were on strike.

On May 9, 1970, with one week's preparation, 100,000 marched on the White House. Walter Reuther, UAW president, finally sent a telegram to Nixon condemning the Cambodia invasion and the shooting down of students.

At Jackson State College in Mississippi, a Black school, the National Guard killed two students charged with "rioting."



But the war continued and demonstrations continued. The biggest of all occurred on April 24, 1971. In San Francisco an estimated 250,000 to 350,000 participated. In New York there were over one-half million. A Harris Poll showed 60 percent of Americans in favor of the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

Then came the Pentagon Papers. Nixon was re-elected after he promised he would negotiate and withdraw troops. But he broke off negotiations and rained 100,000 tons of bombs on North Vietnam in 10 days. It was an act of vengeance. In the middle of the bombing he went to Moscow to negotiate a trade agreement and was received with honors.

Yesterday and today

The combined heroic resistance of the Vietnamese and the tenacious struggle against the war by the American antiwar movement finally forced the United States to pull out. In 1973 the pullouts began.

On Jan. 27, 1973, a cease fire was signed. These were the Paris Accords. Vietnam again remained divided, but that wouldn't last long. The war resumed. But without U.S. troops, the new U.S. puppet, Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, lost all of Vietnam to the North Vietnamese armies—and the war was over.

Yes, this movement altered the course of history. It demonstrated that working people in this country could effectively change the foreign policy of this government if mobilized on a correct "Out Now" basis.

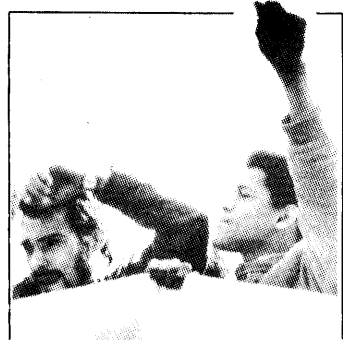
Today, as the U.S. government rains down napalm bombs once again—this time on the people of Central America—a new antiwar movement is emerging. What we did in the 1960s and '70s will be done again.

But this time, I believe, the movement will be compelled to develop on a much higher political plane. Today, for example, the unions are in on the ground floor in this developing antiwar movement. In the case of the San Francisco Spring Mobilization, the unions are in the leadership of the movement.

And out of it must come something that did not come out of the antiwar movement of the 1960s and '70s, and that is a political organization that represents the American working class—a labor party.

The next big step the labor and antiwar movements must take is the formation of a labor party that would oppose the war and actually begin the fight against the political system dominated by both the Republican and Democratic parties. ■

Socialist Action Forum



Charting a course toward independent political action



Ron Weisen: 'We can put a halt to concessions'

The following is an interview with Ron Weisen, president of United Steelworkers of America Local 1397, which represents workers at U.S. Steel's Homestead Works. Weisen, who ran an unsuccessful bid for international president of the USWA, is a leader of the union's Rank-and-File Caucus.

Weisen was recently sentenced to six months in jail for his activities in support of the Rev. Doug Roth [See Socialist Action, January and March 1985]. He is one of 65 arrested for activities sponsored by the Network to Save the Mon Valley. Funds to help with the defense effort can be sent to Labor Defense Fund, 615 McClure St., Homestead, Pa. 15120. The interview was conducted by Shirley Pasholk.

Socialist Action: One of the themes of the April 20 demonstration is the need to spend money for jobs and social services rather than the military. Could you go into why you think this is important?

Ron Weisen: Our jobs are being exported out of this country. What they're doing is exporting slave labor. We have 97 large corporations in El Salvador paying their work force 31 cents an hour.

Now Reagan wants a war down there to protect big business. It's our sons and daughters, not the sons and daughters of the rich, who will fight this war. He was elected president of the United States—not dictator of Central America.

Our argument isn't with the people down there. They're only being used by American corporations to make a larger profit. We should be out of Central America.

S.A.: Could you describe some of

your activities?

Weisen: I've taken U.S. Steel to court five times to save this valley. It seems like the international union picks up on every program which comes out of Local 1397.

We started the first food bank in the USWA. We started the first unemployed committee in the entire country during the 1979 Youngstown shutdown.

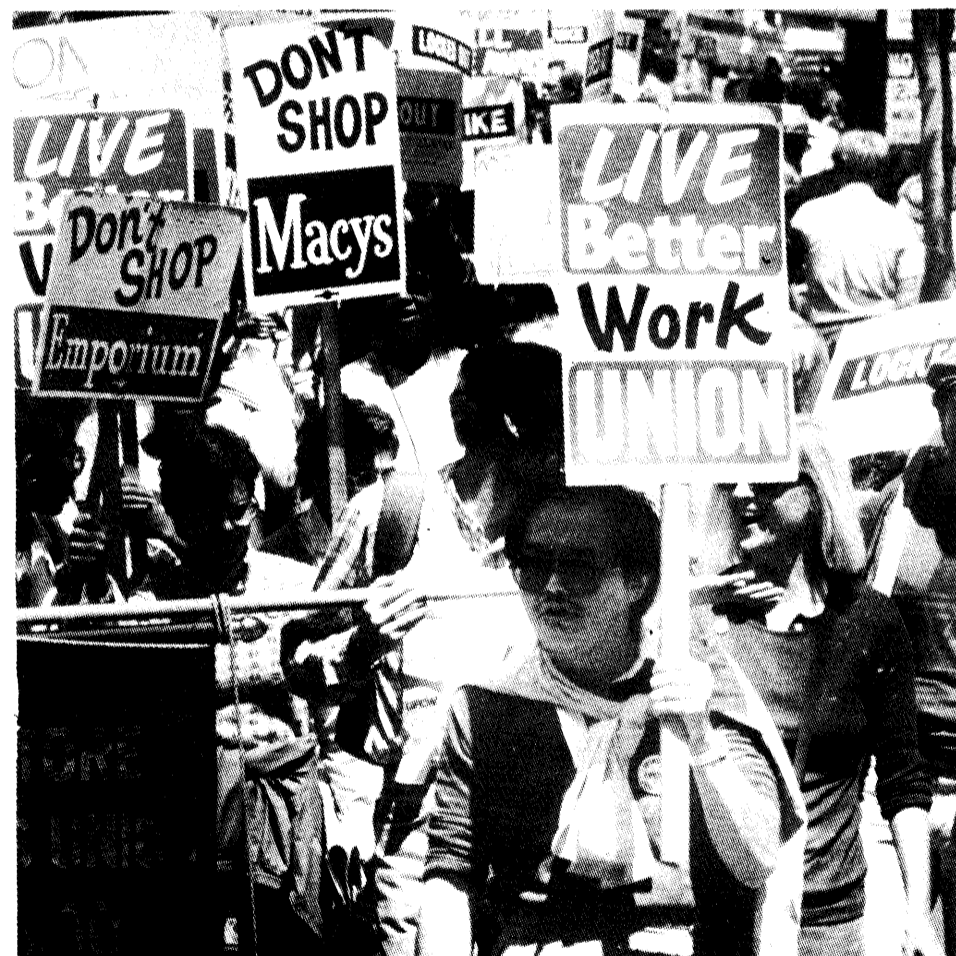
We started the Tri-State Conference on Steel. We asked McBride [then international president of the USWA] four

(continued on page 11)

This month's FORUM is devoted to a discussion of the four themes of the April 20 antiwar demonstrations. A major focus of the discussion is the bipartisan character of the U.S. government's austerity and war policies and the need for the labor, Black, and antiwar movements to chart a political course independent of the Democratic and Republican parties.

As in previous issues of FORUM, we have invited leaders from unions and antiwar and Black organizations, who do not necessarily agree with us, to express their views. Our goal in this section is to encourage a wide-ranging discussion on subjects of interest to all those involved in movements for social change.

In this issue we are presenting the views of the following six people: (1) Ron Weisen, president of the United Steelworkers of America Local 1397; (2) Ken Morgan, leader of the Baltimore chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party; (3) Jerry Gordon, coordinator of the Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; (4) Anthony Mazzocchi, former international vice president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union; (5) Carole Seligman, staff writer for Socialist Action newspaper; and (6) Dan La Botz, instructor of political science at Chicago's Roosevelt University.—THE EDITORS



Ken Morgan: 'April 20 is vital to Black people'

The following is an interview with Ken Morgan, a leader of the Baltimore chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP). Morgan is one of a number of NBIPP activists who seek to preserve and implement the original NBIPP charter, which establishes it as an organization politically independent of the Democratic and Republican parties. He is currently involved in building the April Actions for Peace, Jobs and Justice. The interview was conducted by Alan Benjamin.

Socialist Action: Could you tell us something about your background?

Ken Morgan: I participated in my first civil rights demonstration at Tem-

ple University in 1963. It was a protest against the murder of Blacks in the South. Since that time I have been involved in community activism. As I gained more experience and knowledge about what was needed to change the world, I became involved in issues that affect Black people nationally and internationally.

S.A.: What is your involvement in NBIPP and what is the current state of the party?

Morgan: I have been involved in NBIPP since its inception five years ago. I've tried to build the party because of what it stands for in terms of Black political action. Independent political

action is key to Black people's liberation.

The NBIPP charter states that the aim of the party is to obtain power in order to radically transform the social and economic order, that is, to achieve social and economic freedom for the masses of Black people. Therefore, the party is supposed to actively oppose racism, sexual oppression, and capitalist exploitation. That pretty much sums up the thrust of what the National Black Independent Political Party should stand for.

S.A.: You say should stand for. Has it lived up to its charter during these five years?

Morgan: NBIPP is at a critical stage. There are people who would like to abandon the charter. There is a battle within the party between those who want NBIPP to be an active participant in the struggles of the Black community—a mass-based, independent party—and those who are opposed to

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The following comments on the April 20 antiwar demonstrations were given to *Socialist Action* by Jerry Gordon. Gordon, an international representative of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, was the organizer of the Sept. 14-16, 1984, Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean held in Cleveland.

Gordon was formerly a co-coordinator of the National Peace Action Coalition, which organized some of the mass protests against the war in Vietnam.

The potential exists for a massive turnout on April 20.

Let's look at the component forces. The first are the anti-intervention forces. The largest demonstration by these forces occurred four years ago on May 3, 1981. It was sponsored by a single current of the movement. They really let loose a good burst of energy and succeeded in turning out 100,000 people. The time had to be right and the place had to be right. It all seemed to come together.

It is ironic that with the growth of the movement since 1981, with all of the escalations that have occurred, May 3 still stands as the largest anti-intervention demonstration.

By contrast, today we have the entire anti-intervention movement on record in support of this demonstration. Sentiment has grown manifold. The dangers and the threats and actions taken by this government are much worse. And so the potential is there for a large turnout on April 20.

Antinuclear movement

Now the second component is the antinuclear movement. At our conference in Cleveland in September, we took a very positive view of this movement. Let me read from the action proposal that we adopted:

"The U.S. anti-intervention and antinuclear movements are natural allies. Both movements should unite in opposing interventionist wars, the nuclear arms race, and astronomical military spending which is bankrupting this country and depriving it of funds needed for jobs, health care, education, housing, food programs, and the environment.

Unity in action by the anti-intervention and antinuclear movements—so badly needed today—can pave the way for demonstrations in the months ahead of a size and magnitude without precedent."

Of course there are differences within the movement on phraseology used by some disarmament groups, on an electoral focus, and on a sometimes even-handed approach toward anti-intervention demands.

But with full knowledge of whatever differences we might have in those areas, the view of the majority at the Cleveland conference was to reject what

Jerry Gordon:

'We must tap the antiwar mood'

we felt were sectarian attacks against the antinuclear movement.

We saw it, above all, as an expression of the fear, the concern, and the anxiety of tens of millions of people in this country about a nuclear holocaust. If this is the form it happens to take at this time—a nuclear-freeze movement—we'll relate to it on that basis.

So we viewed them positively and we are working with them as partners in this effort. Of course, we have the experience of June 1982, when the disarmament movement generated the largest antiwar demonstration we have seen in all history—surpassing the ones we had in Vietnam—with a turnout of approximately 1 million people in New York.

Of course, it is one thing to have organized that demonstration when Reagan was talking about winning a limited nuclear war. It is somewhat different now when these talks [a reference to the arms negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva] are going on. Nevertheless, the very deep-seated, passionate desire to curb these nuclear maniacs remains.

Anti-apartheid movement

The third component that has developed rather swiftly is the anti-apartheid movement. We are witnessing an exploding revolution of Blacks in South Africa and, at the same time, a spread

of demonstrations by all sorts of groups in the United States. The sweep of the opposition to the apartheid regime is immense.

This was triggered by the general strike on Nov. 5 of hundreds of thousands of workers in Transvaal and the

'The passionate desire to curb the nuclear maniacs remains.'

ruthless repression in the aftermath by the cops—the killings, the jailings of trade unionists. The outbreak of the civil disobedience actions in Washington was a result of the demand that these trade unionists be freed.

The U.S. government cannot deal with South Africa like it tries to deal with Nicaragua or El Salvador. This sentiment against the apartheid regime can be a vital factor in the building of the April 20 action.

Struggles at home

We should not overlook the fourth theme, the fourth component—the struggles here at home.

Take what is happening to U.S. federal workers, of whom there are tens of thousands in Washington, D.C. They

are threatened with a 5-percent wage cut in October so that the Pentagon can have more money to carry on these wars.

Temporary workers are being hired in qualitatively greater numbers than we have seen before. That is a union-busting move that is being resisted by the American Federation of Government Employees. The federal workers represent an enormous constituency.

Consider the cuts in social security. The government is threatening to do away with the cost-of-living adjustment—after all of Reagan's promises. Look at the austerity measures coming down. The tie-in is easier and easier to make by the day. So what is the conclusion when you examine all of this?

The conclusion is that the vision that we had, starting with the organizing of the Emergency National Conference, of demonstrations of substantial proportions is realizable. But obviously, nothing is automatic—nothing is spontaneous.

The challenge we face in the remaining crucial weeks before April 20 is to close the gap between what the movement is capable of mobilizing for the April actions—given the political situation—and our current state of organization in preparing for those actions.

Some demonstration centers like San Francisco and Los Angeles are going full speed ahead. But other cities, especially some of those building for the D.C. action, have some catching up to do. There is still time.

If an all-out, movement-wide effort is now unleashed, involving the movement's activists and tapping all of its resources, April 20 will see a powerful show of opposition to the U.S. government's war and interventionist policies.

Voter abstention reveals distrust



By CAROLE SELIGMAN

Last November Ronald Reagan received 54.5 million votes to Mondale's 37.5 million. This means that of the 174 million eligible voters in this country, 82 million did not vote.

The ruling-class media and its statisticians had predicted a significant increase in voter turnout over 1980. But this did not happen. The increase was a mere three-tenths of 1 percent, for a total turnout of 52.9 percent.

At its first national convention in November 1984, Socialist Action adopted a document entitled, "28 Theses on the American Socialist Revolu-

tion and the Building of the Revolutionary Party" (*Socialist Action Information Bulletin*, No. 1, \$2). Although written two years ago, the document's assessment of the Reagan presidency and of voter abstention remains as valid today as when it was first written. It states:

"The Reagan victory [in 1980] was by no means a popular mandate for reactionary programs. On the contrary, it was the expression of the increased distrust and disaffection with the two-party system by half of the eligible voting-age population who preferred to abstain from voting.

"This attitude of cynicism and

indifference to the two capitalist parties could only express itself in the negative given the complete lack of any independent expression of working-class politics.

"The absence of a labor party based on the unions has put its stamp on all aspects of political life in the United States. This has prevented the working class from using its potential strength as an organized and independent political force....

"With the growing political and economic crisis of U.S. capitalism and the growing ferment among the working masses, the preconditions for the development of a labor party continue to ripen."

In 1984 Ronald Reagan received no mandate from the American people to carry out his reactionary policies. As in 1980, the Democrats provided no alternative to "Reaganism."

If anything, Mondale's policies were indistinguishable from Reagan's on most of the important issues.

The bipartisan attacks on the rights and standard of living of millions of working people will only accelerate during Reagan's second term. The disaffection expressed in the continued abstention will give way to resistance and struggle as the economy inevitably moves into a downturn.

But in order to successfully drive back the employers' attacks, it will be necessary for working people to break through all the obstacles in their path.

Union activists and leaders will find they must challenge the conservative business unionism of the current union leadership in order to effectively fight the boss. Strikes, picket lines, and genuine solidarity must be organized with the full participation of the union membership.

And as the new leadership engages the employers in battle at the job site, it will find it needs to challenge the bosses' parties in the government as well. This is the next big step working people must take.

Anthony Mazzocchi:**'Labor needs own political party'**

The following is an interview with Anthony Mazzocchi, director of the New York-based Workers' Policy Project. Mazzocchi is a former international vice president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union. He was a leader of that union's work in the area of occupational safety and health and was active in the anti-Vietnam War movement. The interview was conducted by Alan Benjamin.

Socialist Action: What is the Workers' Policy Project and what sort of work is it involved in?

Anthony Mazzocchi: The Workers' Policy Project was founded as a think tank and as an activist, educational organization partisan to the interests of working people. Our projects range from economic educational projects to assisting groups of workers in various struggles. We are also committed to helping form a new political instrument based on a working-class program.

S.A.: You were instrumental in the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) a number of years ago. What does the occupational safety and health picture look like today, and what is the labor movement doing on this issue?

Mazzocchi: The overall situation for workers today is one of increasing dete-

rioration of health and safety conditions. There have not been any innovations of significance since the passage of OSHA.

We are calling on all workers to push the "Right to Act."

This in effect is a call to deputize someone in the workplace to be an environmental ombudsman. This person would have access to any and all data the company has in its possession and

**... Ron Weisen**

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years ago about the use of eminent domain and the idea of the public authority. He said he didn't want anything to do with it. "That's socialism," he said. Now they're involved in the Tri-State Conference trying to save Big Dorothy [blast furnace at U.S. Steel Duquesne Works slated for shutdown]. It's a little late, but it's about time.

S.A.: What can be done to stop plants like Duquesne Works from closing?

Weisen: If the steel companies won't make the steel America needs, then the American people must find a different way. Local 1397 and the Tri-State Conference on Steel propose a Tennessee-Valley-Authority-type approach to the steel industry.

At least \$3 trillion need to be spent over this decade to bring our nation's infrastructure up to standards. Every million dollars spent on infrastructure requires 100,000 tons of steel. In the Tri-State region alone, at least 8 million tons of steel will be needed just to repair the roads and bridges.

The federal government should take ultimate responsibility for financing and backing such an Authority. Unlike the TVA, the SVA [Steel Valley Authority] should be locally controlled with a board made up of worker, community, and local government representatives. New management should be appointed by and responsible to this board.

Of course, greedy corporations like U.S. Steel will never voluntarily sell its facilities to such an Authority—not when they get big tax write-offs from shutdowns. Eminent domain has been used to preserve forests and endangered wildlife. Why shouldn't it be used to save our jobs and the steel industry?

S.A.: The International claims that the future direction of the union is in non-adversarial relations. Do you think they're serious about their corporate campaign or do you think it's a substitute for picket-line activity and building solidarity?

Weisen: They'll never build solidar-

ity. When Abel [ex-international president of the USWA] brought in the ENA [Experimental Negotiating Agreement], it was the death of our union, because if you don't have the right to strike, you don't have a union. [The right to strike at the expiration of the basic-steel agreement was given up in exchange for cost-of-living and guaranteed annual wage increases.] They've been in bed with the

"Reagan wants a war down there to protect big business."

company so long they should file for maternity benefits.

At a recent meeting in Clearwater, Fla., local [USWA] presidents told horror stories for six hours. They have laborers at Gary and South Works working for \$3.85 an hour. In 1981 over 23,000 people worked at Gary; they're down to 3700 today.

Last month 600 union presidents met in Washington, D.C. There was a big sign behind the podium, "Solidarity in Steel."

I said to them, "Why don't you rip that sign down because you don't stand for it, you're still pitting one plant against the other."

I said, "The company does anything it wants. It's steamrolling right over us because of the concessions package you and these presidents okayed."

"We can stop the concessions," I said. "All we do when we give concessions is subsidize our future shutdown."

S.A.: Why were you arrested?

Weisen: We took on Mellon Bank. That really shook up Pittsburgh. We went to the Shadyside Presbyterian Church in East Liberty. Thomas Graham is a trustee there. He's also a director of Mellon Bank and an assistant to Roderick at U.S. Steel. This church has \$7 million in an endowment fund while people are starving in Pittsburgh.

We dressed as bishops and went to St. Paul's Cathedral where all the Catholic corporate wheels go. We said Mel-

would have the legal authority to act on that information—to stop any dangerous processes. This ombudsman would be absolutely secure against retaliation.

Many unions have been forced to cut back on their health and safety efforts. The general attack on unions by management and the reduction of commitment on the part of OSHA are creating conditions that, we think, will cause an increase in workers' accidents and disease.

S.A.: One of the themes of the April 20 national demonstrations is "Money for Jobs, Not for War."

What in your opinion is the state of the labor movement in the wake of the Reagan re-election?

Mazzocchi: The labor movement is in need of a complete overhaul. The struc-



ture, strategy, and tactics of the mainstream unions have proven inadequate to the task at hand. The relationship of the AFL-CIO to the Democratic Party has kept workers discussing the corporate agenda. We need to create our own political instrument and set our own agenda.

The recent Reagan budget will have the same effect as every budget written in the last 10 years. Increasing hardship and insecurity for workers and the poor—and increasing wealth for the corporations—are the order of the day.

S.A.: What has been the role of the Democratic Party during the first four years of the Reagan administration?

Mazzocchi: The Democratic Party is basically corporatist in policy and direction. It possesses neither the desire nor the will to challenge Reagan. Look at the response to the last election—a move to the right in order to "capture" Reagan's vote.

A new political party is necessary and possible. As part of this effort, the Workers' Policy Project is creating the "Workers' Political Association."

The WPAs are membership organizations formed on a local and regional basis. In order to initiate a new political instrument, we are asking people to contact us at the Workers' Policy Project, 853 Broadway, Rm. 2014, New York, N.Y. 10003.

lon Bank controls the bishops. Money controls all the bishops. I don't care what denomination it is.

We went to Youngstown wearing gangster uniforms and carrying violin cases. Reporters asked, "Why are you dressed that way? Are you implying DeBartolo's a gangster?" I said, "Bowie Kuhn, the commissioner of baseball, made that statement."

S.A.: How do you view Labor Management Participation Teams? [A program in the 1980 basic-steel agreement to set up joint labor-management groups to consider quality of work life, productivity, cost savings, and similar non-contractual issues.]

Weisen: The pilot program for LMPT was in Aliquippa, Pa. When the LMPT program started in 1981, there were 12,000 workers there. Only 1000 are left. Any time the company institutes a program, it's to benefit the company and screw the workers. LMPT is another name for job elimination.

S.A.: Some people claim the U.S. worker has lost power, industry is decapitalizing, and there's really nothing that can be done to turn around the situation.

Weisen: We could turn it around.

... Ken Morgan

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this perspective. Some people want to take the anti-imperialism and the anti-capitalism out of the NBIPP program.

S.A.: As expected, the Rainbow Coalition and Jesse Jackson endorsed Walter Mondale. What is your assessment of the state of the Black movement in the aftermath of the Jesse Jackson campaign?

Morgan: Although I politically defend Jesse Jackson and Louis Farrakhan against racist attacks, the Rainbow Coalition was a dead-end road. There needs to be some form of independent political action—although this does not mean that we would not support people or politicians who are con-

Unions are the greatest thing in the world. I might tear the labor flag down a lot, but I'm only trying to take the many stains out of it. Young people'd better realize that unions set the standard of living for everybody in this country.

S.A.: The Steelworkers spend a lot of money and effort supporting Democratic Party candidates...

Weisen: That's a joke. The most we can give a Democratic candidate is 20 percent of what he or she receives. The corporations give that same Democrat the other 80 percent. How the hell are they going to vote? What we have to do is put our own labor people into these jobs.

S.A.: How can workers stop attacks from union busting, concessions, two-tiered systems, and cuts in social services?

Weisen: We've got to mobilize all the people and shut this country down. That's the only way the crooked politicians, the corporations, and the banks will sit up and take notice.

In 1892 Homestead was a battleground. Homestead's going to be the battleground again for a new union movement.

sistent with our views on specific issues.

Black people helped elect Carter. But Carter cut the budget, attacked social service programs, and generally did the kinds of things that Reagan has done. He didn't represent the interests of Black people. As for Mondale, he was trying to out-Reagan Reagan.

It is important to understand that Jesse Jackson captured the motion of Black people, not vice versa. Black people were in motion around a way to deal with the cutbacks in affirmative action, joblessness, and oppression. The Jackson campaign was an effort to capture that motion and restrain it.

But as the economic situation gets worse for Blacks in the next few years, a big opportunity will present itself to

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Dan La Botz:

'Bipartisan policies kill civilians in Nicaragua'

By DAN LA BOTZ

Dan La Botz, an instructor in the Political Science Department at Chicago's Roosevelt University, recently returned from Nicaragua. He has worked for 10 years as a labor and community organizer in Chicago and has written extensively on Mexico and Central America.

I hitchhiked from Matagalpa to Jinotega in the mountains on the north Pacific side of Nicaragua.

Everyone hitchhikes in that part of the country. Bus service never was very good, and now with the U.S. boycott of the country it's hard to get spare parts to keep all the buses running. But almost all of the truck drivers stop, military and civilian, and 20 or 30 people throw their bags and bundles and boxes over the side, climb up, a foot on the axle, a foot on the tire, and over the top.

There are funerals everyday; for soldiers sometimes, but it seems as often for the farmers, *campesinos*, who were attacked while harvesting in the fields. Or there are funerals for the teachers or students killed in the local school or for the doctors or patients killed in an attack on a clinic.

The United States is making war on Nicaragua through the *contras* or counter-revolutionaries, former members of the Somoza national guard and mercenaries from all over North and South America—the scum of two continents.

They are not making war on the Nicaraguan army—they are fighting the civilian population. The Council on Hemispheric Affairs, a non-profit, private research group based in New York City and Washington, D.C., reported

"We should support the right of Nicaragua to self-determination."

that 880 non-combatants had been killed after capture by the *contras* and that 5000 Nicaraguans had died as a result of *contra* activity. The report estimated that 605 civilians had been killed in 1984.

The National Emergency Committee of the Nicaraguan Institute of Social Security and Welfare published a book on Dec. 25, 1984, which gives the results of *contra* attacks up to November 1984. The summary indicates the following:

- Some 7300 people killed by the *contras*, including 3346 children and adolescents
- 6236 children orphaned
- 142,980 farmers and Indians displaced from their land

The total up to that time included 14 schools destroyed, 359 schools forced to close, 840 adult education centers forced to close, 98 teachers killed, and 247 adult students killed. In addition some 171 teachers were kidnapped.

Similarly, 41 health centers were either destroyed or otherwise affected, 18 health workers were killed, and 31 health workers were either wounded or kidnapped. It should be remembered that these casualties occur in a country whose population is 3.5 million.

A few months have passed since that report was published, and hundreds of others have been killed, wounded, or kidnapped by the *contras*. The war goes on.

The civilian casualties killed by the



contras are no accident. The U.S. policy is to disrupt the Nicaraguan economy and society through economic boycott and military attack.

So far the United States has spent about \$100 million to finance the *contra* war against Nicaragua. Now the Reagan administration is seeking another \$14 million.

In addition, the United States has spent \$1.7 billion on the war in El Salvador since 1980 and currently has about 100 advisers there—almost double the limit of 57 established by the U.S. Congress. At the moment there are 6000 U.S. Marines carrying out war games in Honduras; 1500 of them permanently assigned there.

It looks at the moment as if Congress will not vote the \$14 million for further aid to the *contras*. However, that is not because there is any clear or consistent opposition from the Democratic Party. The opposition has come from church groups, labor unions, teachers and students, and others who have visited Central America, or who have worked with Central American refugees, or who have taken the time to look into the issues.

The Democrats have no policy alternative in Central America. Enough Democrats in Congress have consistently voted to pass military aid to the *contras* and aid to the El Salvador government in the past to keep the war there going. Remember that Walter Mondale, the liberal Democratic Party candidate for president, said that he was prepared to embargo Nicaragua.

Nor should we expect anything else. While Republicans and Democrats have different styles, they have the same foreign policy. It was, after all, a liberal Democrat, President John F. Kennedy, who authorized the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in April 1961.

In April 1965 it was liberal Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson who sent the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division into the Dominican Republic in violation of the charter of the Organization of American States (OAS). Johnson didn't trust his Latin American allies. As he said at the time, "The OAS couldn't pour piss out of a boot if the instructions were written on

the heel."

And, of course, there was the war against Vietnam. As Stephen E. Ambrose wrote in his book, *The Rise to Globalism*, "Vietnam was the liberals' war."

Some 60,000 U.S. soldiers were killed in that war, 46,000 in combat; 300,000 were wounded. Probably millions of Vietnamese were killed. The direct cost to the United States for that war was \$141 billion.

When Republican President Richard Nixon in 1973 used the U.S. Navy and the CIA to help the right-wing military carry out a coup in Chile and overthrow the government of Salvador Allende, he was carrying out a foreign policy consistent with that of his Democratic Party predecessors.

Likewise when Ronald Reagan

ordered the invasion of Grenada on Oct. 25, 1983, it was an act of aggression more grotesque but less spectacular than Johnson's invasion of the Dominican Republic.

Right to self-determination

Nicaragua has had the audacity to rebel against the neocolonial system and to try to assert its independence and self-determination. I believe that we should support the right of the Nicaraguans to self-determination no matter what political system they may ultimately choose for themselves.

We should defend that same right for the people of South Africa in their struggle against apartheid. We should defend that same right for the people of Poland led by the Solidarity labor movement in their struggle against the military junta of Wojciech Jaruzelski and the threat of Soviet invasion.

We should defend that right for the people of Afghanistan in their struggle against the occupying army of the Soviet Union. In supporting the right to self-determination, we strengthen all fights for freedom. But we live in the United States, and our first responsibility is to try to stop the policy of the U.S. government in Central America.

The U.S. war in Central America is taking the lives of civilians there everyday. That is, of course, the most tragic impact of the war.

It is, however, also hurting those of us who live in the United States. Not only in the sense that it is morally degrading to be forced through taxes to help pay for the war. Not only in the sense that it is intellectually demeaning to be subjected to the crude war propaganda of the government.

The war in Central America is also part of the justification for increases in military spending which are sucking billions of dollars away from social services in the United States, which are sapping the health and education and housing programs here.

We can play a role in stopping the *contras* in Nicaragua and the U.S. war against Central America. But we can rely upon neither the Republicans nor the Democrats. No politicians will do the job. We must do it ourselves.

There is a way we can do something about this situation. You can join those of us who will be going to Washington, D.C., on April 20 to demonstrate against the war. It's a small step, but it's part of the process of building a mass movement that says: No more Vietnams! No more war in Central America! ■

... Ken Morgan

(continued from page 11)

chart a new course. NBIPP will be vital to the Black liberation struggle because it provides an alternative to various kinds of reforms which ultimately wind up in the Democratic Party.

S.A.: So the important thing now is to mobilize Blacks around the issues that affect them and channel that motion toward independent political action?

Morgan: Exactly. We have to make the connections between racism and imperialism; between our struggle here and the struggle of Blacks in South Africa. Worldwide economic exploitation serves to help bring us together.

A victory or a fightback against imperialism is a victory for Black people. That is why it is important for us to support the Sandinista effort in Nicaragua and the FDR/FMLN in El Salvador. And that is why it is important for us to link the struggle of Black South African liberation fighters with those other struggles.

S.A.: One of the demands of the April 20 antiwar demonstration is an end to U.S. support to the apartheid regime. How do you see this demand

fitting in with the other themes of the demonstration?

Morgan: The April action is a very important action for Black people, for poor people, for working people. It is important because through its demands it links four important issues, one of which is apartheid.

Apartheid in South Africa stems from the racist economic superexploitation of Black workers at the hands of some of the same corporations that also exploit Black and working people here.

The anti-apartheid movement must take up the cause of self-determination for the oppressed Black people of South Africa. It should commit itself to a program similar to the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress. In the past months, millions of Black workers in South Africa struck not just for their own economic gain, but also for political objectives. This is a lesson we should learn here.

It is important for NBIPP and Black activists to be part of the April 20 rally and march and to show the links between apartheid and U.S. military intervention in Central America—the links between the arms buildup and the maintenance of a system that continues to economically exploit Black and Third World people around the world. ■

... What drives Star Wars ?

(continued from page 1)

liminary stages of laboratory testing. These include such exotic devices as neutron bombs capable of destroying incoming warheads in a much wider radius than a simple atomic bomb; particle-beam "guns" that would shoot streams of atoms or subatomic particles at nearly the speed of light; and chemically powered lasers.

The budget now projected for Star Wars is \$30 billion dollars over the next five years.

Can Star Wars work?

Many prominent scientists and opponents of Star Wars, such as Nobel laureate Dr. Hans A. Bethe, concede the theoretical possibility of such a weapons system but dismiss its realizability as an effective shield against a massive attack. There are two main reasons given:

1) While these devices are conceivable, the ability to engineer them is many years away;

2) History shows that in societies at comparable levels of development,

"Star Wars isn't madness of current chief executive."

every advance in military defense is soon balanced by developments in offense—and vice versa. Thus the Soviet Union is in the same technological ball park as the United States and is capable of keeping pace in an accelerated arms race.

The Reagan administration claim—that the purpose of Star Wars is to create an impervious shield against an all-out nuclear attack in order to open the door to nuclear disarmament—cannot be taken at face value. So what, then, is behind this Star Wars "madness?"

It would be the greatest mistake, first of all, to perceive Star Wars as the "madness" of the current chief executive. Reagan's policy is completely in harmony with the historic political and military strategy of U.S. imperialism.

While real differences exist on political questions among the capitalist decision-makers, including on the Strategic Defense Initiative, the extent of such rifts within the ruling class is constrained within the framework of their common interests and goals.

Thus it is unrealistic to expect, despite important tactical differences among them, that any significant section of the capitalist rulers can be allies in the struggle against the drive toward a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union.

This "madness" is not a policy that capitalist imperialism is free to choose or abandon. It is the result of the inexorable logic of the system itself.

To place even the slightest measure of confidence in this or that wing of U.S. capitalism raises false hopes in the wrong forces. But most important, it cuts across the task of mobilizing the only force in our society that can lead the way toward peace—the U.S. working class.

It would also be a mistake to hold the Soviet Union equally responsible for the current precarious future for life on earth. The Soviets do not share the responsibility for originating the present threat of nuclear annihilation.

But the ruling Soviet bureaucrats are guilty of subordinating what should come first—a political campaign to promote the revolutionary action of the toilers of the world to disarm the imperialist warmakers—to a strict reliance on a military defense of the Soviet Union.

Their belief in the compatibility of socialism and capitalism—"peaceful coexistence"—leads them to seek agreements with the imperialist nations which betray the interests and struggles of the

world's working masses. Such a policy by the ruling bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, in fact, only weakens the defense of the Soviet Union.

Why imperialism risks a nuclear holocaust

The Great Depression that began in 1929 and that ended only when armaments production revived the prostrate economy during World War II, continues to haunt the capitalist world. The collapse of the world capitalist economy in the 1930s brought poverty and starvation to scores of millions—because there was too much food, too much clothing, too much housing, too much wealth!

The world's workers and other producers appeared to be drowning in a sea of unsold products. This paradox prepared the workers and their impoverished allies for a profound struggle against the fundamental source of their misery. The capitalist system was saved, however, by the betrayals of the class-collaborationist misleaders of the workers' movement.

The specter of another economic catastrophe of the proportions of the 1930s is noted almost every day in the capitalist press. Behind the balance-of-trade crisis, the debt crisis, the monetary crisis, the budget deficit, and the danger of a renewed climb in prices lurks an even greater crisis of overproduction.

The fear of another 1929 and the specter of revolutionary crises in the major capitalist countries are the factors that drive U.S. imperialism toward the Star Wars insanity.

Imperialism cannot afford to allow little Nicaragua to maintain even a measure of independence, fearing that this land of 3 million will close its borders to capitalist penetration and give a new

talist mode of production in the workers' states—based on an overall plan not regulated by market forces—is essentially free of the crisis of overproduction.

While the world capitalist economy was drastically curtailed in the giant decade-long depression of the 1930s, the Soviet economy, despite mismanagement by the privileged bureaucratic caste, continued to grow.

The revolutionary impact of this catastrophe for capitalism, contrasted with Soviet economic success, should not be underestimated. Its impact on the consciousness of the world's exploited masses opened up a wave of revolutionary struggles and victories—despite the failures and betrayals of the Soviet Stalinist misleadership—that have changed the world relation of forces.

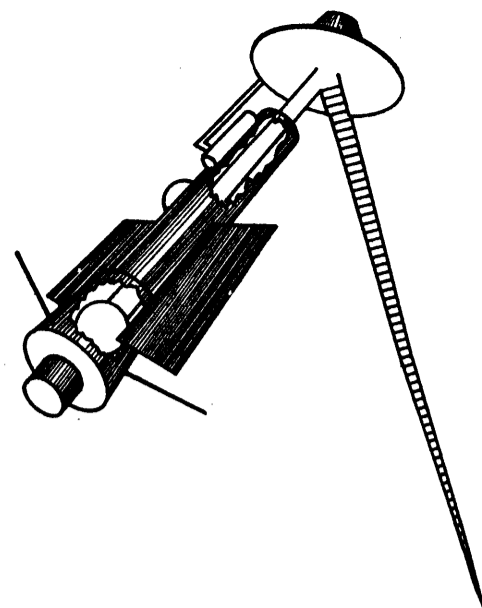
A repeat of this phenomenon on a vastly higher scale is the specter haunting Reagan and his class as they drive toward the desperate gamble of Star Wars.

What can the U.S. gain?

U.S. imperialism is no longer confident of its military superiority over the Soviets in a conventional war. The stalemate in Korea and the defeat in Vietnam have shown that billions of dollars in military hardware is not sufficient against a revolutionary fighting force of millions of peasants and workers.

No less significant were the unprecedented mass mobilizations in this country that contributed mightily to the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam. The fear of even more destabilizing mass mobilizations against new imperialist adventures has been a powerful force restraining the U.S. ruling class.

Star Wars is a deliberate effort to



seized the opportunity to further weaken imperialism by providing material aid to the victorious revolutions.

The most annoying example that U.S. imperialism seeks to avoid seeing repeated has been the material aid supplied by the Soviet Union to Cuba. The Star Wars warning to the Soviet leader is simply this: There had better be no more Cubas! And if there are—despite our joint efforts—you had better not provide them with material aid!

U.S. imperialism aims to gain other benefits from the Star Wars program. It hopes to impart a qualitative impetus to research and development of military technology. It hopes that the investment in Star Wars will pay off in a leap forward in sophisticated weaponry that will alter the military relationship of forces in its favor.

And finally, the U.S. government hopes to bolster the U.S. economy through the multiple technological byproducts of the research and development of the Star Wars program. It is a fact that most technological advances in the civilian economy in the post-war era resulted from military-oriented research.

The road to peace

There is only one road to lasting peace and nuclear disarmament: the construction of a mass movement led by the working class that can wrench the power to destroy the world out of the hands of the capitalist class. How will this be done?

The only real obstacle is a lack of consciousness by the workers of their own potential power to lead the masses of oppressed and exploited people toward a victory over capitalism. But this consciousness cannot be gained with words alone. Workers must learn through action.

The mass mobilizations that built such a mighty labor movement in this country in the 1930s and the mobilizations against the war in Vietnam in the 1960s and '70s were supreme educational experiences as well as practical steps forward for humanity. More than conquering new ground against the most powerful capitalists in history, masses of working people and their allies gained new confidence in their collective power and the vulnerability of the ruling class.

Today the anti-interventionist movement begins with a higher level of consciousness than was the case at the outset of the anti-Vietnam War movement. The involvement of the unions is a measure of that.

The slogans of the April 20 national demonstrations combine the struggle against U.S. intervention and nuclear weapons with the struggle against the attack on the living standards of American workers.

The ground is being laid for the American working class and its democratic fighting institutions to regain their traditional status as champions of all the oppressed and exploited. This is an indispensable requirement for a successful working-class struggle for emancipation—and the liberation of the human race from Star Wars-like madness. ■

WHY IS THE PENTAGON BENT ON POURING BILLIONS INTO THE STAR WARS PROGRAM...



THEY SAID THE SAME THING ABOUT NUCLEAR POWER 40 YEARS AGO



WHEN MOST SCIENTISTS SAY IT CAN'T POSSIBLY WORK?



IF WE'D LISTENED TO THEM THEN, WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE BOMB TODAY



impulse to the world socialist revolution.

The logic of imperialism, to the contrary, drives it toward finding a way to roll back the tide of history and re-enslave the people in the workers' states.

What the imperialists fear is not "Soviet aggression," as they so loudly proclaim. Their incessant clamoring is a fake. What they actually fear is the example of a socialist-type economy that inspires the world's exploited and oppressed masses.

Despite the recent phenomenon of inflation and unemployment in some of the workers' states, such as Yugoslavia and Poland, this is not a structural characteristic of the economy of a workers' state.

Instead, this is the price these states have paid for opening their economies to the re-penetration of imperialist capital without sufficient safeguards. The fluctuations of the world market are reflected inside workers' states that have reintroduced a degree of production for export while loosening the state monopoly over pricing and foreign trade.

But the still predominant non-capi-

convince its antagonists—primarily the Soviets—that U.S. imperialism will blow up the world rather than bow to historical necessity. It is a calculated madness that is not entirely a bluff: The bluff won't work unless the threat to carry it out is believable, and it must be real to be believed.

The U.S. imperialist aim is to force greater assistance from the Stalinist regimes and their appendage Communist parties around the world in holding back revolution. Despite Stalinist willingness to make such a deal with imperialism, Communist parties—as in China and Vietnam—nonetheless came to power.

Despite Stalinist policies designed to maximize defeat, the capitalist dictatorships in China and Vietnam collapsed as a result of the mobilizations of the impoverished masses and the decay of the indigenous capitalist regimes in the dependent countries.

In these cases, the Soviet bureaucracy was no longer in a position to bargain away the interests of the revolution and, reflecting its contradictory position,

Interview with Zbigniew Kowalewski: 'Solidarity still lives!'

Zbigniew Kowalewski was one of the main leaders of Solidarity in the Lodz region, one of Poland's most important industrial centers, and an initiator of the movement for workers' self-management on a national scale. He is the author of numerous works on the Latin American revolutionary movement, on the Black movement in the United States—in particular the role of Malcolm X—and other liberation struggles. He was a delegate to the first National Congress of Solidarity. Since Jaruzelski's coup d'etat, he has been in exile in France.

Socialist Action: How has Solidarity been able to function since it was declared illegal in 1981?

Zbigniew Kowalewski: The social resistance by underground Solidarity to the totalitarian state has lasted three-and-a-half years. It would be very difficult to find antecedents for this lengthy resistance in the history of the workers' movement, with the notable exception of the Bolivian trade union movement.

In Poland the long-term existence of a mass trade union under conditions of clandestinity is a real phenomenon. Its organizational bases are the underground trade-union commissions, which have been able to maintain themselves in the majority of small and medium factories as well as in many institutions and universities.

The material support comes from dues. Today only those who pay dues regularly are considered members, not those who had been members while the union was legal. The percentage of Polish workers who pay dues to their underground union is much greater than, for example, the percentage of French workers who pay dues to their legal trade unions.

The normal routine of activity in the underground commissions consists of providing workers with independent information. In Solidarity, it is under-



stood very well that such information is a key factor in maintaining and developing the resistance to the regime.

It is estimated that between 700 and 1000 trade union publications are currently distributed. Some national and regional weeklies produced by Solidarity have reached a circulation of 20,000 to 60,000 copies. In many shops underground bulletins are handed out. In one case, at the Lenin steel mill in Nowa Huta, 6000 copies are run.

In some places trade-union and general training courses are offered for militant workers. Democratic-minded intellectuals participate in these, demonstrating their continued attachment to an alliance with the working class. In some cities underground radio stations are broadcasting. There are numerous cases of publishing houses that print books banned by the regime.

A national organ, the Provisional Coordination Commission (TKK), continues to function. The police have never been able to dismantle or paralyze it, even though they have, at times, arrested several of its members.

The fundamental structural weakness of Solidarity is the inefficiency at the local and regional levels—with some exceptions—of interfactory cooperation. The underground commissions frequently lead strikes or other economic struggles around partial or immediate demands: wage increases, better working conditions, and defense of the traditional workday. These struggles are not infrequently won.

But there are no strike movements at the interfactory level and that constitutes a serious problem.

S.A.: What is the current economic situation in Poland?

Kowalewski: The economic crisis, which is terrible, continues and there is no end in sight. The regime does not control the economic process. Planning is a fiction. Economic management has disintegrated.

There are innumerable formal and informal centers of decision-making. The informal centers are constituted by bureaucratic pressure groups that have bases in different industrial branches and geographical zones. These groups function as lobbies that compete for greater access to investment funds and to scarce production materials.

The government is not capable of halting the growing tendency toward overaccumulation [of funds and resources], which results from the competition between these bureaucratic lobbies. The counterpart to this situation is growing restrictions in

popular consumption and the increased exploitation of the workforce.

The real income of the population has fallen by 30 percent during the past several years. In 1982 alone prices of foodstuffs increased 163 percent and are continuing to increase. Workers are forced to work longer days through the imposition of mandatory overtime.

The historic conquest of the working class—the eight-hour day—is thereby reversed. The eight-hour day was won in Poland in 1918. Recently the government has authorized shop managers to impose a nine-hour workday if necessary. It also declared that there will be up to two hours off during the day, when production stops for lack of parts or raw materials. This means that workers can be legally obliged to stay in the factory for 11 hours.

S.A.: The Polish regime recently backed down from its proposal to impose steep increases in food prices. What explains this?

Kowalewski: The government has not withdrawn its proposal to once again increase the prices of basic necessities. Rather, it has decided to introduce the increases progressively. It was a tactical retreat—a maneuver—in the face of a threatened 15-minute national strike which was called jointly by the underground leadership of Solidarity and Lech Walesa.

Given this maneuver by Jaruzelski, the call for the strike was withdrawn. Many Solidarity militants consider that the withdrawal of the call was a mistake. Currently, the Solidarity leaders are considering the possibility of launching an important national strike in June to protest price increases and the lengthening of the workday. This is the expression of the fact that social tensions are increasing.

For two-and-a-half years the underground leadership did not present proposals for strike struggles on a national level. If now they are returning to this tactic, it means that today the masses are in a more fighting mood. The regime takes very seriously the possibility of Solidarity fighting back and its capacity to do so.

The state-controlled unions continue to be boycotted by a large majority of the workers and do not enjoy any legitimacy. In order to try to gain some legitimacy, they have to raise a timid voice of protest against the price increases. But they do that only after authorization from the regime. Without the regime's consent they would not dare to lift a finger.

S.A.: What was the attitude of the Polish government—which calls itself socialist—toward the recently ended British miners' strike, the longest mass strike in British history? And how did Solidarity respond to the strike?

Kowalewski: The regime and its "unions"

Last January the Polish government proposed to raise food prices in order to meet the requirements of the International Monetary Fund for the repayment of the \$28-billion debt to Western banks. Then, last month, at least according to the government's explanation, the decision was reversed because of the protest of the official trade unions.

Solidarity, which had called for a 15-minute protest strike against the price hikes, cancelled the planned protest but warned that the government would try to reinstate the increases later.

The Polish government has begun to arrest Solidarity leaders for having discussed a proposed work stoppage at a meeting called by Lech Walesa. Władysław Frasyniuk, Bogdan Lis, and Adam Michnik were all detained on Feb. 13 and are still being held. The Polish government plans to hold a one-day trial shortly before Easter. It is expected that the three will receive sentences of two or three years.

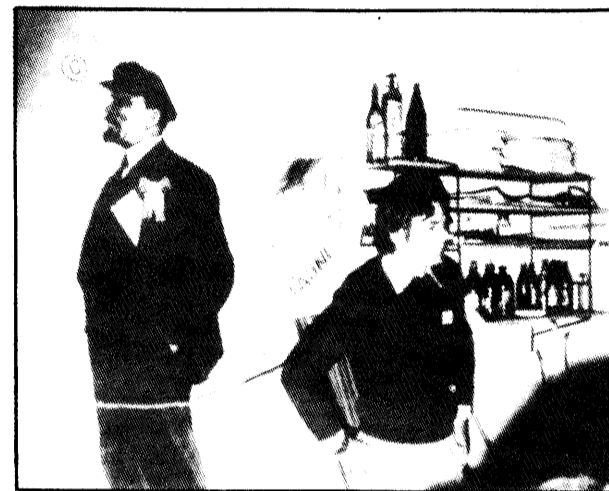


expressed a lot of support—in propaganda—for the British miners' strike, but Arthur Scargill himself characterized their behavior as "hypocritical and antisocialist."

Why? Because the regime took advantage of the strike to considerably increase its coal shipments to Great Britain and, at the same time, improve its political relations with Mrs. Thatcher.

Jaruszelski acted like a scab—which is nothing new. On several occasions in the past the Polish "communist" regime was a strikebreaker on an international scale—in Spain, in France, etc.

The official "unions" ignored the call of the British trade unions to block shipments of Polish coal.



A Solidarity headquarters with a poster of Lenin.

In Solidarity's underground press there were numerous articles on the British miners' strike in which admiration for the tenacity and combativity of the strikers was expressed and in which Jaruzelski's attitude was harshly condemned.

With respect to Solidarity's attitude, the fact that Scargill was known for his hostility to the Polish workers and supported Jaruzelski's coup d'etat had a big effect. Some articles commented that "the hand of the Kremlin" could be seen in the strike, paying Scargill back for his having seen the "hand of the White House" in the Polish strikes.

This is sad. It shows how much "campism" is alive in the workers' movements of both East and West. Nevertheless, several important bodies of Solidarity, especially in Warsaw and Silesia, issued statements and sent messages of full solidarity with the British miners and the National Union of Mineworkers.

They affirmed that if Solidarity were legal it would not permit Polish coal to be utilized for scab purposes. They invited Scargill to correct his attitude toward the Polish workers' movement, given the solidarity that exists between their bosses, Thatcher and Jaruzelski.

Scargill and the leadership of the NUM ignored these messages, which is a shame. As far as I know, not one single body of the NUM has adopted an attitude of reciprocity. This does not favor the development of sentiments of international working-class solidarity. On the part of the Polish workers, we have made modest steps forward, but they have not yet found their counterpart. ■

International VIEWPOINT

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Miners strike ends but fight goes on

By HAYDEN PERRY and MICHAEL SCHREIBER

LONDON—In a dramatic meeting in London on March 3, amid cries of defiance and tears, National Union of Miners (NUM) delegates voted to end the longest miners' strike in British history.

After 51 weeks on the picket line, they have gone back to work without a contract, without agreement on pit closures or on amnesty for miners fired for various alleged offenses during the strike.

The majority vote for going back to work was razor-thin, 98-91, reflecting the deep division in the union. Miners from Scotland, Yorkshire, and Kent wanted to continue the strike. Among other reasons, they would not abandon their fired brothers. They must win amnesty for them, they said.

"The strike is over but the dispute continues," announced NUM President Arthur Scargill. "The fight will go on."

Overwhelming pressure was put on the miners by the Thatcher government, which ran the nationalized mines through the National Coal Board (NCB). The aim of the government is to make the coal industry "profitable" with a view to selling the best mines off to private investors.

The NCB hired Ian McGregor, an American industrialist and banker, who had already rationalized the British steel industry at the cost of thousands of steelworkers' jobs. McGregor had similar plans for Britain's coal miners.

For McGregor, hard-headed economics dictated that he close high-cost

"The repression of the miners has shown the public that class and wealth still rule."

mines and open new mines where productivity would be much higher. Miners would have to be laid off, but that was the cost of "progress."

For the miners, pit closures meant the destruction of entire communities. In England today, with 3 million unemployed, a laid-off miner faces a lifetime on the dole. This fact must be considered before a mine that is still producing coal is shut down, the miners say. And they have walked the picket lines for a whole year to make that point.

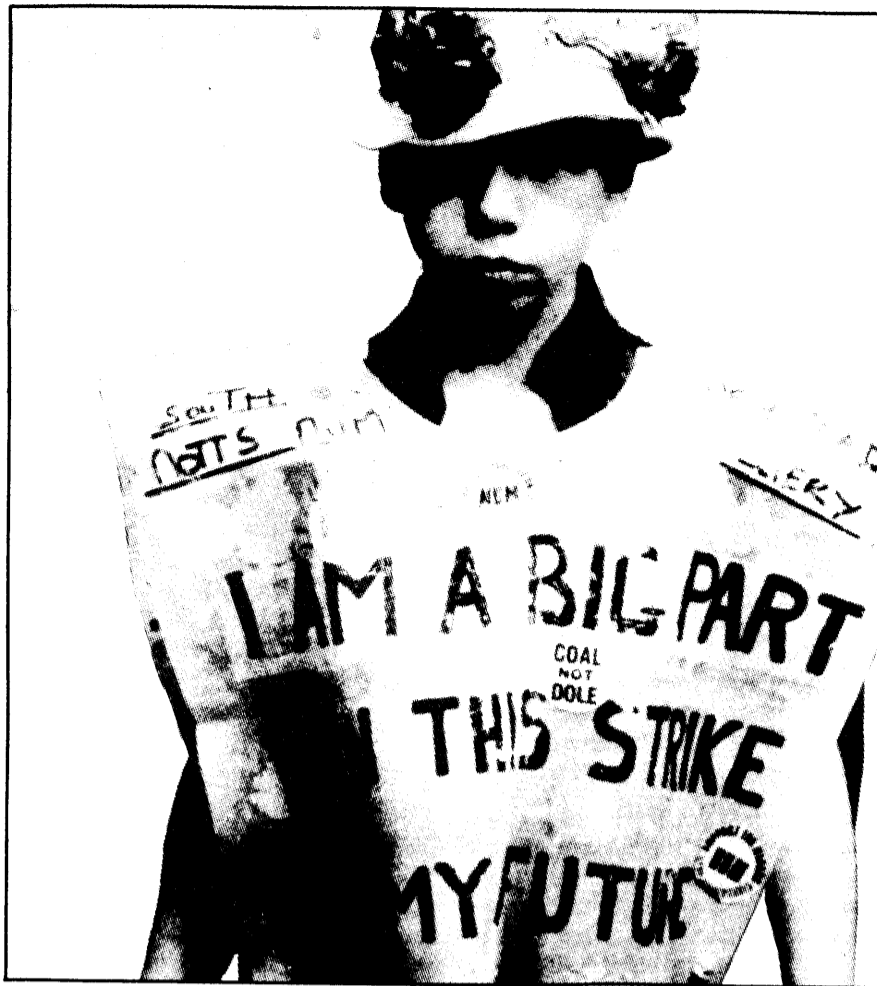
Pitched battles

The ruling Conservative Party had pointed out in a detailed strategy report written as long ago as 1977 that the coal industry would be "the most likely battleground" for an assault on the labor movement. This showdown had been set in motion in 1982 when the NUM—traditionally the most militant of British trade unions—overwhelmingly elected a radical leader, Arthur Scargill, to the national presidency.

And it was a battleground. For a year the miners confronted all the repressive force the British ruling class commands. They faced 8000 police sent into the coal fields from all parts of Britain to convoy scabs through the picket lines.

For the first time in a hundred years, the British people saw pitched battles between pickets and police, with blood flowing on both sides. Two strikers died. Over 9000 were arrested, and 300 were sent to prison, some for up to five years.

Over 700 miners were fired from their jobs including, for example, the entire strike committee and most union officials at the militant Betteshanger mine in Kent. The fight to obtain



amnesty for victimized strikers is key during the next few weeks.

In its battle against the miners, the government was able to count on the "moderate" union chiefs to weaken the miners' leadership and strike. As Scargill put it, "The trade-union movement in Britain, with a few honorable exceptions, has left this union isolated. They have not carried out the TUC [Trade Union Congress] decisions—to their eternal shame."

The September 1984 national gathering of the TUC, roughly equivalent to the AFL-CIO of the United States, had voted overwhelmingly to support the miners. Yet despite this vote, truck drivers hauled scab coal and power-house workers burned scab coal. After some resistance, dock workers moved imported coal. So the NCB could boast they had coal stockpiles of 2 million

tons after a year of the strike.

The TUC leadership, moreover, refused to step up mass picketing of the electric power plants, although this had been mandated by the Congress. In fact, Margaret Thatcher was able to announce to a Tory conference in London on March 9 that production in the power plants had risen by 2 percent during the course of the strike.

Labour Party polarized

In October 1984, when the NUM was fined 200,000 pounds for contempt of court, Labour Party head Neil Kinnock took the occasion to lash out at the NUM for "violence" on the picket line.

Kinnock is trying to build his base for the next parliamentary election. His statement was meant to reassure the most right-wing trade-union leaders that it is possible to peacefully accommodate themselves to the anti-labor "new reali-

Canadian frame-up trials unravel

By BARRY WEISLEDER

TORONTO—Charges of attempted murder against three Armenian political activists, in connection with the shooting of Turkish diplomat Kani Gungor in 1982, were dropped by a provincial court judge in Ottawa on Jan. 8 at a preliminary hearing.

Harout Kevork, Raffic Balian, and Haig Gharakhanian will go to trial on lesser charges of conspiracy to commit murder, despite the scarcity of evidence against them. Melkon Gharakhanian, who was arrested with the others on March 12, 1984, was discharged on attempted murder and conspiracy charges last summer. The remaining three activists have spent the past 10 months in confinement.

The nightmare of systematic legal harassment began in earnest for the four Armenian residents of Toronto in May 1982 when they were arrested and charged with various counts of conspiracy and extortion. After being held without bail for 112 days, all were released following an eight-week preliminary hearing, which resulted in a number of charges being dropped.

None of the activists, contributors to the magazine *Azad Hay* (Free Armenian), has been convicted of any offense—despite the many months they have languished behind bars.

The four are partisans of a unified, socialist Armenia. They disavow the methods of terrorism with which they have been linked by the commercial media.

Many see the harassment of the four activists, and the Armenian community at large, as an act of appeasement by the Canadian government toward its NATO ally Turkey, whose repressive right-wing regime still refuses to acknowledge the 1915 genocide of 1.5 million Armenians.

The political nature of the frame-up of the four Armenians was revealed when the new federal government's Security Intelligence Service, citing "national security interests," blocked release of surveillance information requested by lawyers for the defendants.

The defendants claim that the surveillance evidence would show conclusively that the four closely monitored activists were nowhere near and had nothing to do with the wounding of the Turkish trade counsellor. But a federal

ties" put forth by Thatcher and still be welcome inside the Labour Party.

Kinnock and Thatcher both fear the broad left that has coalesced around support for the miners' strike. The miners' strike was a political event that has changed the relationship of class forces in Britain.

For years the country had been ruled by a degree of consensus that kept the class struggle muted. Now the ruthless repression of the miners has shown the British public that class and wealth still rule. Sympathy for the miners has grown; support for Thatcher has dropped, according to the latest polls.

Tony Benn, the main leader of the left wing of the Labour Party, described the effects of the strike on the party itself when he told a miners' defense rally last December, "What has happened has been to establish in every single constituency party miners' groups and women's action groups that have no intention whatever of disbanding when the strike is over. They are instruments ready and able to support any issue that is in the interest of working people."

The development and interlocking of different movements in support of the miners was illustrated on March 9 when 15,000 cheering people attended an International Women's Day rally in Chesterfield, Derbyshire. Scargill told the rally, which was called by the Women Against Pit Closures movement, "If there's one thing the union's got to do, it's to say to the women's support groups: This is not the end. It's the beginning."

Although the miners feel betrayed by the TUC, though they are financially exhausted and have returned to work, they are not demoralized. At many pits they marched to work behind their union banners and with their union band playing.

The miners' refusal to capitulate at the end of the longest mass strike in European history has produced a major change in the fighting capacity of the British labor movement. A large and militant left wing that includes trade unionists, women's groups, and Labour Party activists is being consolidated. As Scargill put it, the fight will go on. ■

court judge, in a separate proceeding, ruled against the release of this information.

State harassment of the Armenians and cover-up of spy-agency wrongdoings raise growing concern about the Security Intelligence Service and the controversial legislation (Bill C-9) that created it.

These actions and statements of intent make clear that the new Conservative federal government has picked up where the former Liberal regime left off. It is engaging in the conscious strengthening of police powers to spy upon, intimidate, and disrupt the legal activities of advocates of social change, be they trade unionists, feminists, ecologists, or international solidarity activists.

The need to defend the three remaining imprisoned Armenian activists is no less urgent, even as the legal case against them continues to unravel. Their families have been bankrupted by defense costs. The three, if again denied bail at the new hearing they have requested, face many more months behind bars during what is expected to be a lengthy trial.

Without public outcry, the authorities will be encouraged to continue to victimize the innocent. It's time we fought back.

Any contributions to the defense fund should be sent to: CIDAPP, P.O. Box 456, Station Z, Toronto. ■



Israel's Iron Fist sows terror in South Lebanon

Begun in 1982, the Israeli war in Lebanon still rages. Intended to last only 48 hours, the invasion and later occupation of Lebanon has left thousands of innocent people massacred by the occupying Israeli army. Entire villages have been burned and razed.

With this story, Ralph Schoenman begins a three-part series on the Middle East today. Schoenman is presently the director of the Committee in Defense of the Palestinian and Lebanese People. He is the former executive director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

Shortly after this story was written, the Israeli army gave further evidence of the brutality of its occupation of Southern Lebanon. On March 21 it began a series of raids on occupied Shi'ite Moslem villages.

On March 21 an Israeli tank opened fire on the village of Kfar Melki. It killed 30 people, including two Lebanese employees of CBS.

On March 22, according to U.N. "peacekeeping" forces, the Israeli army raided the town of Qlaile and detained 300 residents. Terrified villagers fled into the mountains in an attempt to escape the Israelis.

According to the March 23 *New York Times*, "military [Israeli] analysts say they believe Israel is ready to turn south Lebanon into an empty no man's land if that is what it takes to make the northern frontier secure."

The "Iron Fist" policy of the Rabin government described by Schoenman below "is just a velvet glove compared with what Israel is prepared to do," writes the *Times* correspondent.



By RALPH SCHOENMAN

When Yitzhak Rabin became Shimon Peres' minister of defense in the current "national unity" government, he launched his policy of Egrout Barzel—the Iron Fist—in Lebanon and the West Bank. Rabin had supported the Likud's policies in Lebanon throughout the war.

The Palestinian refugee camp of Dheisheh outside of Bethlehem became the target of extremist settlers under Rabbi Moshe Levinger. Camping outside of Dheisheh, the "settlers" launched random shootings, beat people in their homes, and launched fire bombs at night.

"There is no difference of opinion," declared Rabin as he toured the West Bank, "over the measures required to ensure law and order."

Rabin shook hands with Levinger and promised "tougher government measures."

The army sealed all entrances and exits to Dheisheh and patrolled it day and night. Random shootings occurred and 35 political activists were arrested. Four were subjected to electric torture in the notorious prisons at Tulkarm and Fara'a.

Among those imprisoned is Hamdi Farraj, former managing editor of *A'shira*, who has been under house arrest since the magazine was shut down two years ago. Farraj told the military governor of Bethlehem that Dheisheh resembled the ghettos of Eastern Europe. The Governor replied, "You have oxygen. You should be content with that because nothing else will be left to you."

Rabin has imprisoned 1100 West Bank Palestinians since January. The fields of Sakhnin were destroyed as armored vehicles ran through the olive groves, a signal from Yitzhak Rabin to

the Palestinians of the West Bank that he was back at the helm.

Responding to a call from Minister-without-Portfolio Yosef Shapiro that the army should be deployed at full strength in the West Bank, Rabin reassured him that his ministry's policies in Judea and Samaria "have not changed."

The Iron Fist, however, is not confined to the West Bank. "Time," Rabin declared, "is working against us in Lebanon. The longer Israel stays there, the more the Shi'ites will hate us."

Shi'ites resist

Rabin has put into effect the "full strength" of the Iron Fist in Lebanon as well. Over 2000 Shi'ite Lebanese are now in the Israeli detention camp in Ansar. Moshe Sharon reported in the

Tanks ran over passenger vehicles, killing the occupants before television cameras that were smuggled in by journalists who evaded the army ban on their presence. Surviving men were detained and most "disappeared."

Yuv al Ne'eman, chairman of the right-wing Tehiya Party, disclosed, amid the repression, the original official plans and called upon the government to abide by them. He demanded that Israel extend its sovereignty over the region and announce as originally intended that Eretz Israel extended to the Litani River. The government, he said, must keep its forces 25 kilometers beyond the river for many years to come.

It was not for lack of planning and desire that the Israeli authorities had to abandon annexation. Ze'ev Schiff, mili-

met so vast a popular upsurge in Sidon that he felt compelled to call for armed resistance to Israeli occupation throughout the South.

Israel sought to ascribe this to Syrian pressure. Syria, however, was not pushing Gemayel to support armed and popular resistance in Lebanon. Gemayel was tacking his sail to the wind of the mass upsurge of resistance to the Israeli occupation.

This was confirmed by Pierre Yazbeck of the Phalange Lebanese Forces, who declared that every day that passed there was less support for the Israeli presence within the Maronite community. Nasser Nasserian of the Christian militia near Sidon acknowledged that the Maronite community had joined in the resistance.

Beginning of the end

Israeli commanders increasingly acknowledge that they are confronted by a people's war that has engulfed the entire population of Lebanon. Israeli papers such as *Ha'aretz* and *Yediot Aharanot* carried accounts supplementing those of Schiff. Joseph Brilliant, writing in *The Jerusalem Post*, described Israeli soldiers "happily dismantling their installations" and demanding to go home.

The Israelis have sought to destabilize the Beirut government by unleashing Samir Geagea against Gemayel. A notorious leader of the Phalange militia of Bashir Gemayel, Geagea had participated in the massacres at Tal al Zataar and in Sabra and Shatila on Israeli orders.

He is known throughout Lebanon for the brutal murder of the rival Christian leader Tony Franjeh, his wife, and children. The weakening of Gemayel, however, posed the prospect of the left regaining control of the government in Beirut. *The New York Times* reported on March 14 that Syrian Vice President Khaddam was attempting to pressure Shi'ite leader Nabih Berri and Druse leader Walid Jumblatt to remain in support of Amin Gemayel.

But all the maneuvers and terror tactics cannot, as *The Jerusalem Post* wrote in a remarkable account called "The Beginning of the End?" slow the process. Commander Zvika is quoted as saying about his men contemplating departure from Lebanon: "I don't remember my guys ever being quite as enthusiastic about anything."

(The second article in this series will deal with the recent "peace overtures" emanating from King Hussein of Jordan, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, and Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat. The third and last article will analyze the internal crisis of the Israeli state.)

"Iron Fist is just a velvet glove compared to what Israel is prepared to do."

Feb. 23 *Jerusalem Post* that the Shi'ites in Lebanon have always been the most disadvantaged segment of Lebanese society:

"Their rank and file was deliberately kept underdeveloped and uneducated. The central governments devoted hardly any funds to the development of the Shi'ite rural areas, which were ruled and exploited by some five great feudal Shi'ite families—the Shi'ite nobility. These families took their share of the Lebanese national cake, and it was in their interests to keep the Shi'ite masses in ignorance and poverty."

It is this population that has forged the remarkable resistance against the powerful Israeli army in a very confined area all of 10 miles from the Israeli border.

Rabin renewed his theme, vowing that "the iron hand," involving protracted curfews, pre-emptive arrests, and spot searches, would fall on the Lebanese South.

On March 3 *The Jerusalem Post* reported that Israeli troops were attacking mass demonstrations of women and children. Mosques were demolished. The paper called it an "all-out war" on the civilian population.

Farmers were prevented from reaching their fields and merchants from opening their shops. When raiding troops were resisted in towns like Zrariya, the army returned at night with 1000 soliders and 200 armored vehicles. On March 11, they went on a rampage gunning down people in the streets at random.

tary correspondent for *Ha'aretz*, reported that when he visited Lebanon after 18 months absence, it was like getting "belted in the face."

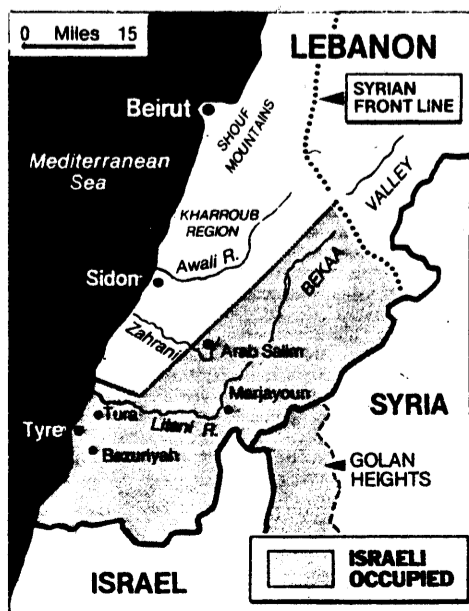
It takes the wind out of you, he told his readers, to see the look in people's eyes—both those of the Israeli soldiers and of the populace. It reminded Schiff of the American soldiers he had seen in the final stages of the Vietnam War.

Schiff reported on the profound change in the Israeli army, pointing out what happens when an army's military prowess proves useless. The Lebanese, Schiff reported, look at the occupying forces with unyielding hate. He described the guerrillas in Lebanon as unafraid of attacking the Israeli army units and convoys at close range.

For their part, the Israeli soldiers keep their fingers on the trigger at all times and regard everyone as a potential enemy. And when they withdraw from an area, the Israelis leave a trail of terror.

Upon departing Sidon, for example, the Israeli army blew up a five-story apartment building where a meeting was taking place between Sunni leader Mustafa Sa'ad and the leaders of Shi'ite and Christian communities. The intention was to facilitate the entry of the Lebanese Army of Amin Gemayel, enabling it to take control from the popular militia as the Israelis withdrew. The plan backfired.

The blinding of Mustafa Sa'ad and the murder of his young daughter during the bomb blast resulted in a general strike throughout the South. Gemayel



The unknown history of Zionism

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

The Iron Wall: Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir, by Lenni Brenner. London, Zed Books, 1984, 221 pp., \$9.25.

Lenni Brenner's latest book, "The Iron Wall: Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir," examines the ideological and historical roots of the Revisionist movement founded by Vladimir Jabotinsky.

The book is a concise survey of the internal politics of the World Zionist Movement from its founding by Theodore Herzl and Chaim Weizmann through the present Israeli state. It details the successful attempt to secure the backing of Great Britain, among other powers, for a Zionist state in Palestine.

Brenner examines the early Zionists' subservient and admiring attitude toward Benito Mussolini and Italian fascism. He documents Zionism's sustained collaboration with the Nazis throughout the 1930s and '40s. And he recounts the military conquest of Palestine through support from and combat with the British Raj, as well as 37 years of state power right through and including the massacres of Sabra and Shatila.

As a primer, therefore, the book is a provocative introduction to the real workings of Zionism. The theme of how Jabotinsky's obsession with military conquest suffused Zionism and came logically to direct it, is powerfully told.

Revisionism has never been as marginal to Zionist politics as liberal apologists have claimed. The entire spectrum of Zionist opinion understood clearly that theirs was a course of conquest. Jabotinsky was always to remind them of it. In his essay "The Iron Wall: We and the Arabs," Jabotinsky set forth the theme to which he would return:

"Zionist colonization must be carried out in defiance of the will of the native population and can, therefore, continue... only under the protection of force—an iron wall which the local population cannot break through. In this sense, there are no meaningful differences between our 'militarists' and our 'vegetarians'... We all applaud day and night the iron wall."

As in Lenni Brenner's first book, "Zionism in the Age of the Dictators," "The Iron Wall" expands upon the little-known but seminal work of Faris

BOOK REVIEW

Yahya, "Zionist Relations with Nazi Germany," (1978). Yahya documented Zionist efforts to squelch Jewish resistance to the Nazis in exchange for Nazi support and release of select colonists for Palestine.

In recapitulating some of this history, "The Iron Wall" elucidates powerfully the bizarre re-enactment on the Palestinian people of the degradation, subjugation, and massacre visited upon the Jews by governments whose racist and genocidal doctrines Zionism assimilated and upon whose support the Zionist project has depended to this day.

Sordid history of Zionism

If Brenner owes much to Marxist scholars like Yahya, he has given new currency to the sordid and largely suppressed history of Zionism.

For example, Mussolini set up squadrons of the Revisionist youth movement, Betar, in black shirts. Menachem Begin, when he became the chief of Betar, preferred the Brown shirts of the Hitler gangs, a uniform both Begin and Betar members wore to all meetings and rallies.

Simon Petliura was the Ukrainian fascist who personally directed pogroms which killed 28,000 Jews in 897 separate pogroms. Jabotinsky negotiated an alliance with Petliura proposing a Jewish police force to accompany Petliura's forces in their counterrevolutionary fight against the Red Army after the Bolshevik revolution.

This strategy of enlisting Europe's Jew-haters and most vicious movements and regimes as the financial and military patrons of a Zionist colony in Palestine did not exclude the Nazis.

The Zionist Federation of Germany sent a memorandum of support to the Nazi Party in June 1933. In it the federation noted that "on the foundation of

the new [Nazi] state... fruitful activity for the Fatherland is possible."

Far from repudiating this policy, the World Zionist Organization Congress in 1933 defeated a resolution calling for action against Hitler by a vote of 240 to 43.

During this very Congress, Hitler announced a trade agreement reached with the WZO's Anglo-Palestine Bank, breaking the Jewish boycott of the Nazi regime at a time when its economy was extremely vulnerable. The Zionists became the dis-



"Don't Say You Didn't Know"—Israeli antiwar poster

tributors of Nazi goods throughout the Middle East and Northern Europe.

The list of acts of Zionist collaboration with the Nazis goes on. Brenner's documentation is thorough.

What can account for this incredible willingness of Zionist leaders to betray the Jews of Europe. The entire rationale for the state of Israel offered by its apologists has been that it was intended to be the refuge of Jews facing persecution.

The Zionists, to the contrary, saw any effort to rescue Europe's Jews, not as the fulfillment of their political purpose, but as a threat to their entire movement. If Europe's Jews were saved, they would wish to go elsewhere and the rescue operation would have nothing to do with their project of conquering Palestine.

Colonization efforts

There was a common ground between the Nazis and the Zionists, expressed not merely in the proposal of Shamir's Irgun [Revisionist underground military organization] to form a state in Palestine on "a national and totalitarian basis."

Jabotinsky, in his last work, "The Jewish War Front," wrote in 1940 of his plans for the Palestinian people:

"Since we have this great moral authority for calmly envisaging the exodus of Arabs... we need not regard the possible departure of 900,000 with dismay. Herr Hitler has recently been enhancing the popularity of population transfer."

In 1940, R. Weitz, the head of the Jewish Agency's Colonization Department, which was responsible for the actual organization of settlements in Palestine, wrote:

"Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country. We shall not achieve our goal if the Arabs are in this small country. There is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to neighboring countries—all of them. Not one village, not one tribe should be left."

Brenner's account of how this policy was implemented by the Haganah [Labor "socialist" Zionist militia founded by Jabotinsky] and the Irgun is graphic.

In his delineation of the sordid scheming and cynical betrayal of the Jews in whose name the Zionist movement purported to act, Brenner is meticulous and eloquent. In his documentation of the relationship between this record and the subsequent crimes inflicted upon the Palestinians, his account is compelling.

Flawed perceptions

There are, however, certain flawed perceptions that undermine his otherwise powerful narrative.

Brenner falls at times into a Euro-centrism of his own in discussing the nature of Palestinian society and its response to the overt plans of the Zionist

movement to usurp their land.

"Nahum Goldmann once correctly pointed out," writes Brenner, "that if the powers had decided 100 years earlier to set up a Zionist state, the Arabs could have done nothing to stop them as they were then little more than tribesmen."

While it served Zionist propaganda to perpetuate this myth, Brenner lapses in accepting it at face value. There were over 1000 villages in Palestine at the turn of the 19th century. Jerusalem, Haifa, Gaza, Jaffa, Nablus Acre, Jericho, Ramleh, Hebron, and Nazareth were flourishing towns.

The hills were painstakingly terraced. Irrigation ditches crisscrossed the land. Citrus fruits, olives, and grain were traded across the world. Trade, crafts, textiles, cottage industry, and agricultural production abounded.

Brenner repeatedly refers to Palestinian riots or attacks against Zionist forays as "pogroms."

It is a wholly inappropriate usage. There was no organized Jew-hatred in Palestine. Not even spontaneous riots, expressing pent-up Palestinian rage at the steady theft of their land, were directed at Jews as such.

His account of the massacre at Sabra and Shatila is decidedly off-base. "In reality," he writes, "Sharon was careful to be sure that no Israeli entered the camps precisely because they knew that civilians were going to be killed and they were preparing their alibi."

The reality is that Israeli officers were in Sabra and Shatila from the first day overseeing the killing.

Brenner states: "[The Israelis] had always understood that their own army could not be counted on to be sufficiently ruthless to do the necessary job."

In fact, the special units—the Sayerat or Scouts—recruited from the Kibbutzim are shock troops, like Green Berets, notorious for having carried out in villages and camps of Palestinians and Lebanese alike massacres such as in Sabra and Shatila. And the Israeli army had tortured thousands of prisoners, created mass graves throughout the Lebanese South and used the most ruthless methods-conceivable in reducing Palestinian camps to rubble.

These errors flow from an attempt to crowd much into 200 pages, and are compounded by a certain



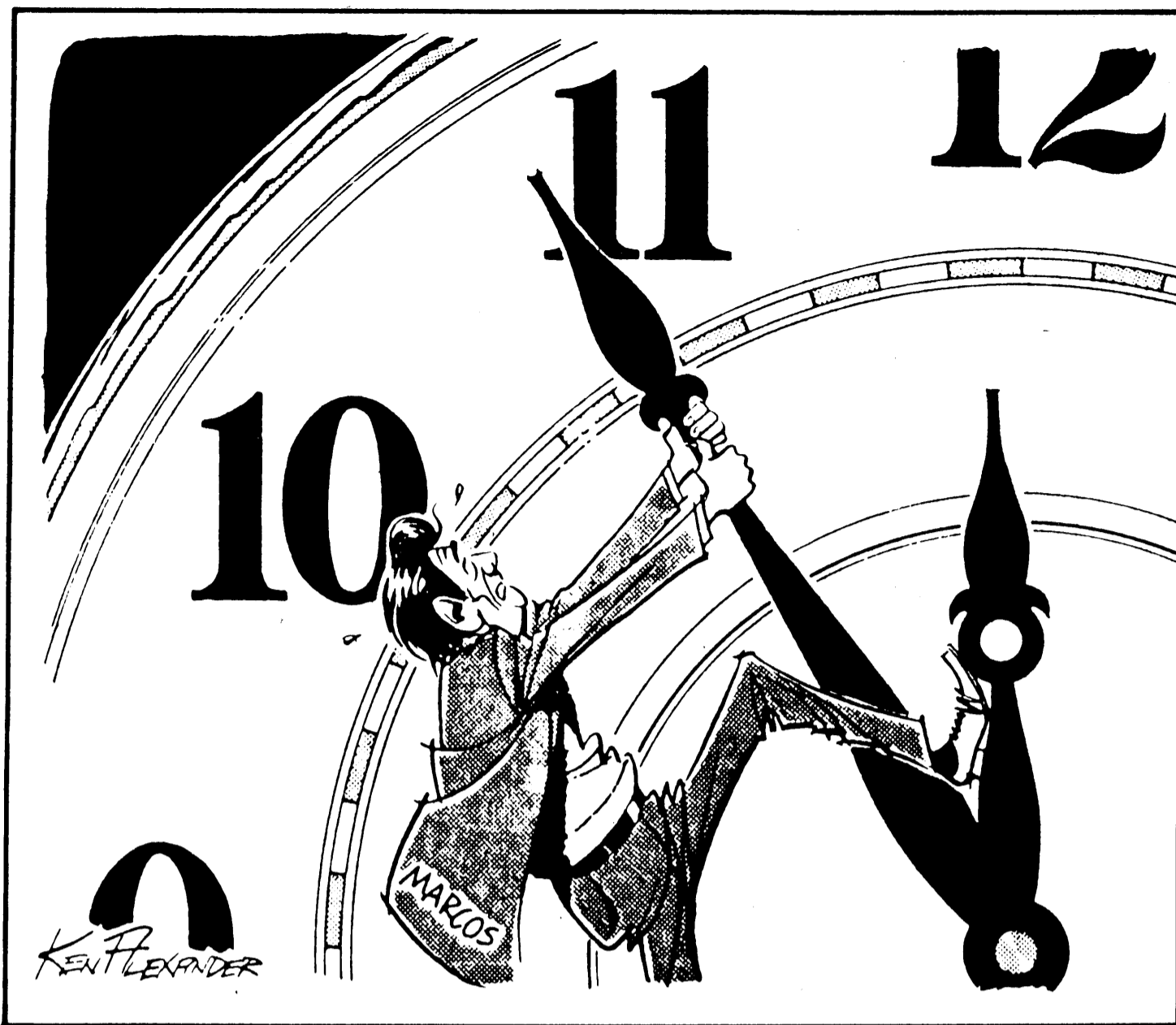
Benito Mussolini outfitted the Zionist Revisionist youth in black shirts.

unfamiliarity with Palestinian experience and social structure, which gives rise to an unwittingly patronizing tone.

Brenner is illuminatingly precise in his understanding of the limitations of bourgeois nationalism and his treatment of the failings of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Its inability to devise a strategy involving the population is an important contribution to the discussion of the Palestinian future.

"The Iron Wall" is most telling in its depiction of how Revisionist Zionism prefigured the direction and character of the Zionist movement as a whole. As in "Zionism in the Age of the Dictators," Lenni Brenner has demolished the paralyzing myths which have inhibited clear discussion and opposition to Zionism. His work prepares the way for an end to the ghettoization of the struggle for Palestinian rights.

By documenting so thoroughly the history of Zionist theory and practice, Lenni Brenner has released the moral energies of broad strata of politically active people who have, for so long, abstained from the struggle for Palestinian liberation which, as his work teaches us, is the struggle for Jewish liberation as well.



Aquino trial spotlights Marcos' uncertain future

By ROBERT CAPISTRANO

The trial of the accused assassins of former Philippine senator Benigno Aquino was postponed for the fifth time in early March because of the continued absence of five key witnesses. The testimony of the missing eyewitnesses to the Aug. 21, 1983, airport murder of Aquino was instrumental in destroying the "lone gunman" theory put forward by President Ferdinand Marcos.

As a result of the massive mobilizations which followed the murder, a government fact-finding commission was forced to file charges against 25 military personnel. Most prominent among them were armed forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver and the head of airport security Gen. Luther Custodio.

The uncertain state of the Aquino trial ironically parallels the larger dilemma faced by Ferdinand Marcos in

coping with the aftershock of the murder of his most formidable political opponent within the Philippine ruling class.

On the one hand, Marcos is under heavy pressure to dispense justice in a "credible" fashion and thereby absolve his government of responsibility. Among those applying pressure is the United States, justifiably concerned about military and economic interests threatened by Marcos' inability to control the Filipino people.

On the other hand, the conviction of Ver would further undermine Marcos' authority because of Ver's well-earned reputation as the dictator's right-hand man. Ver, Marcos' former bodyguard, rose to power because of his loyalty to the Philippine president. Only the most gullible would believe that Ver could be independently involved in the assassination.

For now, the disappearance of key prosecution witnesses has allowed the regime time to decide how much and who to sacrifice to allow it to ride out the storm unleashed by Aquino's murder. Anticipating the results of the trial, Marcos has already indicated that Ver will return to his old job if acquitted.

But Marcos' dilemma is part of the larger problem faced by the Philippine capitalist class and its U.S. backers: Who will succeed the Filipino dictator?

This is not an idle question in a country that is in hock to the International Monetary Fund, faced by a working class whose work stoppages increased three-fold in 1984 over 1983, threatened by peasant insurrection in 50 provinces and a national liberation war in the Muslim south, and whose government lost almost all of its domestic and international credibility in the wake of Aquino's murder.

For its part, heightened repression and the "salvaging" (disappearance) of opponents has been the answer of a regime girding itself to defend the gains

of two decades of corrupt rule.

After Marcos, what?

But the impending passage of the ailing dictator, rumored to have a terminal degenerative disease, has led to jockeying within the ruling clique for the position of heir apparent. Gen. Ver's predicament and the unpopularity of the

ambitious Imelda Marcos have strengthened the hand of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile in U.S. eyes, although Ver retains significant influence in the armed forces.

The "legitimate" opposition is also grooming itself to fill the vacuum. In late December, Cory Aquino, wife of the assassinated senator, tried to pull together leading oppositionists in a committee to choose a possible short-run contender or a candidate for the 1987 presidential elections.

The committee soon split, not only because of the egos involved, but perhaps more significantly, over the issues of the U.S. bases and the legalization of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The CPP, which is currently leading a guerrilla war in the countryside, is heavily influencing the mass movement in the cities.

"Moderates" such as Salvador Laurel of the UNIDO group were unable to adhere to a call for the removal of the U.S. air and naval bases, knowing that such a position would lose the U.S. backing that is necessary for the success of any bourgeois pretender to Marcos' throne.

For its part, the United States has hedged its bets, proposing to grant Marcos a \$100 million increase in military aid over 1984 while cautiously criticizing the regime's "excesses" and courting the opposition. The United States is working behind the scenes to prepare a transitional regime consisting of "moderate" oppositionists and "clean" Marcos supporters.

Meanwhile the mass movement continues to simmer. Following the massive demonstrations which commemorated the anniversary of Aquino's assassination, the "parliament of the streets" marched on the presidential palace in late September to mark the anniversary of the declaration of martial law. The bloody repression of the September demonstration led to sizeable protest actions in October.

In the same month transit workers and Jeepney drivers struck to protest increases in gas prices. They were joined by other unions as well as student and other organizations in solidarity actions. The transit workers repeated their action in January.

These popular mobilizations, out of the control of any sector of the ruling class, continue to hold the key to the political future of the Philippines. ■

Kenya conference on women set for July

By ZAKIYA N.T. SOMBURU

In July the third and final global women's conference of the United Nations Decade for Women will be held in Nairobi, Kenya. The first was convened in Mexico City in 1975 and the second in Copenhagen in 1980. This year's gathering will "review and appraise the achievements of the World Decade for Women."

Only governmental delegations will be seated at the official conference. But individuals and representatives of non-governmental organizations will participate in a parallel conference, where they can join in workshops and informal discussions on issues that extend beyond the formal agenda.

I attended a conference last July at Morgan State University in Baltimore at which 500 participants from around the country met to prepare an African-American perspective for the meeting in Kenya. Health, education, and peace were the major themes of this event, which was sponsored by the African-American Women's Political Caucus, Inc.

The Baltimore conference called for an end to U.S. military intervention in Central America; an end to the U.S. "constructive engagement" policy with

South Africa; an end to the linking of the Cuban presence in Angola to the independence of Namibia; immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Grenada; and rejection of Reagan's anti-communist propaganda.

The participants also voted to work for the defeat of all "workfare" proposals in Congress and for unrestricted funding for abortion. They resolved to promote solidarity with all struggles against the triple oppression of racism, sexism, and poverty.

For more information on the Kenya conference, contact "1985 and Beyond," P.O. Box 23367, Baltimore, Md. 21203. ■

... apartheid

(continued from page 1)

face of apartheid.

Ronald Reagan tried to place some of the blame on the victims of the police massacre. "There has been increasing violence and there is an element in South Africa that does not want a peaceful settlement, that wants violence in the streets," he said at a news conference.

Over the past year, 244 people have died at the hands of apartheid's repression. Hundreds of thousands more are faced with forced relocation, joblessness, and landlessness.

White-minority rule is sustained by foreign investment and foreign aid. We here in the United States have the obligation to demand that our government's shameful role in South Africa come to an end. ■

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Lenin's April Theses: A strategy for socialist revolution

By ANN ROBERTSON

At the beginning of April 1917, the Bolshevik leaders in Petrograd were eagerly awaiting V.I. Lenin's historic return to Russia after the many painfully isolated years he had spent in exile. The February revolution, which overthrew the czar and instituted a bourgeois government, opened the door to freedom just enough for Lenin to slip legally back into the country.

In his absence other leaders such as Joseph Stalin and Lev Kamenev were forced to implement the Bolshevik program alone, but they were proud of their performance and confidently expected Lenin's praise.

Convinced that the laws of history sentenced Russia to undergo a fairly extended stage of capitalism, they had been offering implicit support to the new capitalist Provisional Government. They were open to initiatives to reunite with the Mensheviks, whose program essentially aimed at the establishment of a capitalist state. And they contented themselves with demanding that the new government withdraw from the war immediately.

Hence, to these leaders, it was like a bolt of lightning from a clear blue sky when Lenin condemned their leading strategic ideas as something to be "consigned to the archive of 'Bolshevik' pre-revolutionary antiques" and outlined an entirely new direction in what has come to be known as his "April Theses."

Some simply responded with ridicule. But by the April Conference, Lenin had succeeded in drawing a majority of the members of his party to this new strategy, and the Bolsheviks turned a historic corner. To fully understand this new

"The April Theses in essence adopted Trotsky's strategy."

direction and its significance, however, we must return not only to the beginning of the 20th century when the original Bolshevik strategical framework was established but back to Marxist theory itself.

Many have believed—incorrectly—that Marxism is a kind of natural science that has uncovered the underlying laws of human development. Under this

... protests grow

(continued from page 1)

good example—the April 20 coalition has involved many more unions, church, peace, and community groups than was possible during the Vietnam era. The San Francisco Spring Mobilization committee has particularly sought to involve the unions because working people have the most to gain by an end to the wasteful war spending and the pumping of millions of dollars into support for racist regimes like South Africa.

These first steps to involve the unions in the fight against war have been taken in many of the local April 20 coalitions. Eventually this approach can result in a completely transformed anti-interven-

tion movement—one powerful enough to actually stop direct U.S. aggression abroad.

assumption humans will arrive at socialism in the same manner that rivers flow to the ocean—according to inexorable laws of nature. But neither Marx nor Engels ever adopted such a crude materialist philosophy, which unavoidably postulates that humans are passive victims of laws entirely out of their control. Rather, they insisted, "circumstances make men just as well as men make circumstances."

At any particular time in history, human actions are restricted by the level of technology. But within this given circumference, consciousness reflects on



its circumstances, evaluates them, and, by employing the available tools, eventually moves beyond them.

A flawed strategy

At the beginning of the 20th century the Russian revolutionaries—wanting to liberate the millions of oppressed people of Russia—armed themselves with Marxist theory but found themselves saddled with profound questions regarding its application. Russia had not yet crawled completely into the modern world—feudal relations prevailed in the countryside, and the czar brushed aside all democratic rights as an unnecessary inconvenience.

Accordingly, Georgi Plekhanov, known as the father of Russian Marxism, along with the Mensheviks theorized that the Russian proletariat must support the liberal bourgeoisie, which would lead a capitalist revolution and replace the czar. Only after a rather lengthy stage of capitalist development could socialism be placed on the agenda.

To accomplish this task, the current anti-intervention movement must actively seek to involve endorsing unions in the leadership of the coalitions. The slogans, activities, and coalition structures must all be geared toward expanding the participation of more powerful social forces—particularly the unions.

The development of dozens of local citywide coalitions building April 20 offers the best opportunity to start bringing together a leadership committed to building a movement that genuinely reflects the broad opposition to U.S. war policy. Millions of Americans can be mobilized by such a coalition even before a large-scale U.S. military escalation occurs.

Lenin, however, argued that this strategy was hopelessly flawed. The first and most fundamental step of the bourgeois revolution is the nationalization of the land, prying it away from the feudal aristocracy and redistributing it to the peasants.

But according to Lenin, the liberal bourgeoisie could not take this first step for two reasons. It would not agree to the expropriation of the property of the aristocracy for fear that the spirit of expropriation might surge out of control and engulf its own property as well. Secondly, many of the estates belonging to the landed aristocracy were mortgaged to the banks of the bourgeoisie and hence confiscation would have been a direct attack on bourgeois property.

Lenin, agreeing with Plekhanov that the revolution must be restricted to the institution of a capitalist era, disagreed on the question of leadership. He designated the proletariat and peasants as a whole (including both rich and poor peasants) as the leading force, a coalition which he termed "the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry."

He never clarified who, between the proletariat and peasantry, would ultimately lead.

The leadership of the proletariat

Leon Trotsky was one of the few to question this strategical framework. As early as 1904 he reiterated Marx's arguments that the peasantry is never capable of leading a revolution. First, it is scattered throughout the countryside with little means of communication, which is vital for the solidification of class interests.

Second, the peasantry itself is comprised of deep class divisions: It includes the very rich who hire others to work for them and the very poor who are forced to sell their labor in order to exist. These divisions similarly prohibit the congealing of a single class interest.

History, then, will only advance under the leadership of the proletariat. But this simple clarification of Lenin's ambiguous formulation in turn has explosive implications. With the proletariat at the helm, the bourgeoisie, perceiving its property interests threatened, will unite with the landed aristocracy to launch the counterrevolution.

In order to maintain power, the proletariat will be unable to remain within the boundary of capitalism, which primarily serves to strengthen the hand of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat, having led the bourgeois revolution and in need of consolidating its position, will be compelled immediately to begin the transition to socialism. And it will be



Lenin with Trotsky (left)

forced to establish international working-class solidarity as well, promoting socialist revolutions wherever possible.

The "April Theses" in essence adopted Trotsky's strategy. Lenin smashed the idea of a prolonged capitalist stage, announcing the immediate commencement of the transition to socialism. The defense of the capitalist Provisional Government was denounced as a "betrayal to socialism," as were proposals of reunification with the Mensheviks.

The demand for peace that the Bolshevik leaders directed to the Provisional Government was mocked: "To urge that government to conclude a democratic peace is like preaching virtue to brothel-keepers."

Finally, the "Theses" called for a government of Soviets, i.e. a government of workers and poor peasants.

Sixty-eight years ago this month, Lenin steered the Bolshevik Party into a new theoretical framework, which unfortunately has yet to be absorbed by many who today confront the task of revolution in "backward" countries. They attempt to consolidate a pure capitalist stage as a lengthy intermediate step between the backward era and a future socialist one. They try to forge alliances between the workers and the bourgeoisie to promote this goal.

But they have failed to grasp the implication of Lenin's analysis, hammered out in light of the concrete experience in Russia: "There is no middle course anywhere in the world. Either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie... or the dictatorship of the proletariat. He who has not learned this from the whole history of the 19th century is a hopeless idiot."

Aside from the hyperbole, the point remains valid.

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Nicaragua:

Contra war hits civilians

By LARRY COOPERMAN

A former Salvadoran chief of intelligence, Roberto Santivanez, revealed new details of the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero. In several bombshell interviews given to the Associated Press and to British television, ex-Colonel Santivanez accused a Nicaraguan *contra*, Ricardo Lau, of setting up the death squads that killed Monsignor Romero and thousands of other Salvadorans.

Monsignor Romero was assassinated while celebrating mass on March 24, 1980. The day before he had called on Salvadoran soldiers "not to obey orders that are opposed to the law of God."

Santivanez accused the Committee for National Security, composed of high-ranking army officials such as current Defense Minister Vides Casanova, of establishing systematic cooperation between the army and the death squads. The death squads, he claimed, were organized by ARENA party leader Roberto D'Aubuisson.

Santivanez stated that Salvadoran security officers guarded the site of the assassination of Romero while two Nicaraguan *contras* and two Salvadoran national guardsmen carried out the killing. When the assassins returned to national guard headquarters, they were reportedly cheered, indicating that the planned assassination was widely known.

Lau, a former member of Somoza's national guard in Nicaragua, was reportedly paid \$125,000 for his role in the assassination. He was the chief intelligence officer for the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (EDN) after the Sandinistas triumphed in 1979. The FDN has been the primary recipient of \$80 million in aid provided to the Nicaraguan *contras* by the CIA.

Contra funding in jeopardy

In the event that Congress does not approve \$14 million in additional aid to the *contras*, the Reagan administration is exploring various ways to continue to support the Nicaraguan rebels. Given the most recent revelations of human rights violations by the *contras*, the Reagan administration is becoming increasingly worried about getting the aid measure approved.

Nonetheless, the U.S. government will find other means if the legal, Congressional route is blocked. In recent weeks, a variety of options have been discussed by the administration, including using various Asian nations as intermediaries for the channeling of funds and weapons.

Honduras also has been pressured to divert part of the aid that it receives from the United States to supply the Nicaraguan rebels with arms and equipment. Honduras had been receiving U.S. funds as part of the "Caribbean Basin" plan in which the U.S. government projected spending several billion dollars to "develop" the region.

Furthermore, the *contras* continue to receive money from private U.S. sources. White House officials stated recently that wealthy conservative Americans might be encouraged "more directly" to increase that aid. And the CIA has always had the capacity to funnel money directly through these sources without having to undergo congressional scrutiny.

Reagan, in a recent speech to the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, appealed to that body to help finance the Nicaraguan rebels. The rebels, who have been accused of committing a pattern of atrocities by several



Ray Hooker speaking March 14 in San Francisco. See story below.

human rights watchdog organizations, were lauded by President Reagan as the "moral equal of our Founding Fathers and the brave men and women of the French resistance."

According to an Americas Watch report issued publicly March 5, the U.S.-armed and trained rebel guerrillas have been responsible for murder, torture, rape, and mutilation—including of women and children "who were fleeing."

The report accuses the Nicaraguan Democratic Force of the "deliberate use of terror."

One senior administration official, in the March 6 *New York Times*, displayed his cynicism: "It seems to be what you would expect to have in a war."

Another administration official was

somewhat more honest: "The *contras* have a tendency to kidnap young girls."

The Americas Watch report also criticized the Sandinistas for human rights abuses, most notably with respect to their treatment of the Miskito Indians. However, the report notes that, since 1982, "there has been a sharp decline."

The FSLN government has admitted making a number of mistakes in their early relations with the Miskito Indians.

The Americas Watch report concludes by noting that "the United States has aided and abetted the *contras* in committing abuses by organizing, training, and financing them."

Further evidence of atrocities

Another private report, prepared by Reed Brody, a former New York state

attorney general, was also issued recently. It details 28 human rights violations by the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, which is largely composed of supporters of former dictator Anastasio Somoza.

One witness, independently re-interviewed by *The New York Times*, described a *contra* ambush of a truck carrying volunteers to pick coffee in Northern Nicaragua. When the machine-gun fire broke out, many of the volunteers jumped off the truck. The witness, Santos Roger Briones, was presumed dead, and merely had his wallet and boots stolen. The others were not so fortunate:

"Then the *contras* came and cut the throats of the people who stayed on the truck. When they finished, they set the truck on fire. From where I was lying, I could hear the groans and screams of those who were being burned alive."

And those responsible for such atrocities call their henchmen the "moral equals of the Founding Fathers."

For Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar, who knows the moral caliber of his own colleagues well, the new reports are not expected to change many congressional minds.

The Reagan administration has been advising the Nicaraguan rebels for months now to sieze and hold a town. The U.S. government wants to be able to give aid openly to a "provisional government" set up by the counter-revolutionaries.

Recent Sandinista attacks on the *contras* have dealt a serious blow to those hopes. The Sandinistas have begun to use heavy artillery against the rebels, and, according to one senior administration official, "it scares the hell out of them."

Nonetheless, the economic cost of the war to Nicaragua, already 40 percent of its entire national budget, is doing far more serious damage than the military attacks per se have done. It is the responsibility of everyone opposed to the atrocities committed by the *contras* to participate in the April 20 protests against U.S. intervention in Central America. ■

Ray Hooker: 'We won't cry uncle'

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Ray Hooker, member of the Nicaraguan National Assembly, spoke to an audience of over 400 at the Service Employees International Union Hall on March 14.

Hooker thanked the audience for the help North Americans gave in securing his release from the *contras* who shot, seriously wounded, and kidnapped him last September while he was campaigning as an FSLN candidate in Nicaragua's first free elections.

Three days after his release he was elected with 87 percent of the vote as a representative of the Atlantic Coast, home to Nicaragua's Miskito Indians and Blacks. Hooker is a member of the newly established National Commission for the Formulation of the Autonomy Law for the People of the Atlantic Coast.

"Land will never become the exclusive property of 2 percent of the population," Hooker said as he explained the

distribution of Nicaragua's best coastal lands to over 1 million people. "This situation has been exterminated forever from Nicaragua."

Hooker presented the three cornerstones of Sandinista policy toward the

"You don't negotiate for principles, you die for principles."

Atlantic Coast region: political power for Black and Indian peoples, economic power based on the administration of natural resources of the region, and cultural preservation. "The principal of autonomy is part of the philosophy of the revolution," he said. "Through autonomy the revolution will be carried forward."

Responding to the escalation of rhet-

oric and concrete acts of war from the Reagan administration, Hooker declared, "Now that we have tasted the fruits of freedom we are never going to cry uncle."

Hooker described the gains of the revolution in the Atlantic Coast region. These include a drastic decline in the illiteracy rate, the redistribution of the land, and a three-fold increase in health care and education.

The main targets of the U.S.-supported *contras*, Hooker said, are health workers, teachers, and truck drivers. "This administration has unleashed a savage war against us," he said. "The only weapon at our disposal is our willingness to sacrifice our lives for principles... You don't negotiate for principles, you die for principles."

Hooker appealed to members of the audience to continue their active opposition to U.S. intervention. In addition, Alameda County Supervisor John George solicited contributions for the construction of a wing in an Atlantic Coast hospital.

Following Hooker's presentation, the audience burst out in unison, "No Pasaran", the cry of solidarity and opposition to the *contra* attacks against the Nicaraguan people. ■