

A Socialist ACTION

The Freeze
FORUM
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VOL.3, NO.6 JUNE 1985



50 CENTS

National fall protests needed to halt U.S. war on Nicaragua

Berkeley students fight apartheid



Hundreds of protesting students and supporters have been arrested at UC Berkeley since sit-ins to demand divestment of university funds from companies doing business in South Africa first began in mid-April.

On May 13, just before final exams, approximately 15,000 students turned out to hear South African Nobel Prize winner Bishop Tutu.

Over 2500 Berkeley students marched to the Board of Regents meeting on May 16 to demand full divestment of UC funds from South Africa.

The students have vowed to continue their protests in the fall semester if the regents decline to vote for full divestment at their June 25 meeting.

By ALAN BENJAMIN

A qualitative escalation in the U.S. war against Nicaragua occurred on May 7 with the decision by the Reagan administration—with the support of the Democrats in Congress—to impose a trade embargo on that country.

Key Democratic Party leaders, who two weeks earlier had blocked the \$14 million in aid to the *contras* seeking to overthrow the Sandinista government, seized on Daniel Ortega's visit to the Soviet Union to urge economic sanctions against Nicaragua.

As we go to press, reports from Washington indicate that Congress is expected to approve aid to the *contras* within the next few weeks. On May 21 Reagan declared that a "bipartisan consensus" now existed in favor of such aid.

House Speaker Thomas (Tip) O'Neill, D-Mass., and most other Democrats said they would support financing for the *contras*, provided the funds

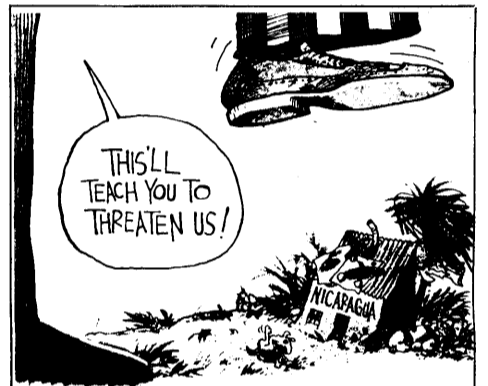
were used for "non-military purposes."

A Democratic congressman was quoted as saying, "It's clear that some kind of aid is going to win."

Reagan announced that he will be seeking \$42 million for the *contras* under a defense authorization bill. If approved, the *contras* would receive funds for fiscal year 1986, as well as for the remaining four months of the current fiscal year.

The bipartisan war on Nicaragua has

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Black mineworkers jolt apartheid state

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

A recent wave of strikes among Black mineworkers in the Transvaal region of South Africa threatens to shake the economic underpinnings of the apartheid state.

Nine thousand Black workers at the Blyvooruitzicht mine, west of Johannesburg, went on strike on May 18 to protest the dismissals of two shop stewards who were members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Two weeks earlier, more than 15,000 workers were fired from three separate mines, including the Vaal Reefs mine, which is the largest in the world. Many of the workers were deported to so-called homelands.

The dismissals came in response to "illegal" strikes that the NUM had carried out on April 26-27 after a breakdown in wage negotiations. The Black miners are seeking a 10-percent wage increase in a wage and benefits package that now totals \$225 a month.

The NUM, a Black organization claiming 110,000 members, has begun a struggle to obtain wage and job parity with white miners—who average \$1755 a month, making them the highest paid workers in the industrial and service sectors of the economy.

According to NUM General Secretary Cyril Ramaphosa, the union will carry out further "actions of resistance," including wildcat strikes, boycotts, and slowdowns in order to confront the apartheid system.

Gold accounts for half of South Africa's export earnings and 10 percent of government tax revenue. The owners of

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Philadelphia mayor covers up firebombing of Black community

By WILLIAM LESSER

The flames had not yet consumed the West Philadelphia neighborhood when the coverup began. There were to be no witnesses. Residents were evacuated from four city blocks under penalty of arrest. Using tactics reminiscent of the invasion of Grenada, news reporters were kept away from the area during the battle and for five days until after police had sifted the ruins.

In the face of public outrage, Philadelphia Mayor Wilson Goode took "full responsibility" for dropping the bomb that killed 11 people—including four children. But he refused to accept the blame. "If I had to make the decision again," he said, "I would do it over and over again."

For 24 hours after the blast, Goode

callously denied that there had been any fatalities. The denials continued even after the *Philadelphia Daily News*



Police attack MOVE in 1978

reported that three bodies had been pulled from the rubble.

The coverup soon began to unravel. Mayor Goode claimed that members of the MOVE organization were "possibly" storing explosives. But no explosives were found. He said that MOVE members might have constructed tunnels underneath adjoining houses in order to blow up the neighborhood "to make international headlines."

But no tunnels were found and no evidence was produced to justify labeling MOVE members "terrorists."

Police Chief Gregore Sambor charged that MOVE members themselves had set fire to their house—a sort of mass suicide! He denied that his forces had dropped an incendiary device. But the police commissioner's version was

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Special: Antiwar coalition sets new course. See pp. 9-12

Fight back!



Sylvia Weinstein:

'Why I became a revolutionary'

By SUZANNE FORSYTH

I interviewed five women for a school project on the subject of why they became socialists.

I chose this project to help me find my own history. I come from a socialist family where radicalism is the norm. I wanted to know why other women were drawn to socialism, whether they had experienced sexism or tokenism on the left, and how they felt socialism related to the women's movement. I wanted to know what being a socialist meant to them.

The interviews were done as informal conversations because I wanted to let the women tell their own stories. One of the women is Sylvia Weinstein, a member of Socialist Action.

Sylvia is 59 years old. She is a well-known activist and speaker for womens' rights. She also writes a column for Socialist Action. At the time of this interview she was running for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Here is her story.

I was born in Lexington, Ky. Both my parents and my grandparents were born in the mountains of Kentucky. My family moved to Lexington in the 1920s.

My grandmother had 18 children, and my mother had six. I was the oldest daughter. I was born in 1926, three years before the Depression, but I don't think that the Depression made too much difference for my family since we were so poor to start with.

We lived near the railroad tracks. Men would come to the door, sometimes women, and plead for food—just food. And if all we had was beans and cornbread, that's what they got; whatever we ate, they ate. We never turned anyone away.

My family was hard-shell Baptist—very religious. My grandma took the Bible literally and believed the earth was flat. I remember the first time I went to school and saw a globe. I came running home and told my grandma the earth was round.

Now she didn't believe in sparing the rod at all, so she just laid into me. She smacked me in the mouth and said she never wanted to hear me blaspheme against God again. She said the earth was flat and Gabriel was gonna blow his horn from the four corners.

We won the strike

The one who had the most influence on me was my other grandmother. She helped lead a strike in Middletown, Ohio. She worked in a tobacco factory that made chewing tobacco called "old plug."

My grandmother and a few other people working at this factory decided they wanted a union. They were secretly signing people up because in those days you couldn't organize a union. You'd be run out of town or accused of sedition. There were all kinds of laws against unions.

The boss came to her and said; "I understand you people want a union. I'd like to talk to the union leaders."

So she and three or four other workers go into this office and he says, "O.K., I want you to get your coat and hat and I want you out of here. I don't want you to ever set foot in this plant again."

My grandma jumped up on a tobacco basket and said, "We just been laid off for union organizing and you can either stay here and work for these wages or you can come out."

And every single one of them walked out.

That strike went on for months and my whole family got involved in it. Finally, the governor of Ohio sent the National Guard in to break the strike. I was there. My grandma got us kids and lined us up alongside her. The workers filled the street all along the warehouses for blocks.

The National Guard trucks come rolling through. These were open trucks with soldiers in them. One said, "You

and looked at the National Guard and they looked at us. Finally, there was a big roar from the back of the trucks, and they rolled back. We won that strike.

Everything fell into place

In my family the ideal situation was to get a decent-paying job, such as a telephone operator. That required a high-school education. Even to get a job at the 10-cent store required a high-school education. I didn't finish high school. I finished the 10th grade. I'd been working at a regular paying job since I was 12 years old. It was a way of taking some of the burden off the family.

When I got married my husband was a seaman, and on his ship he met socialists. This was during World War II. I remember getting a letter saying, "At last, I've found it. I've found the truth!" I thought, "Oh, my god! He's become a Jehovah's Witness!" I didn't know what on earth he'd found.

But I'll never forget the first time I heard the theory about class society and how some people owned all the wealth and other people, who did all the work,

among socialists, too, as it is in every layer of society.

Many of the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, which I joined, were women, but many of them were the ones who did the office work too. Women began to play more of a leadership role during the days of the antiwar movement, but prior to that they didn't.

Women have made huge gains, but nobody gave it to them. They have fought for their rights every step of the way. That's why it's important that we have an independent women's movement. I don't look at the women's movement as middle class. It's true the leadership is by and large white middle class, but if we judge every organization by its leadership, good luck. The rank and file are working women.

I got involved in organizing the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition, a huge nation-wide coalition for the single issue of reproductive freedom. The SWP played a major role in the building of that coalition.

We got involved because we're women and because any political party worth its salt is going to be in the fight where the people are. Otherwise they don't have a grasp of reality. I never left the National Organization for Women (NOW), despite the leadership, and I'm still active in it.

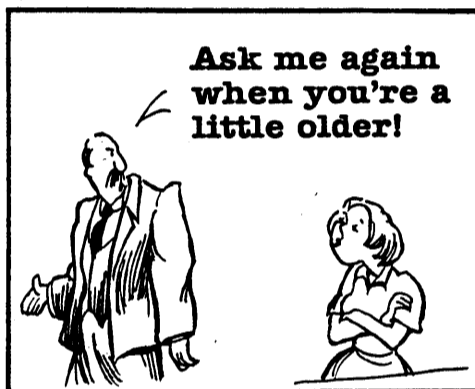
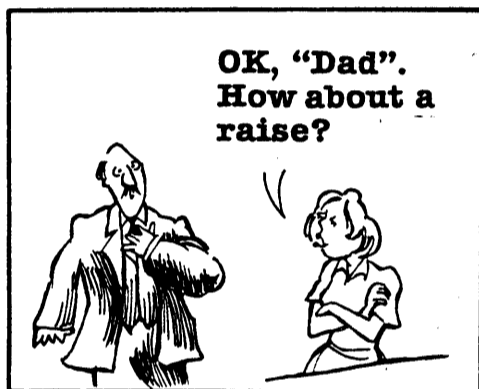
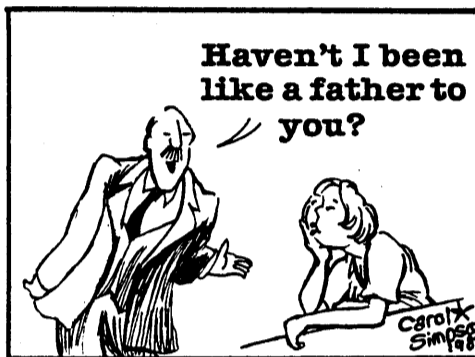
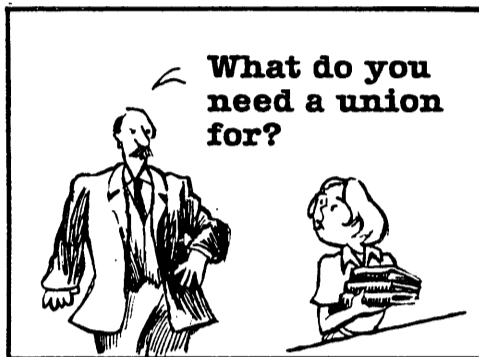
Solidarity and socialism

I was very involved in the Greyhound strike, getting community support for the workers, working down at the union office, trying to set up food banks for the strikers and their families. The same was true when Local 1100 (San Francisco department store workers) was on strike. What we try to do is promote solidarity among workers.

There's always a million things to do—selling papers, going to campuses to distribute and post leaflets. I'm always sneaking around with a staple gun! You want to tell people about socialism, but it's not enough to tell them. You've got to get involved.

I've been a socialist for 38 years and there hasn't been one time in my life that I didn't know this system is rotten. If they aren't doing it to me, they're doing it to someone in Africa or South America. And you've got to change it! There's never been a minute in my life I didn't feel that way.

The experiences I went through as a youngster, watching what workers can do, not only convinced me of what should be done—but that it *can* be done! I'm convinced my life would've been absolutely dull had I not become a revolutionary socialist. ■



better get outta the way, grandma, or we gonna run you over!" I'll never forget it. I was really scared. My grandma said, "Young man, I put diapers on men your age. So you want to run over me—you just come right on!"

They just stood toe to toe. Nobody moved. I remember it was a real hot day. It seemed like hours; we just stood

had nothing. That just hit me. Everything fell into place.

Women fought for their rights

In those days, women in the trade-union movement didn't gain leadership because of sexism in the unions. It's a sexism that's economic, part of our whole social system. It's reflected

Join Socialist Action

If you like this paper, you'll like the organization of the same name—Socialist Action.

This paper shows you who we are and what we do. We're active in the antiwar movement, in the unions, in the struggles against capitalist injustice wherever it occurs.

Those who work for a living have nothing to lose and everything to gain in the struggle for socialism. We campaign for the program that can free workers, women, all of the oppressed from the control of those who profit from their exploitation: the capitalist class.

We campaign for mass independent political action. Working people and their allies need to rely on their own power in order to advance their struggles.

This means that the trade unions and the movements for social change must break from reliance on the capitalist political parties—the Democrats and Republicans.

This means building our own power through demonstrations, independent

actions of all kinds, and building a union-based labor party.

If you like this paper, we hope you'll subscribe and make a financial contri-

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Pilots' strike grounds United

By JAYNE BURRIER

SAN FRANCISCO—On May 17, 5000 pilots went on strike against United Airlines. The key issue in dispute involves a demand by management for a two-tier pay scale that will pay new pilots considerably less than they now receive.

But this is not the "usual" two-tier contract that promises to merge the lower tier with the higher after three or five years. No. The company is proposing a pay scale that will mean a pilot must work for approximately 20 years and reach the position of captain before the pay scale merges into the higher tier. The Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) has rightly characterized this proposal as a *permanent* two-tier.

During the pre-strike negotiations ALPA was willing to accept a five-year two-tier. When management said no, ALPA then offered a six-year two-tier. Again management refused, and the strike was on.

While ALPA is willing to make concessions, they nevertheless have prepared long and hard for this strike. They have been able to call the company's

United has been operating at most at 13 percent its usual capacity, far below its projected 40 percent. The flight attendants union is honoring the picket line. The company claims that 1700 attendants are working, but the union strongly disputes this figure.

Unfortunately, the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which represents mechanics, baggage handlers, cleaners, food service workers, and others, is not respecting the picket line.

Last year the IAM approved a five-year merging two-tier contract, which includes a no-strike clause, and a provision requiring that IAM members not honor picket lines set up by other unions at United. The IAM leadership, as expected, has made little effort to inform the membership of the issues involved, let alone do anything to support the pilots. There has been no organized discussion of what is at stake in this strike.

Consequently, the rank-and-file IAM members have been caught unaware and unprepared. The mechanics have been forced to rely on rumors and speculation. The joke is that Dan Rather will be the first to know whether or not the IAM will honor the picket line.

This lack of preparation has made for confusion and anger among IAM members. For many this is the first time they have had to cross a picket line and they are not happy about it. Moreover, the lack of involvement and confusion among the IAM tends to further intensify the long-standing antagonism between pilots and mechanics. But the company's divide-and-rule strategy has had only moderate success, as many IAM members are naturally supportive of the pilots.

Union busting

There is only one real issue in this strike—union-busting. The facts support this. The airline made a record \$500-million profit last year. They recently purchased Pan Am's Pacific route and fleet for \$750 million. They just bought one-half of the Frontier Airlines fleet.

Last year United paid out record dividends to its shareholders. For Chief Executive Officer Richard Ferris, who owns 90,000 shares, that adds up to a tidy sum. It is no coincidence that these record profits coincide with the first year of the IAM's two-tier contract.

In no way can United plead poverty. Instead they



Socialist Action Joe Ryan

claim that they must prepare for *future* losses. Today's deregulated skies, so management argues, are no longer so friendly for United.

David Pringle, senior vice-president of human resources for United, spells out the company's real intention in *Friendly Times*, the employee newspaper: "To compete in the future we must bring down pilot labor costs to the competitive level."

That means cut salaries to the standard of American, Continental, and People Express.

How odd all this sounds when one remembers that United was the only major carrier to support deregulation.

For workers all of this means a lower standard of living. For the bosses, however, it means colossal profits. But realizing these future super-profits depends upon management's ability to weaken, if not destroy, the unions that demand decent wages and working conditions for their members.

Consider this: the media reports that United is losing approximately \$4.5 million per day during this strike. A loss of this size is equivalent to what United would save each year if it accepted the ALPA proposal.

"There is only one issue in this strike: union busting."

bluff on a number of issues. One of the most important involves the availability of scab pilots.

Before the strike, United management claimed that it would be able to operate at 40 percent of its normal capacity during a strike. The company boasted that it had a pool of thousands of experienced pilots waiting in the wings.

But ALPA did its homework. The Future Aviation Professionals of America, who monitor commercial and business aviation, reported that at best United could choose from 500 to 1000 experienced (not to be confused with qualified) pilots. But other airlines, too, are continuing to hire new pilots.

When the strike began United could count on only 200 management pilots and about 260 scabs.

Jayne Burrier is a mechanic with United Airlines.

By BETH BOERGER

For background to the following article on the struggle for survival of the steel communities of the Monongahela-Ohio Valley, see the March 1985 issue of *Socialist Action*.

DUQUESNE, Pa.—Workers are maintaining a 24-hour vigil to prevent demolition of U.S. Steel's huge Dorothy Six blast furnace here. On May 18 hundreds of unionists and townspeople rallied across from the abandoned plant in order to build support for their campaign. The company has scheduled demolitions to begin on June 10.

The community-backed struggle to save the Dorothy Six works was initiated last October by the Tri-State Conference on Steel. Bob Erickson of Tri-State met with *Socialist Action* to explain the group's long-term strategy and their plans to save the giant furnace.

The plan for a community-controlled Steel Valley Authority (SVA) was originally put forth as the result of a "Conference on the Revitalization of Pittsburgh's Steel Industry" held in Homestead, Pa., in October 1983.

Local union, religious, and unemployed leaders determined that normal union activities were not enough to fight back against the corporate decapitalization taking place in the Mon Valley. Working people throughout the valley have been painfully forced to realize that U.S. Steel and other corporations are not bluffing when they demand "giveback" concessions.

According to Erickson, there have been over 50 incidents in which plants

Town rallies against closing of steel plant



have closed when workers refused to take concessions. As a result of these plant closures 20,000 to 30,000 jobs have been permanently lost.

The Tri-State Conference on Steel plan for SVA is an attempt to put forth an alternative demand—ownership of the means of production by the workers and the community. "If basic industry in the Mon Valley is to be saved, it will be saved by a struggle to release facilities and provide money to reopen them," explains Erickson. "The struggle around Dorothy Six is the first step."

Similar to farm struggle

While attempting to develop a program that conforms to the specific problems of the Mon Valley, leaders of

Tri-State believe that the struggle for basic industry here cannot be built in isolation from the struggles of working people in other parts of the country.

Erickson compares the unemployed movement of western Pennsylvania to the struggle of family farmers in the Midwest. Both struggles are based in regions suffering from a severe economic crisis not generalized throughout the country. In both regions the severity of hardships facing the majority of the population makes it possible to build widespread popular support for a program that challenges the basic tenets of capitalism.

In the past months much of the work of Tri-State has been building support for the public authority in a region that is in many ways one of the most conservative in the country.

"The nature of the popular base in the Mon Valley is VFW's, American Legion halls, and ethnic clubs," says Erickson. "Tri-State has been going to these groups with a program that states that workers and communities should own the means of production, and we have been able to incorporate these people into the struggle."

Erickson estimates that 70 percent to 90 percent of the residents of Duquesne favor the plan, and 10 percent are actively involved in the movement. In addition to union support there has been a significant amount of support

from locally elected public officials.

While a long battle remains ahead for the coalition of forces that has come together to save Dorothy Six, the struggle has become a focus for hope for many in the Mon Valley. For now Erickson believes that the struggle is leading to one important victory. "People will see that you can challenge capitalism and that we can build a popular struggle to do so."

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Did Reagan blunder in Bitburg visit?

By PAUL SIEGEL

The press and TV made it seem as if Reagan's visit to Bitburg was merely the result of an incredible series of blunders ranging from poor staffwork to a number of inept remarks by Reagan. Actually the visit to the German cemetery met the needs of the American ruling class.

Reagan's propensity to make wild statements when not carefully guided by teleprompters made a delicate situation into a media disaster.

First, he said that a visit to a concentration camp site would only "awaken the memories...and passions" of the past, suggesting that Nazi genocide had best be forgotten.

Announcing he planned to visit to a German cemetery that contained the graves of SS soldiers, he said that those buried there were as much victims of Nazism as those who died in the concentration camps. He put the SS stormtroopers in the same category as those they murdered:

Reagan's comments not only revealed his moral and intellectual obtuseness, they also inadvertently revealed what was at stake in the German visit. The Kohl government has held out against massive anti-war protests in West Germany and permitted the United States army to install Pershing II missiles, which can strike Moscow in six minutes after launching. Kohl is also a staunch supporter of Reagan's 'Star Wars' project.

It was important that Reagan demonstrate the closest support and collaboration with his staunchest ally in Europe.

Lay an old quarrel to rest

But why did Kohl insist on the visit even if it meant embarrassment for Reagan? The answer: to organize a chorus of patriotic nationalism seeking to drown out the antiwar movement.

Such a resurgence of German patriotism would make growing militarism an accepted aspect of German life. Kohl's plan for Reagan's presence at the graves of German soldiers would say symbolically that World War II was an old quarrel with no bearing on their relationship today.

Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann, an adviser to Kohl, was quoted in *The New York Times* as saying that West Germany is "the most pessimistic nation you can find."

What she implied was that German youth, who are finding it hard to get jobs, are not taken in by all the talk about the wonders of German democracy

"Reagan had to demonstrate his support for his closest ally in Europe."

and are resistant to patriotic appeals. These calls to patriotism are all too similar to the Nazi appeals of the past.

A recent study by the Allensbach Institute of generational attitudes in the United States and 10 Western European countries showed that young West Germans have less in common with their parents in terms of their moral, religious, and political attitudes than youth in any of the other countries compared.

Manfred Rommel, the son of Hitler's Field Marshall Rommel and the Christian Democratic mayor of Stuttgart, said that young Germans have learned wrong lessons from the history of Nazism.

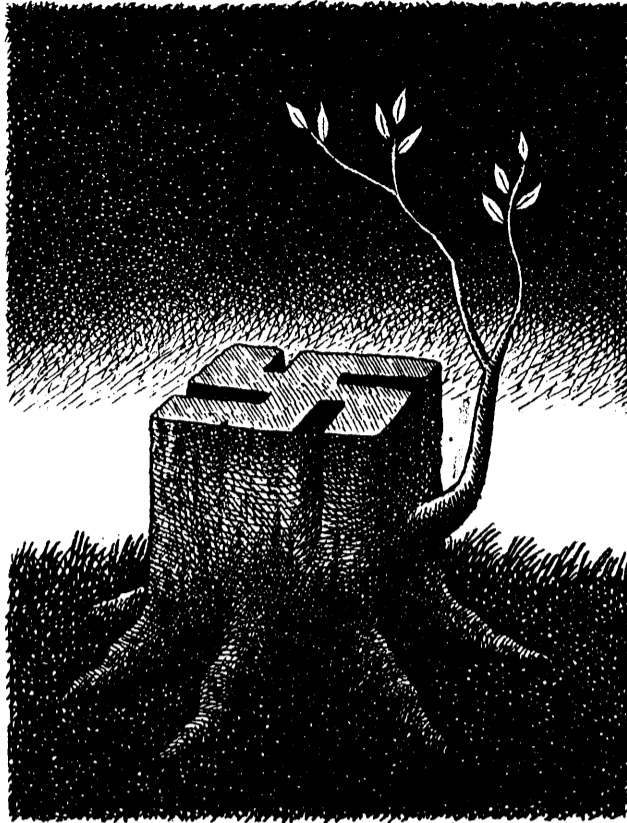
"They say, 'Since Hitler demanded discipline, I will decide by my conscience,' he asserted. "But it was not just discipline Hitler demanded, but discipline for Hitler."

What the Christian Democrats evidently want is unquestioning obedience not to Hitler, who is dead anyway, but to the Kohl government.

Under the guise of homage to the war dead, the Kohl government sought to obscure its own ties to the Nazi past. It cannot admit that it is the antiwar movement that is the real opponent of the Nazi totalitarianism. Kohl accuses the antiwar youth of being pawns of another form of totalitarianism.

The message of the ceremony at Bitburg was that it was only a few evil men who composed the Nazi government—Reagan with his customary crudity spoke of the government as "one man's totalitarian dictatorship."

Now that they are gone, he implied, the German



Jean-François Allaux

people can stand united against a new threat to its freedom from the East.

Rewriting history

The Bitburg ceremony speeches rewrote history. The big-business interests now ruling the new "democratic" Germany extolled by Reagan include the Thyssen, Krupp, and I.G. Farben companies, which were the same ones that financed the Nazi movement. In the wartime plants of I.G. Farben slave laborers were worked to death.

Friedrich Karl Flick, who, as was revealed in a great scandal a year ago, gave out more than \$8 million to people in the Christian Democratic, Free Democratic, and Social-Democratic parties, is the son of Friedrich Flick, who was convicted by the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal of having "used slave labor, spoliation and of being an accessory to the crimes of the SS."

Friedrich Flick, given a seven-year term, got out after three years, returned to his position in industry, and went on to become the wealthiest man in West Germany.

In order for the Kohl government to present itself as the heir of an anti-Nazi resistance, a spokesman for Kohl announced that Col. Berthold von Stauffenberg, whose father Count von Stauffenberg, an aristocratic staff officer, sought to assassinate Hitler in 1944, would be present at Bitburg.

The plan was dropped, however, after Col. von Stauffenberg told news people that he was "dismayed" by the announcement, wouldn't comment on how he felt about the visit, and added, "In the military one doesn't really go of one's own decision."

On the other hand, Major General Remer, the 73-year-old former Waffen SS officer, loyal to Hitler to the end, was not so reticent about his feelings concerning the Bitburg visit. "It was high time," stated the neo-Nazi leader. "After all we are all sitting in one boat, in NATO."

The original opposition to the Nazis was not mentioned at the Bitburg ceremony. This was the mighty working-class movement—Social-Democrats, Communists, and trade unionists—which had to be crushed before the awful totalitarian machine could roll over the German people.

The rank-and-file of these parties and their leaders themselves were by the many tens of thousands the first victims of the Nazis. It was for them that Dachau was built.

So too today the members of the left and the anti-war movements are the genuine anti-fascists. Far from covering up the past, they hold seminars and exhibitions about the Nazi period, drawing lessons from it and pointing out how the press today encourages racist feeling against immigrant workers. The Green Party in the Bundestag presented a resolution urging that the Bitburg visit be eliminated.

On the "wrong" side

U.S. policy also has its continuities with the past. In an interview last October, Reagan attacked the Americans who fought in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during the Spanish Civil War, commenting, "I would say that the individuals that went over there

were in the opinions of most Americans fighting on the wrong side."

In the opinion of most Americans, according to Reagan—that is, of most right-thinking Americans like him—they should have been fighting not against the Franco fascists but with them, giving them the same support as did Mussolini and Hitler!

But Reagan only stated bluntly what was the policy of the Roosevelt administration. It clamped an embargo on Loyalist Spain that helped weaken its struggle. Just so did Mondale suggest during the election campaign an embargo against Nicaragua, and Democratic members of Congress today, while expressing tactical differences on the pace and method of aid to the contras, are going along with Reagan's attack on revolutionary Nicaragua.

In his profound Bitburg insult, Reagan carried on a long American tradition of ignoring the plight of the Holocaust victims until it was too late to save them. Such was the policy of the Roosevelt administration during the Nazi murders [see article on opposite page].

The boat of forgiveness

Reagan also has ample precedent for his forgiveness of the Nazi murderers. John Loftus, who had a high position in the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigation, states in his well-documented "The Belarus Secret" (Knopf, 1982) that thousands of Nazis and Nazi collaborators, including top criminals of the worst sort, were recruited by American intelligence beginning in 1945 when World War II was coming to an end.

Many of them were parachuted into the Soviet Union in the early 1950s, where they tried unsuccessfully to act as spies, saboteurs, and guerrilla troops. Others, supplied with fictitious documents, were sent to the United States and South America.

To cite but one example from among the many examples documented by Loftus, Stanislaw Staniewicz, who as mayor of Borisov in Nazi-occupied Byelorussia directed the murder of 7000 Jews in a massacre in which babies were buried alive in mass graves, worked for the CIA-operated Radio Liberty and died a U.S. citizen.

Anti-Semitism is again on the rise in the "new" Germany. And the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, among others, have exposed the close relationship of the Reagan administration to unabashed American anti-Semites and racists, some of whom serve in the administration, others who serve as policy advisers...as long as their anti-communist credentials are impeccable.

Why, then, should Reagan have raised "petty" objections about honoring 49 SS soldiers? After all, as the neo-Nazi Remer said, "We are all sitting in one boat."

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By CAROLE SELIGMAN

Rock-and-roll producer/impresario Bill Graham placed a full page advertisement in *The San Francisco Chronicle* calling on people to rally in Union Square against President Reagan's impending visit to Bitburg.

A large crowd turned out on one day's notice. Reagan's trip set off a wave of revulsion and fear among Jews. Those who considered the U.S. president the greatest ally of the Jews were shocked that he would visit a cemetery where Nazi stormtroopers are buried.

But was this slap in the face of world Jewry—especially Holocaust survivors—really a departure from past U.S. policy? The evidence says "No"!

Elie Wiesel, Holocaust historian and gifted novelist, helped rewrite the U.S. historical record when he spoke April 19 at a ceremony where he was presented with a Congressional gold medal.

Wiesel said, "We are grateful to this country, the greatest democracy in the world, the freest nation in the world, the moral nation, the authority in the world, and we are grateful especially to this country for having offered us haven and refuge."

He called Mr. Reagan a "friend of the Jewish people."

Friend of Zionist Israel, not Jews

Though the U.S. government is truly Zionist Israel's greatest friend and ally—with South Africa a close second—this is an entirely opposite policy than one of friendship or goodwill toward Jews.

What, for instance, was the real response of the U.S. government, with Roosevelt at the helm, when Nazism's

"How many know that the U.S. never altered its immigration quotas for Jews during WWII?"

aim of destroying all of European Jewry came to light in the 1930s?

Germany, it will be remembered, began passing harsh anti-Jewish legislation as early as April 1933. It denied German citizenship to Jews in September of 1935. Soon after followed further decrees, orders, and laws expropriating Jewish property and placing Jews under police surveillance.

Germany began carrying out the policy of mass murders by 1941, including the full operation of the death camps.

Yet despite all this, the U.S. government consciously refused to aid the Jews or even to speak out forcefully until well after the facts were widely known—and it was too late!

Refusal to give sanctuary

How many people who today believe that the U.S. government is a friend of the Jews are aware that our government, despite voluminous and irrefutable information as to what the Nazis were planning and already carrying out, refused to give sanctuary to Jews trying to escape Nazism?

How many know that the United States never altered its immigration quota system for Jews—or even filled



Anti-Semitism then and now

the existing quotas!—during the extermination of European Jewry?

How many are aware that Jews desperately seeking entry to the United States (perhaps believing the words imprinted on the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free") were turned away from our shores?

This little known history is fully documented in journalist Arthur D. Morse's "While 6 Million Died," among other publications.

"Open the Doors!"

The Fourth International in Europe and the Socialist Workers Party in the United States adopted an aggressive defense of the Jews. The SWP campaigned for the United States to "Open the Doors" to all refugees of Nazism.

The SWP carried out an aggressive campaign to aid fascism's victims through the American Fund for Political Prisoners and Refugees. It organized petitions to Congress to admit the Jewish refugees. It also mounted mass demonstrations and actions against American fascists and used its newspaper to educate workers against racism and anti-Semitism.

A manifesto adopted by the SWP National Committee in 1938 stated in its conclusion:

"Show the Hitlerite assassins and pogromists the real position of American labor by your protest meetings! Show them that the American working class means it

seriously when it says that it detests anti-Semitism and the anti-Semites like the plague!

"Show the victims of the fascist terror that you mean it seriously, by stretching out to them the hand of fraternal solidarity, by demanding of the American government the free and unrestricted right of asylum for the Jewish scapegoats of fascist barbarism!"

A 1973 SWP pamphlet by Peter Seidman stated:

"The efforts of the SWP during the 1930s flowed from a revolutionary socialist analysis of opposition to capitalism, the source of both anti-Semitism and fascism in today's world. In Europe, cothinkers of the SWP in the Fourth International, who shared these views, fought bravely against the fascists. Many of them sacrificed their lives in the struggle."

Sanctuary yesterday and today

Though the 1930s were a long time ago, American anti-Semitism is far from dead. The Reagan administration is full of racists and anti-Semites.

The most hopeful sign that history won't repeat itself is the growing movements against U.S. intervention in Central America and racist apartheid. Active protest movements force the government to come under close scrutiny and make it more difficult for it to harbor such racists as those who constructed the U.S. policy of acquiescence to the Holocaust.

The crimes we cannot forgive or forget

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

Memory of the Camps: A British documentary film narrated by Trevor Howard.

Locked in British archives since the end of World War II, these are filmed records of what the Allied forces found when they marched into German concentration camps.

Alfred Hitchcock was a technical consultant for this documentary. Trevor Howard, in an understated narration presents the facts: 11 million people died in the camps, over half of them—6 million—were Jews. The other 5 million included communists, trades unionists, and gypsies.

There were 300 concentration camps

throughout Germany. Ten of them, including the notorious Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, Buchenwald and Auschwitz, were shown and described in "Memory of the Camps."

Part of Reagan's purpose in visiting the Bitburg cemetery was to "forgive and forget" Nazi atrocities in order to cement the U.S.-German alliance, including the installation of Pershing missiles in Germany and German support for Reagan's "Star Wars" plan. "Memory of the Camps," shown widely on public television stations, will help make that impossible for all who see it.

When British forces entered Bergen-Belsen, the Jews imprisoned there had been without food and water for six days. A typhus epidemic was raging.

Today a growing number of U.S. churches are providing sanctuary to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees. This sanctuary struggle is rooted in the anti-intervention movement like the movement to aid the Jews was rooted in the labor movement of the 1930s.

Today's sanctuary movement is indicative of the moral determination of ordinary American people not to be complicit with the U.S. government's policies in Central America, which have already lead to the deaths of tens of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans. The sanctuary movement is scoring great success in saving lives and exposing the U.S. government's role.

The fight against anti-Semitism

In "The Transitional Program," a document approved by the founding conference of the Fourth International in September 1938, Leon Trotsky spelled out the tasks of revolutionists in their fight against imperialism and war. In it Trotsky wrote the following:

"Before exhausting or drowning mankind in blood, capitalism befools the world atmosphere with the poisonous vapors of national and race hatred. Anti-Semitism today is one of the more malignant convulsions of capitalism's death agony.

"An uncompromising disclosure of the roots of race prejudice and all forms and shades of national arrogance and chauvinism, particularly anti-Semitism, should become part of the daily work of all sections of the Fourth International, as the most important part of the struggle against imperialism and war. Our basic slogan remains: Workers of the World Unite!"

Indeed, as Trotsky wrote, the only insurance that history will not be repeated is the replacement of the capitalist system itself, which depends on racism and anti-Semitism to provide ready scapegoats for its endemic and ever-worsening crises. ■



German civilians forced to view Buchenwald after liberation

The smell of death was heavy and omnipresent. Thirty thousand people had already been killed at that camp.

The Nazi guards were made to dispose of the bodies and the local German capitalists were brought in to observe (impassively, the camera showed) what their support to Nazism had wrought.

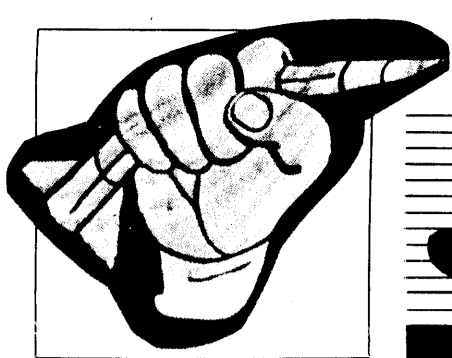
Many of the survivors were so emaciated they looked like corpses and were too weak to eat, let alone walk.

The camera hides nothing. The naked corpses of men, women, and children lie in massive piles, killed by deliberate starvation and disease.

The film shows the ashes of some of the 10,650 Jews burned in the ovens of Dachau in the last month alone. It describes the 80,000 killed at Buchenwald and the 300 per day cremated in Mauthausen. Four million were killed at Auschwitz.

"Memory of the Camps" was painful to watch. But it must be watched. It will help engrave this crime on the memory of humankind. Those who know can help stop repetitions. ■





Socialist Action Forum

This month's FORUM section is devoted to a discussion on the perspectives for building the antinuclear-weapons movement.

Socialist Action contacted leaders of the Nuclear Freeze movement and specialists on the arms issue to present their views on this urgent topic.

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

In this issue of FORUM we are presenting the views of Charlene Tschirhart, director of the San Francisco Nuclear Freeze; Gene Carroll, labor coordinator for the national Nuclear Freeze; and Stephen Jay Gould, renowned scientist and author.—The editors

Charlene Tschirhart: 'April protest was moment of hope'

Charlene Tschirhart is the director of the San Francisco Nuclear Freeze. She is also one of the four co-chairs of the San Francisco Spring Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice. In this capacity, she coordinated the Mobilization's finance committee. The following interview was conducted in San Francisco on May 9 by Alan Benjamin.

Socialist Action: I understand that the San Francisco Freeze generally follows the strategy of the National Freeze. Can you tell us what that is?

Tschirhart: This year the national strategy is to push a piece of legislation through that will stop deployment, testing, and production at the time of the talks between the United States and the Soviet Union. We don't want to end up seven years hence with the talks concluded and right into Star Wars.

We are circulating a national petition that will be finally delivered in the fall to Reagan and Gorbachev. In late July, in several cities, we will go both to the Soviet consulate and to appropriate elected officials to present a first set of names asking that we freeze while the talks are going on. In August, on Hiro-

shima-Nagasaki Day, we will return to their offices and demand a response to our petition.

We're also working for a comprehensive test ban—no flight testing, no underground testing. Economic conversion, pushing for jobs and not bombs, is another one of our national strategies.

We will also be seeing what we can do about putting a comprehensive freeze bill through the Congress this year. We know it will be difficult. What the Freeze really wants is to stop and then reverse the arms race. The half measures are not enough and do not pacify us.

S.A.: How has the antinuclear movement responded to the Star Wars program?

Tschirhart: In Northern California, at least, over 80 percent of the people say they're for a freeze. But we're dealing with a broad base of people, and many people call in asking why the Freeze is against Star Wars. They've bought the notion that Star Wars would be the deterrent that would end nuclear war.

We have to remind them that every new development has always been the



one that's going to end nuclear war. We're always invulnerable for a few years, but then the Soviets catch up. The Soviet Union is a country that has seen real destruction by war and is going to defend itself.

S.A.: So a lot of education has to be done about what Star Wars represents?

Tschirhart: It's the next step for the Freeze. We've been around for more

than three years nationally and we realize that if the movement is going to continue it has to deepen.

A lot of people see the Freeze as being very broad and very wide. But it's not very deep when you can have some supporters considering Star Wars. Some of them have been working so long that

(continued on page 7)

By JEFF MACKLER

Stephen Jay Gould is one of an increasing number of scientists who have stepped forward to warn about the dangers of nuclear war.

Gould is a professor of paleontology and evolutionary biology at Harvard University. He is the author of numerous books and articles, including "Ever Since Darwin," "Reflections in Natural History," "The Panda's Thumb," and "The Mismeasure of Man."

Gould is also nationally known for his commentaries on a broad range of scientific issues relating to important social questions. These range from his work refuting racist theories of intelligence to his criticisms of the nuclear arms race.

In a recent telephone interview, Gould told *Socialist Action* that more scientists are speaking out against nuclear weapons because they perceive that the danger is steadily increasing. "Scientists can't escape the fact that we as a community built all these things," he added. "There is a sense of shared responsibility."

Gould said that many scientists have felt compelled to confront the concept of nuclear winter. He pointed out that the National Academy of Science has just published a report on the theory titled, "The Effects on the Atmosphere of a Major Nuclear Exchange."

"You can claim that the original

Stephen Jay Gould:

'Nuclear winter is not an implausible idea'

reports, if you want to be cynical, were done by political liberals and that there was some bias in them," Gould said. "But this report is done by basically conservative scientists who say that it is a plausible scenario."

According to Gould, Edward Teller, "the most conservative man in American research," grants that nuclear winter is a strong possibility.

"Although he likes to pooh-pooh it, Teller does not deny that his own calculations give nuclear winter as a not implausible scenario," Gould said. "He is in favor of more money for research."

Will we follow the dinosaurs?

The idea of nuclear winter was first put forth by groups headed by Cornell astronomer Carl Sagan and Stanford biologist Paul Erlich. They theorized that a nuclear war would blanket the atmosphere with sufficient dust and smoke to block out most of the light from the sun, condemning any people who survived the bomb blasts to death

by starvation and freezing.

Gould compared nuclear winter to the effects caused by the asteroid or comet that—most scientists agree—collided with the earth about 65 million years ago. That catastrophe wiped out

"I think the main effect of the nuclear winter argument is to mobilize opinion."

the dinosaurs and about 50 percent of all existing species of animals and plants.

"The asteroid or cometary impact is a lot more powerful than all the megatonnage of the earth's weapons," Gould pointed out, "But the earth's weapons could have more effect because an asteroid hits in only one place and nuclear bombs hit all over."

"You don't even need to detonate a

very large percentage of the weapons provided you burn cities," he continued. "The Sagan group calculates it to be as little as 100 megatons. The start of great firestorms would be enough to trigger a strong version of the nuclear winter."

Gould said that nuclear winter—while a 50 to 70 percent probability—cannot be verified mathematically. "But you don't need certainty to use it as a good argument," he stressed. "I think the main effect of the nuclear winter argument is to mobilize public opinion."

"If they can get away with it," Gould cautioned, "people committed to military establishments will use the argument in other ways. They can say that it is all the more reason to make cleaner weapons or to have more research for weapons."

Socialist Action asked Gould to comment on statements by former government officials, like Alexander Haig, to the effect that nuclear war is winnable. "It depends on your concept of winnable," Gould said. "I think Teller would still say that, but his concept of winnable allows for a wipeout of half of our own people."

Gould believes that mass demonstrations are essential to effectively end nuclear weapons production. "I don't think major political changes are ever made purely by friendly persuasion," he concluded. "People must vociferously make greater demands on nations that hold nuclear weapons." ■

Eugene Carroll:

'The Freeze is as strong as ever'

Gene Carroll is the national labor coordinator for the Nuclear Freeze Campaign. He was formerly the field and disarmament coordinator for the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy. The following interview was conducted by Michael Schreiber.

Socialist Action: What is the state of the Nuclear Freeze movement today and what are the tasks before it?

Gene Carroll: The Freeze Campaign is as strong as it has ever been in terms of its grassroots presence across the country. We have Freeze organizations and groups in almost all 50 states.

The problem we have right now is on the national level with Reagan's smokescreen in Geneva concerning arms negotiations with the Russians. Many members of Congress who have expressed support for the freeze are somewhat reluctant to push it because they feel as if they have to give Mr. Reagan a chance at Geneva.

The National Committee of the Freeze Campaign, which just met on May 3-5 in Denver, is going to pursue a national petition drive based on the theme, "Don't just talk; freeze now."

It will provide a critique that says that we need to move forward with serious negotiations based on not just managing the arms race, but on actually stopping it.

It will point out that we should have a freeze now as a good-faith measure during the course of negotiations.

S.A.: Did Reagan's Star Wars plan and the endorsement by Congress of the MX scheme lead to any demoralization in the antinuclear movement?

Carroll: A demoralization occurred when Reagan was re-elected in November, I think, and also at the very weak showing that Mr. Mondale provided in terms of the freeze.

In Mr. Mondale's second debate, you'll recall, he tried to out-Reagan Reagan and talked about how he would be willing to intervene in Nicaragua if he had to. He backed off on the freeze, talking about his willingness to go forward with certain first-strike programs.

The April actions were a step in the direction of getting people reactivated. This was particularly true in the attempt to build a coalition of people who support the Freeze—which has more of a middle-class constituency among its hard-core advocates—and other groups that link the freeze to the issues of

"The April actions were a step in the direction of getting people reactivated."

apartheid, U.S. intervention, and domestic policies.

S.A.: In addition to the petition campaign you spoke about, what other methods of protest should the antinuclear-weapons movement pursue?

Carroll: I believe that we should continue to try to encourage political expression in its various forms. I think sometimes people in the movement underestimate the importance of lobbying. After all, members of Congress are the ones who vote yes or no on these appropriations.

If we had a really serious and intensified pressure campaign on the members of Congress, I think that would be a very important step. Remember that

Congress eventually voted to stop funding the Vietnam War because public pressure became so overwhelming.

I believe that non-violent civil disobedience and mass actions are also needed, and needed in large numbers—more than ever before. We should encourage non-violent civil disobedience as long as it's done with strategic implications in mind and thought through very well.

S.A.: How best do you think we can involve labor in the antinuclear movement?

Carroll: The more that we link the escalating military budget to the material conditions of American workers, the stronger the labor involvement is going to be.

One of the ways that the peace movement can promote labor participation is by supporting local, state, and national initiatives for economic conversion and economic renewal. We must begin to pull the rug out from under the arms

manufacturers when they use job blackmail threats to continue the production of weapons systems.

In California, for example, that's a very big issue. The state is heavily defense dependent. You have workers working in defense plants who look out the window and see two choices: Either they stand in an unemployment line if they leave their job, or they continue to build bombs.

There has to be an effort to go beyond the already-convinced. That means doing some basic things like trying to get on the agenda and speaking at meetings in union halls.

I like the petition campaign because it gives people a chance to participate simply by signing their name. You're not asking them to quit their jobs and change their life to support your issue. The petition campaign sparks debate on the shop floor and gets people involved.

S.A.: Can you point to recent successful examples of labor's participation in antiwar activities?

Carroll: The National Jobs with Peace Campaign, the Nuclear Freeze Campaign, and the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador have all been involved in efforts to get trade unionists to speak on these issues as trade unionists.

Right now there's a group of teachers from El Salvador who are touring the country speaking to trade-union groups.

The labor involvement in the anti-apartheid struggles—speaking about the apartheid issue from a labor perspective—is a very powerful voice for opposition to apartheid. In Southern California, the Unions for Jobs with Peace and a Freeze organized Proposition 10, which called for a cutback in military spending and redirection to social programs. Those are excellent examples of how we can do this work.

S.A.: What successes did the April 20 mobilization have in involving labor?

Carroll: I was frankly disappointed at the inability of some of the national trade unions to endorse and participate in this march. It was too bad not to see AFSCME, SEIU, and UAW taking part in it. These and a few other unions would normally be strongly involved in these issues on the national level.

It made me think that some labor leaders don't yet see the need for allies, especially after what happened in November. On the national level that was a disappointment, although the unions that did involve themselves worked hard and gave a lot. I do know there were good efforts at the local level trying to involve labor.

The San Francisco march was a success precisely because it really involved the labor movement in the San Francisco area in the mobilization. That's why you had such a big turnout in San Francisco—over 50,000 people. I think that stuff just has to continue.



Disarmament march of nearly one million in New York on June 12, 1982

... Tschirhart

(continued from page 6)

now they're looking for the panacea. They wish it were that simple.

S.A.: What is your assessment of the April 20 demonstrations, particularly of the one here in San Francisco?

Tschirhart: I was one of the co-chairs of the San Francisco April mobilization and was on the finance committee. From the financial perspective, it was the first time in a coalition that there was so much financial accessibility. Every event brought in money.

This was very new. The union people provided some strong leadership and took the financial needs of the event very seriously.

The style of meeting was quite structured compared to many of the previous coalitions. There was an attempt to make decisions by consensus but there was clarity about where decisions were made. We tried to avoid unnecessary debate and struggle. By the time we formed the coalition, we had only three months to create the march and rally.

Basically what happened was that groups agreed to themes, and then other individuals and groups came on the scene and wanted to interject other themes. This happened after more than 200 individuals and groups had endorsed.

S.A.: So you feel it was important that there was a commitment to the initial four themes?

Tschirhart: I feel that if we are going to be broad-based, we have to find out what issues we can agree on and build

the coalition around those. This time most of the unions were saying, "I represent a constituency and our participation in this coalition is dependent on a commitment to the themes that we started out with at the beginning."

This is true of the Freeze, too. When we first began three years ago, we couldn't combine the nuclear freeze with non-intervention in Central America. But over the past two years Freeze supporters have been educated on Central America. Now we're nearly unanimous on this issue.

It is important that we find out where people and groups are in agreement and move from there. Other issues should be handled by other structures and other coalitions if they limit the ability to bring out people and organize massively. It is important if organizations with constituencies are involved that you don't change the focus of the event without allowing adequate time for the representatives to renegotiate with their constituents.

A lot more education is necessary. You're not going to force people sitting around the table, who represent others and have voted on something, to accept another theme until that education and agreement happens.

S.A.: The turnout was impressive—50,000, some say a little more...

Tschirhart: I think it came at an important point. I think people needed the feeling that they are not alone. At least for our Freeze people, we worked so hard on the election and we feel somewhat voiceless now with Reagan in the White House. I think people felt

their voice, their strength, that even on a rainy day we can be 50,000 strong. That was quite an accomplishment.

People were by and large excited about the program and the march. I heard from almost everyone that it was a moment of hope.

S.A.: So where does the coalition go from here? Can the coalition stay together around the four themes—freeze and reverse nuclear weapons, end U.S. support to apartheid, end U.S. intervention in Central America, and jobs and justice?

Tschirhart: As you asked me the question, I realized how sophisticated it is to see the connections among the four themes. You can't expect that sophistication from everyone.

People come to the Freeze and they work for us for a few years and all of a sudden when they look at things more deeply they see the connection among the four themes of April 20. We all joined in one march and we did connect those themes. It is a beginning.

I would hope that next time we could agree on four major speakers and really show these connections—that money and energy should be spent on jobs, justice, and people—not destruction, but life.

I think there are possibilities for the future. The Freeze is committed locally and nationally to coalition building. We feel it would be good if there were an ongoing coalition with these four themes. We are interested in the most broad-based coalition we can build which calls for jobs, peace, and justice.

N.Y. campaign seeks to ban nuclear ships from harbor

By CLIFF CONNER

NEW YORK—A campaign to put a referendum on the November ballot is under way in New York City. The initiative is aimed at blocking the Navy's plans to bring nuclear weapons into New York's harbor.

The Navy has decided to station a nuclear-capable Surface Action Group at Stapleton, Staten Island. Although Navy policy is neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons on its ships, the issue is not in doubt. A letter from 15 New York City Council members to Secretary of the Navy John Lehman made this clear:

"Statements by the Navy and the Secretary of Defense as well as information in military publications on the purpose of a Surface Action Group, suggest to us a *de facto* existence of nuclear missiles on board the ships to be stationed at Stapleton."

The letter urged that plans for the base be cancelled.

The opposition campaign is being organized by the Ad Hoc Committee for a Navyport Referendum, which was initiated by the New York Mobilization for Survival. The fact that the referendum, if successful, would be *binding* on New York City's government gives this petitioning drive a potentially powerful dynamic.

A majority vote in the referendum would not be binding on the Navy, but it would block the city government from cooperating with the Navyport plans in any way.

The city would be prohibited from providing land or funds to the project. If the Navy were to proceed anyway—"Damn the torpedoes, full steam ahead"—it would have to do so in the face of a popular vote to the contrary. In any case, this is not a petitioning effort that the warmakers will easily be able to ignore.

The campaign is expected to proceed in two stages. First is the drive to collect 30,000 valid signatures of New York

City voters by the end of May. Then would come the effort to mobilize public support to actually pass the referendum in November.

Campaign's two stages

The kick-off for this latter phase will be a "human chain" demonstration on June 8 spanning the Verrazano Bridge, which connects Staten Island and Brooklyn. This action will be part of an

international series of protests during the first two weeks in June. A demonstration to span the Golden Gate Bridge has been called in San Francisco, where the Navy intends to base the presumably nuclear-armed battleship Missouri.

The Navy's plans for New York's harbor call for a fleet of seven ships, headed by the battleship Iowa, that can carry up to 360 Tomahawk cruise missiles. Each of these missiles carries a nuclear warhead 15 times more power-

ful than the bomb that leveled Hiroshima.

The proposed Navyport would be a launching pad for military intervention in Central America and elsewhere. Last November, the Iowa led a flotilla of 25 ships in a traditional "gunboat diplomacy" display in Central American waters.

When New Zealand refused to allow U.S. nuclear ships to dock, the Reagan administration's response was "the squeal heard 'round the world." This is a particularly sensitive issue for the nuclear warriors in the Pentagon—and a rebuff by New York City would inflict a wound far deeper than the New Zealand refusal.

But if New Zealand can do it, why can't New York? ■



Socialist Action/ Joe Ryan

Right-wing Vietnamese attack SWP headquarters

On May 21 right-wing Vietnamese demonstrated and threatened violence at the Socialist Workers Party San Francisco headquarters, calling for vengeance for the socialists' support to Vietnam (photo above).

This is the latest in a series of attacks on SWP meetings called to protest U.S. policy of economic blockade and military aggression against Vietnam and Nicaragua.

Rightist Vietnamese have held several demonstrations against the San Jose SWP starting April 27, when the socialists held a conference on the history of the Vietnam War. Some 200 Vietnamese chanting "Kill Communists!" marched on the SWP hall, forcing the socialists to evacuate.

Protests can be sent to Mayor Thomas McEnery, 801 N. 1st St., San Jose, CA. 95110. McEnery has so far refused to investigate or take any action to halt the attacks. Solidarity messages can be sent to SWP at 3284 23rd St. S.F., CA 94110 and 46-1/2 Race St., San Jose, CA 95126. ■

Antiwar conference set for Twin Cities

The weekend of June 21-23 is the date for the Second Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/ The Caribbean. The conference will be held in Minneapolis at the University of Minnesota, East Bank Campus.

The Second Emergency Conference follows on the heels of the successful April 20 national actions for peace, jobs and justice. The First Emergency Conference held last Sept. 14-16 in Cleveland, Ohio, had voted to call upon the entire peace and anti-intervention movements to unite and sponsor massive demonstrations on April 20.

The demands of the Emergency Conference are:

- End U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean;
- Money for Jobs and Human Needs—Not War;
- End U.S. Support for the Apartheid Regime in South Africa;
- End the Arms Race.

A very wide array of individuals and organizations have endorsed the conference, with labor union representatives figuring prominently.

The call to the Emergency Confer-

ence states in its conclusion:

"Increasing the involvement of the ranks of labor in the anti-intervention struggle is of decisive importance... The struggle of working people in the United States for jobs, a decent standard of living and protection of our unions cannot be separated from the fight against U.S. interventionist policies abroad and runaway military spending at home."

Conference coordinator Jerry Gordon, in a recent declaration, stated, "The U.S. government has sharply escalated its actions against Nicaragua. A clear emergency exists. People in the movement must get together on a national basis to assure a massive response to this threat, on a top priority basis. The Minneapolis conference is the place for this to happen."

The agenda of the conference starts with a Friday night rally to "End the U.S. War on Nicaragua and Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean."

Speakers include Roberto Vargas of the Nicaraguan Embassy; Vernon Bellecourt of the American Indian Movement; Ione Biggs of the National Coun-

cil of Negro Women; and Joe Lindenmuth, president of United Steelworkers of America Local 2265.

Saturday workshops will include the anti-apartheid fight in South Africa, winning the labor movement to the anti-intervention struggle, building unity in the anti-intervention movement, and others.

A panel discussion entitled "What Can We Learn from the Vietnam Anti-

War Movement?" will be held Saturday night. Panelists will include prominent leaders from that movement.

The Sunday schedule will be devoted to action proposals.

The conference is open to all. All who register will have voice and vote. For further information contact Emergency National Conference, P.O. Box 14180, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN. 55414. ■

... protests

(continued from page 1)

entered a new stage. The U.S. government, it is clear, is dead set on overthrowing the Sandinista government.

Mass response is needed

The movement against the U.S. war drive received a tremendous boost with the successful April 20 antiwar demonstrations. The House of Representatives, feeling the pressure of tens of thousands mobilized in the streets, voted on April 23 against Reagan's request for aid to the *contras*.

But today, with the U.S. trade embargo and the imminent aid package to the *contra* terrorists, it is more urgent than ever to extend the gains made in building the April 20 actions.

Nationally coordinated fall protests are needed around the four themes of the spring mobilizations. It is necessary to bring out greater numbers and new forces into these fall actions. Only in this manner can the American people

force the warmakers to retreat.

Various antiwar conferences and meetings will be held in late May and throughout the month of June. A decision by the national and local spring coalition leaderships to call for national fall actions would give a clear direction to the antiwar movement.

Now is the time to prepare for these fall actions. ■

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A response to critics:

S.F. coalition sets example for antiwar movement

By CARL FINAMORE

On April 20, 1985, tens of thousands marched in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver, Seattle, Houston, and other cities for jobs, peace, and justice.

The successful April 20 demonstrations were a powerful blow to the warmakers in Washington. The turnout was greater than even the organizers had expected: 65,000 in Washington, D.C.; 50,000 in San Francisco; 8000 in Los Angeles. But more important than the numbers was the breadth of some of these demonstrations.

The recent upsurge in campus activity and the large April 20 actions have revealed that opposition to the U.S. war drive is widespread among the American population. Polls continue to show that a majority of people in the United States oppose Washington's policies in Central America.

Since the April 20 actions, a big debate has broken out in the left press and among antiwar activists over the significance of these demonstrations and over the most effective

opposing the inclusion of an additional slogan, "No U.S. intervention in the Middle East."

In the course of building the April 20 actions, opposing viewpoints were argued out and put to the test. Why has Socialist Action come under attack? What is our strategy and why was the strategy we advocated successful in San Francisco?

Mobilize working class

Our starting point is that as socialists our main task must be to reach, educate, and help mobilize the U.S. working class—particularly the organized labor movement and the oppressed sectors of society.

Working people are the majority in this country. They have the power not only to curb the imperialist war machine, but to replace the warmakers with a government that defends the interests of the exploited and oppressed.

The potential for building a mass movement against U.S. foreign and domestic policy has been obvious at least since 1981, when 100,000 people marched in Washington against U.S. intervention in Central America and over 500,000 workers responded to the AFL-CIO call for Solidarity Day.

The national elections, however, sidetracked the labor and antiwar movements for well over a year as the key peace organizations, solidarity groups, and unions subordinated their independent organizing to working for the Democratic Party.

The *Guardian*, *People's World*, *Unity*, *Frontline*, and most of the other left papers that attack Socialist Action for orienting the San Francisco coalition in a "right-wing" direction were doing all in their power to get working people—Blacks, Latinos, women, the unemployed—to work and vote for the Democratic Party.

Isn't this a bizarre contradiction—to criticize the San Francisco coalition for not being "left" enough in its slogans and, on the other hand, to support capitalist candidates in local and national elections?

The electoral strategy of the various protest and left organizations such as *The Guardian* consisted in calling on workers to vote for "lesser-evil" Walter Mondale; the same Mondale who promised to quarantine Nicaragua if elected president. (Actually Reagan is simply carrying out Mondale's program.)

The Democratic Party represents the same capitalist power structure as the Republicans: the corporations and the banks that make and carry out Wash-



Socialist Action/ Joe Ryan

ington's imperialist policies.

It is important to remember that the Democrats actually used nuclear weapons while in power. They also invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965, enforced the "Jim Crow" segregation laws, and denied the Equal Rights Amendment—to give only a few examples.

Supporting one capitalist party or candidate against another in the elections only divides and misleads the independent protest movements.

Mass action

Virtually all the left organizations who today attack Socialist Action argue that periodic mass demonstrations can

U.S. intervention should take but they all share agreement on the fundamental stake imperialism has in maintaining its hold over the economic and political future of Central America.

For Socialist Action, periodic massive demonstrations are a central strategy to force a change in the government's policies and not simply a tactic that is subordinated to supporting one or another capitalist political election effort.

History has shown the effectiveness of this strategy. It was the massive demonstrations and rallies of the civil rights movement that were able to force a change in "Jim Crow"

"peace" candidates and lobbying.

Pessimism

Some of the criticisms of the San Francisco coalition made by the advocates of "left coalitions" spring from their pessimistic assessment of the mood of the American population. These critics consciously downplay the possibility of mobilizing large numbers of people in action against the government's war policies.

This pessimism in turn serves to justify a rather narrow political outlook of only reaching out to groups who share a similar "radical" perspective. Many leaders and activists in the Washington-based April Actions coalition, in fact, were surprised by the large turnout of 65,000 on April 20.

Only six weeks prior to April 20 key leaders of the April Actions had made their second suggestion to postpone the action because of alleged lack of interest and response. This was an incredible misreading of the consciousness of the movement today.

The leadership of the traditional peace groups that organized the Washington, D.C., actions misread the election of Ronald Reagan. They took Reagan's election to mean support by the American people for the policies of war, racism, and economic austerity. Staking everything on the election of "peace" candidate Walter Mondale, they had become disoriented by the election results.

This demoralization dampened any motivation to appeal to a wide range of groups—particularly the unions. If you

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Socialist Action/ Joe Ryan

strategy and tactics needed to build a mass movement against U.S. imperialist policies.

Socialist Action has come under fire in various left papers—in some cases with full-page articles—for the positions we defended and helped carry out in the San Francisco Spring Mobilization for Jobs, Peace and Justice.

Socialist Action has been accused of pushing the San Francisco Spring Mobilization in a "right-wing" direction by voting to prevent revolutionary leaders from Central America from speaking at the April 20 rally. Socialist Action has also been heavily criticized for

be employed as a tactic to "divide" the ruling class.

Mass protests can certainly heighten the divisions among the various capitalist politicians. The *contra* vote in the Congress after the April 20 actions was an example of this. But it would be wrong to direct our protests at liberal politicians for their use as bargaining chips in their congressional disputes.

This is especially fruitless because both the Democratic and Republican parties believe the United States has the right to intervene in the internal affairs of Nicaragua and any other country seeking to break away from imperialist control.

These politicians quarrel with each other over the form

segregation laws, not the dispute between the "Dixiecrats" and the mainline Democratic and Republican politicians.

Government documents contained in the "Pentagon Papers" from the Vietnam era dramatically confirmed that it was the impact of the peace actions that toppled two presidents and helped to force the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam, not the Congressional floor debates between the "doves" and the "hawks."

Unfortunately, important sections of the current antiwar movement do not share this analysis and strategy. This accounts for their primary orientation toward the election of

"History has shown effectiveness of a mass-action strategy."

... S.F. coalition example

(continued from page 9)

do not think it is likely or even possible for the anti-intervention movement to attract a mass hearing, then you obviously will fail to appreciate the need for broadening out the appeal of your coalition beyond the traditional peace groups and radicalized sectors of the population.

Fortunately, the leadership of the national April Actions overcame its late start and initial hesitations in time and organized a powerful action. Hopefully, this will encourage these forces to organize more and bigger demonstrations.

Unity in action

Despite a whole series of disagreements on politics and tactics, it is vital for organizations and activists to be able to come together in action around com-

of smaller demonstrations over the past few years. Socialist Action's goal was to help form a coalition that would actively involve trade union officials and workers in a leadership capacity.

Socialist Action recognizes that most of the current trade union officials constitute a serious obstacle to the expression of the power of the American workers—especially on account of their reliance on the Democratic Party.

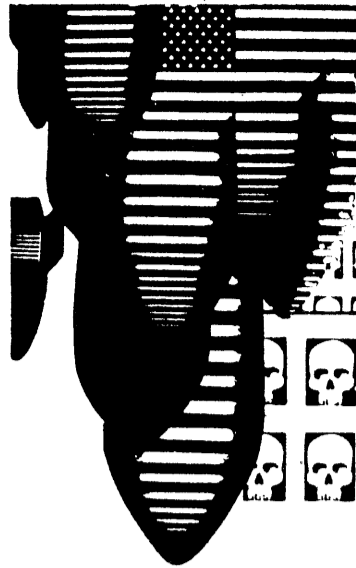
But the fact is that, for whatever combination of reasons, several union officials in the Bay Area were willing to buck the official AFL-CIO policy on Central America. All eight Bay Area central labor councils supported and helped build the mobilization. Most sent voting delegates to the

mercenaries and assassins to interfere with the rights of the people to determine their own form of government."

Henning continued, "We want jobs. We don't want \$14 million sent, either in arms or economic aid, to the subversive forces of Nicaragua at the very time Reagan is cutting aid from the senior citizens, from the welfare people of America, and from the students of America."

The fact that today millions of working people are being forced to pay for the U.S. government's military policies with wage concessions and cuts in social programs has changed the situation dramatically.

Unlike the '60s, today it is possible to build coalitions that can raise additional demands around apartheid, nuclear weapons, and jobs without



communist organizations, and leading forces in the Black liberation struggle, in particular those identified with the Rainbow Coalition."

These pro-Mondale "left" critics maintain that part of the leadership of the San Francisco coalition—including members of Socialist Action—capitulated to the pressure applied by the trade union officials in the coalition.

The May 13 issue of *Frontline* exclaims, "With such a watered down program, they were able to win endorsements from a broad range of respectable forces, including all seven Bay Area labor councils."

Nicaragua in forefront

First of all, there was nothing watered down about the program of the Bay Area coalition. What is "right-wing" about the demand to end all forms of U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, or the demand to end U.S. support to the murder-machine in South Africa?

Isn't it obvious that the U.S. government is dead set in its course to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and that a defeat for the workers and peasants in Nicaragua would be a major blow to working people in every country of the world?

Isn't it clear that the impoverished masses in this region are in the forefront of the international class struggle against the main enemy of humanity: U.S. imperialism. When Daniel Ortega recently visited Uru-

April 23, remains a top priority for the Reagan administration. Renewed efforts to appropriate \$14 million in aid to the *contras* received bipartisan support in the Congress only days after the vote opposing such funding was taken. Later this year Reagan will ask for \$28 million to finance a contra army of 35,000.

Isn't it therefore incumbent upon us in this country to help forge the broadest possible coalition to demand, "U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua"? Isn't this the most effective way to support the revolution?

A flexible approach

The inclusion of official representatives from the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN or from the Nicaraguan FSLN as speakers at the San Francisco rally would have jeopardized efforts to involve some major unions and would have prevented Jack Henning, head of the state AFL-CIO, from accepting the invitation to co-chair the April 20 rally. This was a simple fact.

The coalition steering committee correctly subordinated the tactical question of any particular speaker to the overall strategic goal of building a broad mass action. By making these kinds of political decisions the coalition was able to retain its unprecedented amount of labor and community support.

In the case of the FDR/FMLN speaker an alternative proposal was made to accommodate the valid concerns that were raised. The official representative of the Salvadoran revolutionary movement was invited to speak, but in his role as an exiled trade unionist whose name is on the death list.

This flexible tactical approach satisfied the overwhelming majority of the San Francisco coalition and was a model of the kind of give and take so vital to preserving broad participation in a coalition.

Obviously, it is important for the American people to hear first-hand from the victims of the U.S. foreign policies we oppose—particularly from Nicaragua and El Salvador, where 100,000 people have died as a result of these policies. This can only contribute to a more informed and stronger anti-intervention movement.

But this does not mean that the only Nicaraguans or Salvadorans who can or must speak at the mass anti-intervention rallies are the representatives of the revolutionary organizations in those countries.

Trade union leaders, students, teachers, refugees, human rights activists, or religious leaders are often just as capable of presenting vivid and highly political first-hand accounts of the horrors of U.S. imperialism. Their testimonies can be very accessible and politicizing for U.S. working people.

Tactical decisions regarding these kinds of speakers—as opposed to the official representatives of the revolutionary organizations—can only be made by carefully evaluating the actual state of coalition building in every local area.

The San Francisco coalition was destined to stir up such

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Socialist Action: Joe Ryan

monly agreed upon issues. The people in Central America cannot await the full settlement of the issues that divide the broad range of organizations and individuals who oppose U.S. intervention.

With full recognition of the differences that exist, the political goal of the anti-intervention movement must be to forge the broadest possible unity against the U.S. government's war policies.

The reason for building a coalition in the first place might seem elementary, but some participants in the movement don't seem to understand it. The idea is to find the points of unity among the various groups and to set the disagreements aside. No one group's program gets adopted. The purpose is to unite around a common independent action in order to increase the numbers and thus the power and influence of the action.

This seems self-evident and almost everyone will proclaim their support for such an approach. But yet this unity in action is extremely difficult to attain in practice. A recent example is the San Francisco Spring Mobilization Coalition for Peace, Jobs and Justice, which organized a successful march of 50,000 on April 20.

Labor's strategic role

The San Francisco April 20 coalition sought and actually achieved a unity of considerable breadth. It was not a "leftist" coalition, like those that have come together for dozens

official decision-making meetings.

This in itself was a major development in U.S. politics: Important segments of the labor movement were willing to directly oppose the Central American policies of Lane Kirkland who, it must be remembered, was a member of the reactionary "Kissinger Commission."

A united front of virtually all the Bay Area unions was achieved. It did not consist of just the "progressive" unions as in the past. Given the support to the action by Jack Henning, head of the 1.5-million-member California Labor Federation, it was difficult for any one union or labor council to pull out. This was unprecedented.

The trade union movement was willing to take action around the four issues of the Spring Mobilization: End U.S. intervention in Central America; End U.S. support to apartheid; Jobs and justice; Freeze and reverse the arms race.

This genuine involvement of the labor movement is the key difference with the antiwar movement of the 1960s. Nearly all the union leaderships at that time—it was still the period of "guns and butter"—backed the war policies of Johnson and Nixon.

Things are different today. At the rally itself, Henning blasted the bipartisan war against Nicaragua. "We want the United States out of Nicaragua," he said, "where the Reagan administration is using

being driven off their independent mass-action course into the capitalist electoral arena.

A hue and cry

The San Francisco coalition has become a center of controversy in the anti-intervention movement because its political orientation differed significantly from that of the Washington, D.C., April Actions coalition.

The Guardian, *Frontline*, and other left papers raise a

"The Guardian called for votes for Mondale—the same one who would quarantine Nicaragua."

hue and cry that the San Francisco coalition did not add the demand, "U.S. Out of the Middle East, Asia, Pacific and Europe" to the major four demands—as the Washington, D.C., coalition had done. They also charge that San Francisco failed to present representatives from revolutionary organizations in Central America at its rally.

Frontline, the newspaper of Line of March, laments that the San Francisco coalition did not adopt an "approach more associated with the anti-imperialist, left wing of the peace movement, solidarity groups,

guay, over 300,000 people turned out to greet him. They fully understood that a defeat of the Nicaraguan revolution would be a defeat for them as well.

The recently imposed U.S. trade embargo against Nicaragua is another sign that the U.S. government is planning a fight to the finish against the Nicaraguan revolution. As in the 1960s during the Vietnam War, the U.S. government is escalating its role step by step before the actual introduction of U.S. troops.

Contra funding, although opposed by the Congress on

(continued from page 10) controversy precisely because it represented a different direction and orientation for a movement that in the past had been centered on relatively small solidarity committees and peace groups.

A new direction

From the start, the Bay Area trade unions—in alliance with the Nuclear Freeze Campaign and some important church groups—became the moving force building the April 20 actions. Unfortunately, some groups on the left acted as if the same program which was sufficient for a narrow coalition would also be appropriate for a broad one.

Over the past few years, the traditional peace and solidarity groups, like CISPES, have played a very important role in mobilizing support for the people in Central America through

affect policy does not come by raising demands for solidarity—which are demands focused on the movement, not the government—but rather by mobilizing in action against the U.S. government's policies.

Of course, every group has a right to define itself politically in any way it chooses. That is not the question here. It is not a question of supporting the Central American revolutions. For our part, Socialist Action unconditionally supports the revolutionary struggles of the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran workers and peasants.

Solidarity in action

But support to the revolutions cannot be the basis for building a broad anti-intervention coalition. The real issue before the coalition was how to achieve the broadest possible unity in action among the majority who oppose U.S.



Socialist Action/Joel Ryan

“Many who are willing to act on Central America are still confused about the Middle East.”

educational activities and in medical and financial-aid campaigns.

However, neither CISPES nor the combination of dozens of other solidarity groups have been able to mobilize the large numbers of people who are opposed to intervention.

The anti-intervention demonstrations which have occurred in the Bay Area over the last two or three years have generally ranged from several hundred to only several thousand, with a high of 15,000 at the “Vote for Peace” rally held outside the 1984 Democratic Party convention.

What accounted for the inability of these groups to draw in large numbers of people into their projects? The most important factor was their orientation of making political support to the revolutionary forces in Central America a central axis of their activities. This political stance prevented the formation of a large and broad united front-type action coalition.

Socialist Action's starting point is the consciousness of the American working class. We advocate the inclusion of slogans and speakers which we believe are best suited to galvanize the workers into action against the government.

Socialist Action doesn't harbor the illusion that working people equally oppose the aims of U.S. imperialism in every part of the world or that the American majority which opposes intervention in Central America also subjectively supports the revolutions in that region.

We don't insist upon opposition to the imperialist role in the Middle East or support to speakers from the FDR/FMLN or the FSLN as preconditions for organizing united front-type coalitions around the four crucial demands raised by the San Francisco coalition.

Genuine working-class solidarity will grow as the antiwar movement grows and develops politically. But the power to

intervention in Central America and who support the other three demands.

The fundamental political orientation of the San Francisco coalition was to develop slogans, structures, activities, speakers, and materials directed to the majority of working people.

The consciousness of working people will be raised by participating in independent actions like demonstrations, rallies, and picket lines—not by the simplistic addition of slogans or speakers.

Mass actions against the pol-

icies of the U.S. government help convince working people that they are the majority and that they have the power to affect change. Such actions expose the contradiction between the U.S. government, which represents the capitalist minority, and the aspirations of the millions of Americans who desire peace. Small-scale “radical” actions fail to achieve this goal.

The powerful objectively anti-capitalist effect of a united action coalition such as the Spring Mobilization in San Francisco occurs despite the inclusion in the coalition of the many supporters of one of the capitalist parties.

The Middle East slogan

One of the major charges made by the pro-Mondale advocates of “left-wing” coalitions is that the San Francisco coalition did not adopt the Middle East slogan raised by the national coalition.

People's World, the West Coast organ of the Communist Party USA, goes so far as to

denounce the “omission” of the Middle East slogan as “irresponsible” and a “great disservice to the cause of peace in the region.”

At first glance, the inclusion of a slogan around the Middle East would appear morally imperative. The state of Israel is based on the dispossession of the Palestinian people from their land and on the subjugation of the Arab population within its boundaries.

Israel is expanding its boundaries by initiating wars of aggression against its neighbors. June 6, in fact, marks the 18th anniversary of Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank and the Golan Heights and the third anniversary of the Israeli occupation and invasion of Lebanon.

Israel could not long thrive without the massive military and economic aid provided by the successive Democratic and Republican administrations. Israel, indeed, has become a surrogate for the United States in its war on the liberation

struggles throughout the world.

Nevertheless the inclusion of this slogan in the April 20 coalition would have been incorrect. First of all, those who think that all the moral and political issues have been addressed with the inclusion of the Middle East are simply short-sighted for there are hundreds of just, courageous, and progressive struggles all over the world.

Why not include the demand of “England out of Ireland,” or of Puerto Rican independence, support to Polish Solidarnosc, the need for a labor party, abortion rights, gay rights—all of which deserve our support? If slogans around all these just struggles had been included, we would have surely had a rather small turnout on April 20.

But more important, the Middle East slogan was politically divisive—particularly for the labor movement. Important sectors who are willing to act around Central America are still either confused or backward on the Middle East.

The San Francisco coalition was initially formed in December 1984 around the original four demands of the national coalition. The demands at that time did not include the Middle East. The national coalition only added that slogan later on—after the San Francisco coalition had been formed.

Had the Middle East slogan been added, the bulk of the Bay Area labor movement and some religious organizations would have pulled out of the coalition. The united front of labor would have been broken. The tremendous momentum would have been lost. And the turnout on April 20 would have been significantly smaller. This is not idle speculation but simple fact, attested to by the labor organizations themselves.

It should also be pointed out that all groups advocating the inclusion of the Middle East slogan were free to carry whatever banners they wished with whatever slogans they wished on April 20. The debate centered on the appropriateness of the Middle East slogan for the coalition as a whole.

Instead of seeing the April 20 action as a good place to help the process of educating American working people about the reactionary role of U.S. support to the Zionist oppressors of the Palestinian people, many left papers took the attitude that without the Middle East slogan, the action was hardly worth supporting. Most of these left papers con-

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California AFL-CIO News

Official Publication of The California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

April 26, 1985

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Labor Marches As 50,000 Join Mobilization

Trade unions, peace activist groups and community organizations put 50,000 marchers onto Market Street in San Francisco Saturday, April 20, in protest of Ronald Reagan's weapons spending, economic and social priorities, intervention in Central America and attitude toward apartheid.

It was the largest of several such Spring Mobilization rallies held across the country.

The march, starting shortly after noon, filled Market Street from the Embarcadero to Civic Center with demonstrators carrying hundreds of banners and signs.

At a rally in front of City Hall after the march, common interest in the causes of social and economic justice was voiced by speakers including members of Congress, a Central American refugee, labor leaders, student activists, a nun, a stand-up comic and a member of the Gray Panthers.

Marchers still were filing into Civic Center Plaza when a company of Zulu dancers took the stage to the delight of the thousands who were present to protest apartheid.

John F. Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, who marched in the front rank and was a master of ceremonies, stated organized labor's reasons for participating in terms of peace, jobs and justice, the theme of the day.

Of peace, Henning said, “We want the United States out of Latin America. Precisely, we want it out of Nicaragua where the Administration... of South Africa



John F. Henning addresses rally.

... S.F. coalition

(continued from page 11)

sciously downplayed the size of the demonstration to make their political point.

Issues like the Middle East require a full-scale educational campaign exposing the role of the Zionists in supporting apartheid in South Africa and the dictatorships in Latin America. A separate coalition of different forces—one in which Socialist Action will participate fully—is needed to advance a fuller understanding of Zionism.

Independent politics

The Spring Mobilization in San Francisco was a test for radical groups claiming to represent the interests of the working class. Most failed the test. Most were disappointed with the demonstration. They failed

this to say to the antiwar activists:

"This time around, unlike the '60s, we will harness our energies and discipline them for the long-term struggle, and redirect the course of our nation.

The Rainbow Campaign of '84 will become the Rainbow organization of '85 and '86 and '87 and '88. We will translate protest into action. We will increase voter registration, enforce voting rights laws, and have enough votes in '86 to defeat the MX missile. That's one of our goals."

Doesn't this call to rally to the Democratic Party sound familiar? Eugene McCarthy,

party of the class enemy. Jackson, as we had predicted in *Socialist Action*, delivered his "rainbow" to Walter Mondale.

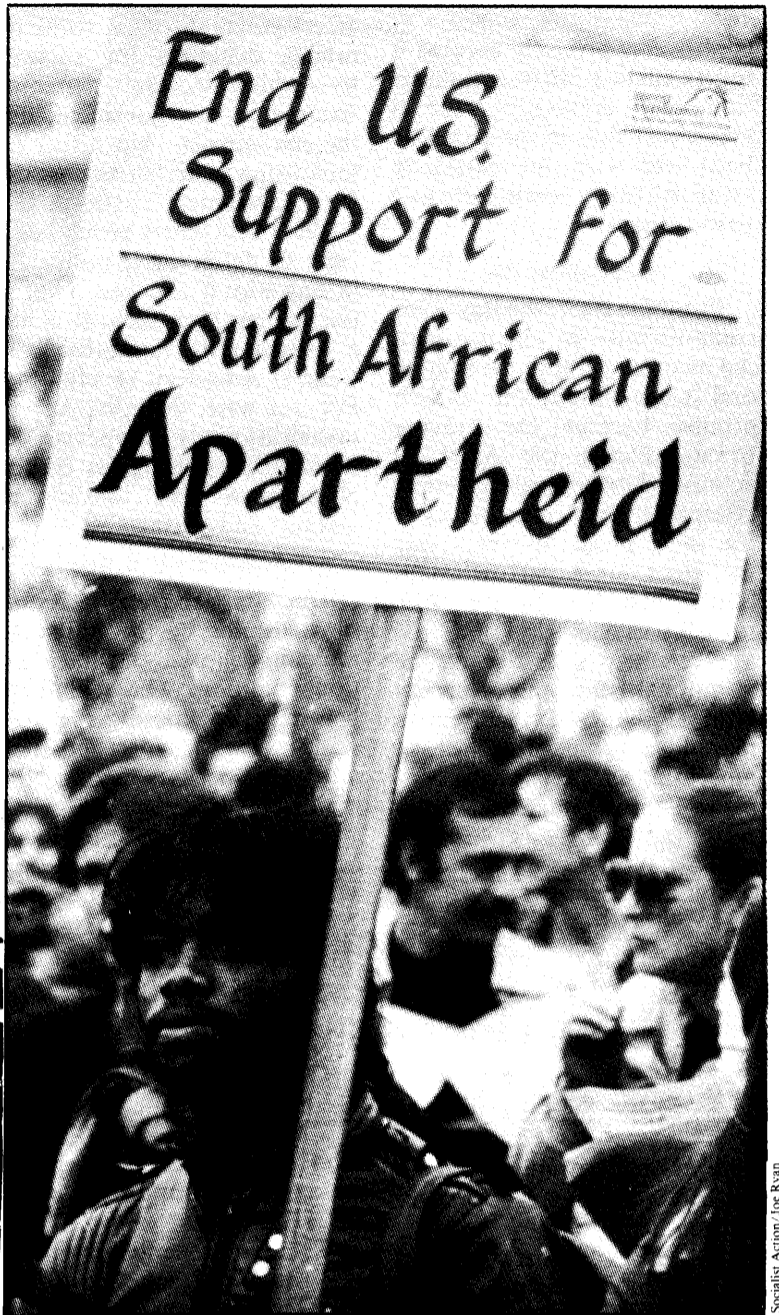
Of course, Jackson is right about the need to translate action into politics. If working people are going to put an end to the policies of this imperialist government, they will need a political instrument of their own to do so.

But this instrument cannot be the Democratic Party. The struggles of working people cannot be advanced by building a "rainbow" organization inside the Democratic Party in the coming years.

On the contrary, out of this developing antiwar movement must come something that did not come out of the movement of the 1960s and '70s, and that is a political organization that represents the American working class—a labor party based on the unions.

The changes in American society since Vietnam have made it possible for large numbers of working people and their unions to join in the fight against imperialist war and against the attacks on their standard of living and democratic rights. The issues of South Africa and the nuclear freeze help to broaden the appeal among working people.

The future is bright for building a genuinely broad and massive movement to stop the warmakers.



"The struggles of workers cannot be advanced inside the Democratic Party."

to understand that the most radical coalition is the one that is capable of mobilizing the most people in action in support of principled political demands.

Independent mass action is not revolutionary in and of itself. But it is an indispensable component of a revolutionary strategy oriented to working people and all the exploited and oppressed in this country.

No list of slogans on paper is as radical as thousands of workers in the streets for the first time against their own government. Their illusions about capitalism will be shed more rapidly once they take independent actions.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, was by all accounts the most powerful speaker at the Washington, D.C., rally. He nonetheless had

George McGovern, and Robert Kennedy all wanted to translate the Vietnam antiwar movement into politics—that is into the Democratic Party.

In an interview at Howard University three months earlier, Jackson stated plainly that he had no intention of trying to lead Black voters—or antiwar activists—out of the Democratic Party.

"Independence is not separatism," he said. "Our tension in the party is not over whether we should remain Democrats or not, it is over the direction of the party."

Jackson captured the attention and hopes of millions of Blacks and oppressed working people in his election campaign. But his "rainbow" was designed to funnel the growing discontent of millions into the

Bay Area labor press highlights success of April 20 mobilization

• "Trade unionists, peace activist groups and community organizations put 50,000 marchers onto Market Street in San Francisco Saturday, April 20, in protest of Ronald Reagan's weapons spending, economic and social priorities, intervention in Central Amer-

ica, and attitude toward apartheid."

—California AFL-CIO News, April 26, 1985.

• "Spring Mobilization: Many ILWU Convention delegates chose to spend an extra day in San Francisco April 20

to join 50,000 members of unions and community groups in a dramatic march up Market Street, concluding with a rally at the Civic Center. The demonstration, organized by one of the broadest labor/community coalitions to come together in many years, focused on an end to U.S. intervention in Central America, an end to apartheid, and the need for jobs and peace."

—The Dispatcher (ILWU), May 10, 1985.

• "The San Francisco Labor Council had thrown its support behind the mobilization, urging fullest participation from members of its 130 affiliated unions."

—Northern California Labor, May 10, 1985.

• "Sisters and brothers from Local 29 joined more than 50,000 protesters from Northern California to march down Market Street in San Francisco on April 20 to dramatize their opposition to our current government's policies."

—The 29er (Office and Professional Employees Union Local 29), May 1985.

• "San Mateo County unionists joined hands with a variety of peace, church, and community groups in a huge mobilization which brought out 50,000 marchers in San Francisco April 20."

—San Mateo County Labor, May 1, 1985.

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By LARRY COOPERMAN

In late April President Reagan suffered a rare defeat in Congress. Every proposal aimed at securing some form of aid for the *contras*—even “humanitarian” aid or funding for “non-lethal” military hardware—failed to gain a majority in the Democratic Party-controlled House of Representatives.

Immediately, the big-business media and the Reagan administration raised a hue and cry—as they had in the past—that Nicaragua was going Communist and the House Democrats were succumbing to Sandinista propaganda.

Immediately following the House votes on *contra* aid, *The New York Times* Sunday magazine (April 28, 1985) published a cover story by Mario Vargas Llosa, a prominent Peruvian author and human rights activist, who gave a behind-the-scenes account of Nicaragua.

Vargas Llosa explains that he does not support aid to the *contras*. With that for an introduction and with his impressive credentials as an opponent of repression, he paints—in thousands of words—a collage of individual anecdotes which amount to a political condemnation of the Sandinistas and an endorsement of the fundamental objectives of the political opposition.

The Vargas Llosa piece, as well as articles such as “The Sins of the Sandinistas” by Robert Leiken, published in *The New Republic* (Oct. 8, 1984), represent a waning of enthusiasm for the Nicaraguan revolution on the part of liberals.

As the pressure continues to mount from the Reagan administration and as the Sandinistas are forced to appeal to the Soviet Union for increased aid, Democratic Party liberals are fast retreating from their opposition to stiff measures against Nicaragua.

Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.) said that economic sanctions were “appropriate” and, linking Nicaragua to South Africa, called for embargoes against all “repressive” regimes!

“In both instances,” Solarz said, “you have governments deeply committed to policies we are opposed to. In South Africa it is apartheid and in Nicaragua it is repression at home and revolution abroad.”

House Speaker Tip O’Neill, joining the anti-Sandinista chorus, sent a congressional envoy to Nicaragua to convey House Democratic disapproval of Daniel Ortega’s visit to the Soviet Union.

While O’Neill claims to continue to oppose *contra* aid, the retreat of many Democrats on that issue means that a new proposal for \$14 million in aid will be revived in the House and probably pass.

Conservative echo

There has been no shift in American opinion on the issue of aid to the *contras*. To the contrary, recent polls demonstrate a growing mood against the Reagan administration’s policies. Yet, there is growing bipartisan support for policies of increased intervention in Central America.

There is nothing new in right-wing Republicans or newspapers and magazines with a conservative political orientation

“Recent polls show a growing mood against Reagan’s war policies.”

decriing a supposed lack of freedom in Nicaragua.

Reagan administration supporters such as Jeanne Kirkpatrick, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, openly speak at “private” fundraising gatherings where the very wealthy give hundreds of thousands of dollars to prop up and beef up the counterrevolutionary war against the Sandinistas.

Increasingly, the conservative propa-

Liberal Democrats eager to join anti-Sandinista chorus



ganda campaign has found its echo in more liberal circles, both here in the United States and internationally. The support given to the candidacy of Arturo Cruz by the Socialist prime minister of Spain is just one example.

On March 21 a paid advertisement signed by nine prominent liberal or ex-liberal personalities appeared in the French daily *Le Monde* calling on the U.S. Congress to approve *contra* aid.

The signers ranged from historian Hugh Thomas, who wrote classical accounts on both the Spanish Civil War and the Cuban Revolution, to playwright Eugene Ionesco. The text of the advertisement explained:

“The renewal of this aid is necessary from a strategic point of view. The Sandinista junta has never concealed that its goal is the integration of the Central American region into one Marxist-Leninist whole. In this eventuality, the United States would be compelled to retreat from one of its main overseas commitments.

“This is precisely the objective of Soviet strategy—to force the United States to withdraw from the areas that represent a vital importance to it and to the free world. In this respect, the issue of Central America, Europe’s fifth frontier, is also a problem.”

One of the main pillars of the propaganda offensive against the Sandinistas is that they have turned Nicaragua into

a beachhead for Soviet intervention or subversion in Central America.

Without the shadow of the Soviets lurking behind the Sandinistas, it is difficult to convince anyone that the Sandinistas pose a strategic threat to the United States.

The Sandinistas do receive aid from the Soviet Union. Their policy is to receive aid from anyone who will help them safeguard their revolution. Given the vast damage inflicted upon the country by CIA and *contra* sabotage, there is a critical need for all aid, whether it is economic or military.

Already, 40 percent of the Nicaraguan government’s budget has to be devoted to defense. These defense needs have placed a tremendous drain on the economy and partially reversed some of the significant strides made in the living standards of Nicaragua’s poor during the first four years of the revolution. It has created critical shortages in many areas and forced the Sandinistas to divert important resources toward the military.

Furthermore, the United States has used its veto to prevent the International Monetary Fund from giving any loans to the Nicaraguan government. And U.S. policy is to try to pressure its Western European allies into stopping the flow of aid to Nicaragua from those countries.

In this context, and given the new trade embargo imposed by the United States, the Nicaraguan government has

every right and, indeed, has no other choice than to ask for aid from Moscow. As in the case of the Vietnam War, the amount of aid coming from the Soviet Union has not been nearly enough to counter the damage inflicted upon Nicaraguan society by the U.S. government.

In fact, the Reagan administration knows full well that the Soviet Union has placed limits on the amount and kind of aid sent to the Sandinistas. An article in the Nov. 10, 1984, *New York Times* was quite revealing in this respect. It quoted an “experienced American official in Managua”:

“The Soviet Union has an important bilateral agenda with the United States that includes things like arms control, NATO, and the Warsaw Pact. Compared to those matters *Nicaragua is not that important to them* [our emphasis]. They are not going to sacrifice the possibility of progress in those other areas in order to get some planes to the Sandinistas.”

Nonetheless, any increase in aid from the Soviet Union to Nicaragua would be a positive step forward. Given the inability of the Soviet Union to make any progress with the U.S. government in arms talks, it is likely that some increase in economic collaboration, whether in the form of increased trade or increased aid, will be forthcoming.

At a news conference in Managua the day the embargo was declared, Sergio Ramirez, Nicaragua’s vice president, stated bluntly that the Nicaraguans will “become closer to all countries that support the revolution,” and, he added, “this includes the Soviet Union.”

Bipartisan objectives

The reason the Democrats are falling into line on the issue of aid to the *contras* is that they have the same fear of the Sandinista revolution as the Republicans. Republican Senator Dave Durenberger, in a *Washington Post* opinion piece on the Congressional debate on the \$14 million aid package, points out:

“In subsequent negotiations between the administration and a number of senators, it became clear that there existed a strong consensus on the nature of the Sandinista government and the potential threat it represents to U.S. interests.”

Durenberger revealed that, in these closed meetings,

“a large number of senators and representatives, like the president, were interested in using at least some of the \$14 million for leverage with the Sandinistas. Because leverage can take many forms, both positive and negative, it was impossible for more than 500 tacticians to agree on the most appropriate use of the money.”

The only way to convince Congress not to intervene in Central America is to convince them that such a policy risks provoking a huge response from the American people. The April 20 mobilizations were an important first step toward that objective. Reliance on the tactical differences between Democrats and Republicans, by contrast, is a dead end.

This point is best illustrated by the remarks made by William V. Alexander Jr. (D-Ark.), who is the Democrats’ chief deputy whip:

“There’s a movement on our side to accommodate the lust members feel to strike out against Communism. Ortega’s trip to Moscow triggered a reaction in the House and provides overwhelming support for the need to show the flag.”

Hussein-Arafat peace proposal finds no takers in Israel

Now that Israeli troops have made a partial withdrawal from Lebanon, the Reagan administration considers this a good time to unfreeze stalled negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy have been touring Arab capitals during the last month to pressure Egypt and Jordan to open diplomatic discussions with Israel. Whatever other points may be on the proposed agenda, the fate of the Palestinians would be the overriding issue.

Washington's efforts to get negotiations going have foundered on several rocks. King Hussein of Jordan will not deal with Israel unless he has the support of the other Arab states. This encouragement has not been forthcoming.

Even with such support Hussein insists that Palestinians sit with Jordanians on the negotiating committee. The Israelis refuse to deal with PLO members. No Palestinians acceptable to the Israelis have been found.

In the story below, the last of a series of three on the crisis in the Mideast, Ralph Schoenman analyzes the peace overtures made by Jordan's King Hussein and Yasir Arafat earlier this year and describes the opposition in Israel to these latest proposals.

—The editors

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

King Hussein is described by Wolf Blitzer in *The Jerusalem Post* as a traditional favorite among State Department Middle Eastern diplomatic figures. Over the past decade he has met secretly with several Israeli leaders, including many serving in the current Israeli cabinet.

Hussein is putting pressure upon Yasir Arafat to join in proposing acceptance of the Israeli State. This coincides with the policy goal of both the United States and Mubarak to facilitate Egypt's re-entry into the Arab world on its own terms following the boycott of Cairo after the Camp David talks.

Hussein has been advised that the 60 percent of his population which is Palestinian is increasingly affected by the rise of resistance in the West Bank. This presents the danger of a challenge to his rule in Jordan. *The Jerusalem Post* reported on Feb. 8 that

"No Zionist group is willing to permit a Palestinian state on the West Bank."

Rabin had warned King Hussein of the consequences of unrest in the West Bank for which he holds Hussein responsible.

No one seriously believes that Hussein has any relation to Palestinian unrest in the West Bank but he does, in the minds of the Americans and Israelis, have the capacity to defuse it by his maneuvers.

The *Post* is very clear about the message sent by Rabin to Hussein: "Any illusion that the Israeli Defense Force withdrawal from Lebanon might serve as a precedent for the West Bank must be blown to smithereens."

Buying time

Hussein and Mubarak are out to buy time for the Israelis and the Americans. Meanwhile the Rabin government keeps Hussein on the mark. Rabin declared in the Knesset, "Amman [Jordan] has become the center for the planning and ordering of PLO attacks in Israel."

The Saudis, who subsidize Hussein as they do Hafez al Assad and Mubarak, have understood the nature of this current diplomatic game. Wolf Blitzer reports in *The Jerusalem Post* that King Fahd prefers to take a back seat.

"The Saudis," Blitzer writes, "have been shaken by signs of domestic unrest, do not want to be out in front and are very nervous about their political vulnerability. The potential for a damaging Shi'ite spill-over into Saudi Arabia is very much on his mind."

In Washington the dangers of the Shi'ite resistance in Lebanon to the client regimes in the region is a paramount concern.

Meanwhile, Hosni Mubarak in coming to Washington was responding to pressure to renew his rela-



Yasir Arafat embraces King Hussein of Jordan.

tions with Israel if he wished to receive the nearly \$1 billion he requested. Calling for Israel to respond to the call for negotiations, he declared that the Israelis would commit a "historic mistake" if they held fast.

"Peace camp" rejects proposal

The agreements signed by Yasir Arafat and King Hussein, apart from calling for a federation between a Palestinian state and the Hashemite kingdom, are vague on the treatment of Resolution 242. This U.N. resolution not only requires recognition of the Israeli state but denies the Palestinian people status as a national group with the right of self-determination.

But all the gyrations and formulations of words avoid the crucial issue for the Palestinian people: No political grouping in the spectrum of Zionist opinion is prepared to permit a Palestinian state on the West Bank.

Mordechai Bar-On, Knesset member for the "left" Citizens Rights Movement made clear in *The Jerusalem Post* that for any Israeli government to accept the Palestinians, they must renounce all rights to national sovereignty.

Bar-On stated, "We in the Israeli peace camp must conclude that there is no substantial change and that it is difficult to see how the Amman formulation may contribute to the advancement of the peace process."

Bar-On's reasons are brutally clear. There is no explicit acceptance of the Israeli state in the Hussein-Arafat peace proposal. There is no open acceptance of U.N. Resolution 242. There is no "clear rejection of the use of violence."

And there is "no clear statement that the peace will be final and determinate, bringing about a historical reconciliation."

Bar-On tells us that the "peace camp" insists that "there is no possibility of turning the wheel back on the question of Jerusalem," where Palestinians outnumber Jews in East Jerusalem by 11-to-one.

Bar-On also tells us that the Peace Camp rejects the term "occupied Arab lands" because it could apply to Jaffa or Nazareth. And he writes, "As long as the Palestinians refuse to renounce the 'right of repatriation' as an option, there will be no peace in the Middle East."

No sentiment for Palestinian state

The Jerusalem Post is equally clear. Even the formula "territories for peace," it tells us in its editorial of Feb. 15, means the establishment of a Palestinian state on all the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem.

The *Post* continues, "This is a formula that, as

King Hussein knows full well, will not be endorsed by any conceivable Israeli government in any circumstances, even as a basis for negotiations."

Lest anyone retain any illusions to the contrary, *Yediot Aharanot* canvassed all the political groupings in Israel and reported on Feb. 1:

"If any of our neighbors think that the present government differs from its predecessors in that it would be prepared to give up any parts of Greater Israel, they are deluding themselves and must get rid of that misconception as quickly as possible. The State of Israel and the people of Israel will not forego any territory within Greater Israel."

Five days later Prime Minister Shimon Peres appointed two ministers, Nehemkin and Yacoby, to increase the share of settlement budget allocated to the Jordan Valley settlements—most of which were established by Labor after 1967—and promised to double the budget for new settlements in the Jordan Valley.

United against Palestinians

It is not that Israel and Washington are unwilling to talk. It is that they will talk about the liquidation of the Palestinian movement, whether in stages, over time, or all at one go.

Writing in *The New York Times* on March 17, Abba Eban, the former foreign minister and long-time "Zionist socialist," wrote that the Palestinian community cannot insist on being represented by those who do not accept the "basic norms of international civility."

Eban warns that if the Palestinians do not qualify for U.S. acceptance, they will never be congenial for Israeli discourse. It is up to President Mubarak and King Hussein, he writes, to find a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation with which Washington and Jerusalem will find it possible to hold a dialogue.

For years the Palestinians have been pressured to recognize the Israeli state. Much of this pressure emanates from Washington and its clients in the Arab East. Much, however, has come from liberal Zionists and advocates of "peace," who have contended that such a step would free Israeli opinion to pursue negotiations with the PLO.

But any such recognition removes the basis for the Palestinian struggle and enables the Zionists to assert that 37 years of intransigent refusal to accept the right of the Israeli state to exist as an exclusive Jewish state in Palestine now disqualifies these late-comers from "dialogue."

Why not talk to the Palestinians who collaborated from the start?

Palestinians under the "Iron Fist" do not share these illusions. Reporting that Yitzhak Rabin had begun to prepare new settlements and ruled out any Council elections for Palestinian towns, *al-Ha'mishmar* observed on Feb. 4, 1985:

"The West Bank itself is beginning to rise.

The people reflect a genuine desire for a Palestinian national struggle. The 'popular revolution' is beginning to take off just as Arafat is trying to reach a political agreement, at least partly because of his disappointment with the popular struggle and armed resistance. This is the real crossroad we are facing at Dheisheh camp."

It is an expression of despair and a lack of strategic conception that drives the PLO leadership to look to the likes of Reagan, Hussein, King Fahd, and Mubarak as a source of support in "talks" with the Israeli state.

The crisis of Zionism to which all commentators allude is also a time of crisis for the leadership of the Palestinian revolution. The struggle will not abate. It is time to respond to it.

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'Socialist democracy is the alternative'

Pavlusko Imsirovic, a Yugoslav Marxist dissident, is one of the six defendants accused of "counterrevolutionary activity" in the most significant political trial in post-Tito Yugoslavia.

Imsirovic spent two years in jail a decade ago for "setting up an association against the people and the state."

He is associated with a group of intellectuals who are part of the "free universities" movement in Yugoslavia.

In a surprise announcement on Jan. 23, shortly after Imsirovic had announced his intention of going on hunger strike in protest of the conduct of the trial, all charges against the author and translator were dropped.

Of the five remaining defendants, two will be tried separately. Charges against the other three of "forming counterrevolutionary groups" and "attempting to overthrow the social system" were finally dropped. They were instead sentenced to one to two years in prison for the crime of "hostile propaganda."

Milan Nikolic was convicted on the basis of what he had written in his doctoral thesis on "Social Structures and the Overcoming of Conflict in Yugoslav society."

Nikolic's doctoral advisor was the well-known British Marxist sociologist Ralph Miliband. The thesis, already three years old, was seized by Yugoslav police from Nikolic's desk drawer.

In his final statement in the trial, Nikolic declared:

"Socialist democracy must be more developed than bourgeois democracy. The persecution of critical intellectuals must stop. Blue-collar workers, farmers, and white-collar workers need freedom for political initiative, freedom to criticize the leadership, freedom to organize themselves and to defend their interests. Genuine self-management in the economy and the state favors the abolition of any sort of organizational or ideological monopoly."

Miodrag Milic was sentenced on the basis of his manuscript "History of the Yugoslav Revolution."

In that work, Milic criticizes the Yugoslav Communist Party (LCY) as having been Stalinist prior to 1948 and takes a critical approach to aspects of the LCY's policies during its struggle against fascism.

Dragomir Olujic was put on trial and sentenced for having advocated the formation of strong trade unions independent of the state.

All 19 witnesses, except for one who the defendants believed was an agent of the Yugoslav police, absolved the six of any wrongdoing. The galleries in the courtroom were packed with supporters of the defendants.

The following is an edited and condensed version of an interview with Pavlusko Imsirovic. The interview, which was taken from the winter issue of the Austrian newweekly *Gegenstimmen*, was conducted in late 1984 when the charges against him were still pending. It is published in full in *International Viewpoint*, no. 70.

Question: What do you think of the way in which the media in Yugoslavia have portrayed your trial?

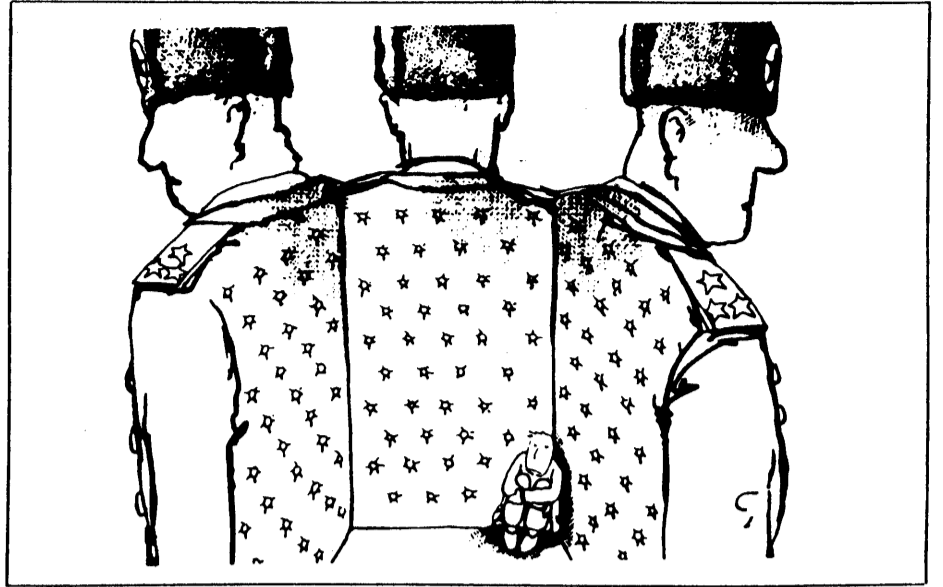
Imsirovic: For the most part, there has been a savage and hysterical campaign against us. We are presented as anti-communist, as puppets of foreign interests—although those forces abroad or the things we are supposed to have done are never defined.

In the press they talk of spies. According to them we were only pawns in somebody else's game. But this is a false accusation. All the defendants in

this trial are Marxists, socialists. Personally, I am a critical Marxist, a communist, a Trotskyist.

Question: I always get the impression, in discussion with Yugoslavian friends, that there is an overriding rejection of the heritage of Marxism because Marxist ideas are associated with the dominant social relations.

Imsirovic: It's an old, old problem. It's the same in Yugoslavia as in the rest of the world's workers' movements. People identify these ideas with socialism as it exists and with the practice of



the socialist and communist parties. That is why these ideas and these movements are discredited.

But solidarity and the fight for socialism and democracy throughout the world are the only way to break with this false alternative, created by Stalinism, which has thwarted the world workers' movement. Stalinism and capitalism are not the only alternatives.

Question: The LCY is a product of the Stalinist tradition, but it broke with Stalinism in 1948. The political system is different in some important ways from that of the traditional Stalinist countries.

There is workers' self-management. There exist certain democratic openings—certainly more than you would find in Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union. Would you say that we are still talking about a Stalinist regime?

Imsirovic: No, I do not think that the Yugoslav Communist Party has remained a Stalinist party heading a Stalinist regime, after the break with Stalin and Moscow. It has shown itself to be bureaucratic and of a similar social character, but not of the same political character. The Yugoslav bureaucracy has a special place in world politics and even has special tactics in internal politics. Self-management is one of these.

Question: Do you think that the balance of forces between the working class and the bureaucracy are better in Yugoslavia than in other Stalinist states,

because of workers' self-management and the particular tradition of Yugoslav communism?

Imsirovic: The origin of these changes has two roots. One is a product of external politics and the situation in Europe. The other is related to the relation of forces inside the country and the extent to which the LCY had behind it a large revolutionary movement which it controlled and dominated. But it also had to make constant concessions to this movement.

Self-management was one of those concessions. On the social level also there were numerous examples of democratization, mostly between 1950 and 1958.

Question: Among many critical intellectuals the idea still exists that by strengthening the mechanisms of the market economy one can achieve a stabilization of the economy. What is your assessment of the possibility of reforming the economic situation?

Imsirovic: There are some people who favor a market economy of a classic type, that is, "laissez faire."

But in reality this does not exist anywhere. Others, with whom I agree, are more favorable to the policy of a planned economy with the mobilization and centralization of all the productive forces.

We have not yet mobilized all our resources. What about people who have no job and therefore play no role in the development of the country? I am therefore for a centralization of the economy—but for a political decentralization, that is, democratization.

Question: What do you think of the stabilization program of the Yugoslav government?

Imsirovic: In my view, these kinds of measures are not adequate to resolve the current problems. It is necessary to attack the fundamental issues, which are always left hanging in the air. There are many issues involved like, for example, that of foreign trade. The state needs a unified policy in relation to the world market.

It is impossible and absurd that each economic unit can adopt its own policy with regard to the world market and that you can have conflicts between nationalities for economic reasons. Such a leveling out, a unification of economic interests and economic policies, is not possible outside of a widespread process of democratization.

Question: Where do you place yourself as a critical socialist vis-a-vis the national question in Yugoslavia?

Imsirovic: The problem of the nationalities is also a difficult one for the Yugoslav democratic movement. My position is a classical Marxist one, that is, for the unconditional right to self-determination. This does not always mean a struggle for the separate existence of this or that nationality, but it can bring about a struggle for an association of nationalities on the basis of absolute freedom of choice.

Solidarity continues to defy Polish regime

By JIM RICHTER

Tens of thousands marched throughout Poland on May 1 and May 3 with their forbidden Solidarity insignias and banners in open defiance of the Jaruzelski regime.

In a statement issued in late April, the principal underground Solidarity interfactory committees and regional leadership bodies called on all Polish workers "to renew with the historic tradition of May Day—an international

day of struggle and protest—by marching in independent demonstrations."

The statement also called for protest actions on May 3, anniversary of the signing of Poland's first democratic constitution.

Despite the stepped-up repression in recent months, the response to Solidarity's call was overwhelming. And the response of the regime was brutal. Numerous protestors were injured as the Zomo's water cannons charged the

crowd. Forty Solidarity supporters were arrested, including Jacek Kuron and Seweryn Jaworski. All have been sentenced to three months in prison.

At the march of 10,000 in Warsaw on May 3 the crowd chanted in unison: "Solidarity lives," "Free Kuron and Jaworski," and "Free all the political prisoners!"

Appeal for open trial

Over 200 Solidarity activists and leaders are currently behind bars in Poland. Most are charged with "carrying out illegal activities against the state."

The most important political trial in recent years—the trial of Bogdan Lis, Wladislaw Frasyniuk, and Adam Michnik—is scheduled to begin within the next few weeks. If sentenced, the three could spend up to five years in prison.

In a letter smuggled out of jail on April 18, the three Solidarity leaders stated, "We have been imprisoned and we will soon be tried for having carried out our union activities. Our trial is nothing more than a provocation reminiscent of the Stalinist era."

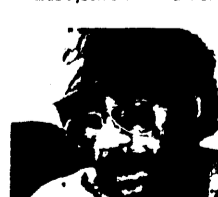
They also called on world public opinion to demand that the trial be opened to international observers. "Their presence will be the only way to get the truth out about our loyalty to Solidarity," the letter stated. ■

Polish 'Inprekor'

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SWP rewrites history of Vietnamese revolution



By SEAN FLYNN

The fall of Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) to the People's Army of Vietnam 10 years ago was truly a victory for the workers and peasants of the world. The triumph of the 30-year armed struggle was testimony to the tenacity and courage of the Vietnamese people, and to the determination of the Communist Party of Vietnam to rid the country of foreign domination.

The ultimately socialist character of the Vietnamese Revolution confirmed that national liberation can only be torn from a formidable enemy if the exploited and oppressed classes are mobilized to secure their own social interests—the peasantry to win land, the workers against the boss, and both to overthrow regimes whose true function is to guarantee the profits of foreign and domestic capitalists and landlords.

In other words, the revolutionary process had to combine the solution of "democratic" tasks—true independence, land reform—with the socialist or anti-capitalist revolution. This is the essence of Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, and the central lesson of the Chinese, Vietnamese, Cuban, and Nicaraguan revolutions.

Through the "Vietnam Syndrome", the political effect of the Second Indochina War and the ultimate U.S. defeat was to directly impede the ability of the United States to act as policeman for the capitalist world. The struggles of workers and peasants in Angola, Iran, Grenada, and Nicaragua could draw inspiration from the events in Southeast Asia and give them confidence that their old rulers could be overthrown.

So the workers and peasants of the entire world owe much to the triumphant people of Vietnam.

But it is possible to solidarize and admire the Vietnamese Revolution and to give credit where due to its leadership without turning a blind eye to the weaknesses of that revolution and of the Communist Party of Vietnam (VCP). For only a critical evaluation of an event as momentous as the Vietnamese Revolution can draw out the true lessons of that struggle.

SWP: Uncritical support to the VCP

In an article entitled "How the NLF Won" published in the April 29, 1985, issue of the Socialist Workers Party journal *Intercontinental Press*, Will Reissner correctly points out that the key to victory in Vietnam was the social mobilization of the people.

Yet in giving the impression that success was a foregone conclusion because of the undeviating policies of the VCP, the article amounts to a political endorsement of the VCP even though that party was and remains deeply marked by its Stalinist heritage.

Reissner approvingly quotes General Vo Nguyen Giap that the "Vietnam war has to be understood in terms of the strategy of people's war."

The unwary reader would not suspect that this is a reversal of all previous SWP analysis and that the SWP has historically been opposed to the *strategy* of protracted rural guerilla war because it is based on mobilizing the peasantry and not the workers as the main axis of struggle.

Sensing this problem, Reissner cites Giap as stating that the key to success was "to mobilize and organize the entire people, particularly . . . the large mass of

peasants under the leadership of the working class."

But because the strategy of "people's war" assigns only an auxiliary role to the proletariat, "leadership of the working class" boils down simply to VCP leadership. And in the context of Reissner's article, it means that Reissner accepts the identification of the VCP—a party trained in the Stalin school—with the Vietnamese proletariat.

The heritage of Stalinism

In drawing out the true lessons of the Vietnamese Revolution, one must begin with the unvarnished facts. Reissner notes that the staying power of the revolution was due to a combination of the two goals which mobilized the Vietnamese people: national independence and land reform.

What Reissner fails to point out is that because of its Stalinist training, the

bourgeois-democratic first stage would be led by the "anti-imperialist" national bourgeoisie. This theory became a fundamental precept for the VCP.

In Vietnam, the first or "national-democratic" revolution would kick out the French, allow Vietnamese "national capital" to develop the country, and after a prolonged period of "new democracy," set the stage for the second, or anti-capitalist revolution.

But the success of the first revolution required peaceful coexistence between all anti-imperialist forces. Hence, the VCP advocated a "bloc of four classes" which discouraged strife between workers and the "national bourgeoisie" and between the peasant majority and the "nationalist landlords."

Only reforms which were palatable to these allies were to be advanced.

From the mid 1930s, the VCP therefore replaced its demand for the over-

against both German-dominated France and Japan.

Despite a program calling for a "democratic" coalition government of all anti-capitalist classes, the Viet Minh had the merit of engaging the Vietnamese people in action against the Japanese. By August 1945, this mass movement had won independence, forming the Democratic Republic of Vietnam with the VCP's Ho Chi Minh as its first president.

The new government carried out important reforms—a literacy drive, legislating the eight-hour day, famine relief after the disastrous floods of 1944-45. Nevertheless, the limitations of the VCP's class-collaborationist program now asserted themselves.

Wed to the two-stage revolution and for this reason unwilling to break with its socially insignificant national bourgeois allies, the party refused to deepen the social revolution. The demands of "land to the tiller" and "workers' control" were not raised, even though in the face of French and Chinese armies of occupation, winning these demands would have cemented further the bonds between the new republic and the worker-peasant majority of the nation.

Further, the VCP still had illusions in the "Big Four" alliance of Britain, France, the United States and the USSR which had just won World War II.

In exchange for the withdrawal of 200,000 Chinese troops and formal recognition of Vietnam's status as one country, believing that "progressives" in the French government would ultimately grant Vietnam independence (the French Communist Party was still in the French cabinet), and faced with a French expeditionary force of 15,000, the VCP opted for "autonomy" within the French Union with full independence to follow within five to 10 years.

It was hard for the newly independent Vietnamese to swallow this line. Demonstrations ensued, led by Trotskyists and nationalist religious sects like the Hoa Hao and the Cao Dai. The VCP's response was harsh repression, culminating in the banning and ouster from the government of several nationalist parties, and the murder of opponent leaders including the Trotskyist Ta Tu Thao in 1945.

The compromise was in vain. In late 1946, the French navy fired on Hanoi, killing 20,000 Vietnamese. British imperialist military forces, and later the French army, had been permitted to enter Saigon without a fight and thus were already the masters of Saigon and had occupied the Red River Valley and Hanoi-Haiphong.

The First Indochina War had begun, synchronised with the breakup of the wartime alliance between Anglo-American imperialism and Stalinism and the launching of the Cold War.

The defeat of the French

The Vietnamese people had paid heavily for the VCP's illusions. Though the VCP realized that only armed struggle could win national independence, it remained locked into the straitjacket of two-stage revolution and its corollary, the "bloc of four classes"—the Maoist euphemism for class collaboration.

Falling back on guerrilla warfare in the countryside (from bases prudently prepared during the "compromise" period), unity of all classes against the French remained the axis of the VCP's program. Nevertheless, the Lien Viet (successor to the Viet Minh front) won support among the peasantry through such genuine but limited reforms as



A ballet showing soldiers, workers, and peasants united in struggle

VCP had to reverse its initial conceptions at great cost in order to advance this combination during the struggle itself.

Let us examine the effect of Stalinism on "the two goals which mobilized the Vietnamese people."

The VCP, established in 1930, just as the Communist International was being

"The VCP refuses to advance program for world revolution."

housebroken to do the bidding of the bureaucratic caste which by then ruled the USSR, could not escape Stalinism's key tenets. These included the concept of defending "socialism in one country," i.e., limiting socialist revolution exclusively to the USSR.

In the late 1920s, Stalin sought to "defend" the USSR through alliances with the "anti-imperialist" bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaders of underdeveloped countries such as China's Chiang Kai Shek. Because he believed that the socialist revolution was impossible in these countries, Stalin advocated a "two-stage" revolution, in which the

throw of the landlords and capitalists with advocating the formation of an "Indochinese Democratic Front" with "patriotic" capitalists and landlords. Similarly, a call for a ceiling on land rents replaced the slogan of "land to the tillers."

By the mid 1930s the conservative bureaucracy which now ruled the USSR sought to "defend" the first workers' state, not through spreading revolution, but through a worldwide "united front against fascism."

Under this schema, the workers would unite with "democratic" capitalists of the United States, France, and Britain against fascist Germany, Japan, and Italy. In Vietnam, this took the form of the VCP subordinating national liberation from France to defeating Japan.

1945: The first revolution undermined

The fall of France to Nazi Germany in 1940 led to Vietnam being ruled by the pro-German Vichy regime under Japanese protection. The VCP again unfurled the banner of national liberation, although it continued to harbor illusions in the "progressive" Free French movement of Charles de Gaulle. Nevertheless, the party took the initiative in forming the Viet-Minh, an anti-imperialist united front formation

(continued on page 17)

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land rent reduction and the distribution of communal and abandoned lands.

Yet the victory of the anti-French struggle was assured only with the launching of a land *revolution* which turned the poorer sections of the peasantry against the rich peasants and the landlords.

Paradoxically, this anti-capitalist social alignment, which Lenin saw as characterizing the socialist revolution in the countryside, was necessary—in Vietnam as in China—to win the democratic demands of independence and redistribution of the land.

In Vietnam, it was this class struggle within the peasantry that enabled the Viet Minh to make the final push which ended in the French debacle at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954. During the winter of 1953-54, the VCP again launched the slogans "land to the tiller," and "rely

"It is a reversal of all prior SWP analysis."

on the poor and lower middle peasants, unite with the middle peasants and restrict and finally eliminate the rich peasant enemy..." (Harrison, "The Endless War," p. 148).

In Vietnam, like in China before it, only a social revolution could galvanize the inner strength of the peasantry against a militarily stronger enemy. And once unleashed, the dragon of social revolution could not be halted at the "national democratic stage."

After they had attained political power, though they hesitated for a time, both the Vietnamese and Chinese Communist parties were forced to eliminate capitalism as the dominant mode of production in the two countries in order to defend that power. The dynamic of these revolutions had posed the necessity of breaking in practice with the concepts of two-stage revolution and the "bloc of four classes."

Sold out at Geneva

Having won the entire country on the battlefield, the VCP lost the southern half at the Geneva Conference of 1954. Under strong pressure from the Stalinist leaderships of China and the USSR (who were still trying to achieve "peaceful coexistence" with the West), the VCP agreed to put off reunification until after elections scheduled for 1956.

The United States, which had financed the French war effort, now took direct control, bringing to power Ngo Dinh Diem and cancelling the elections. Diem's dictatorship tried to repress all opposition and succeeded in rolling back many of the gains won by the peasantry under the Viet Minh. But these actions, including the introduction of "strategic hamlets," also rekindled the war of national liberation.

The Second Indochina War begins

As the guerrilla war resurfaced, the VCP, which had until then concentrated on "building socialism" in North Vietnam, founded the National Liberation Front (NLF) in 1960. The NLF advanced a program similar to that of the Viet Minh, stressing national independence, moderate agrarian reforms, and calling for a coalition government.

Yet like the Viet Minh before it, and faced with escalating U.S. intervention, the NLF had to go beyond this program, and fight to redistribute the land. For if the dogmas of two-stage revolution and the "bloc of four classes" preached the unity of opposing classes in order to defeat the foreign enemy, the actual struggle dictated that only the self-mobilization of the oppressed and

exploited classes around their immediate social interests could release the energy necessary to win national liberation.

By 1965, Nguyen Cao Ky would admit that the South Vietnamese government controlled only 25 percent of the population. Belated land reform programs by the Southern government came "too little, too late."

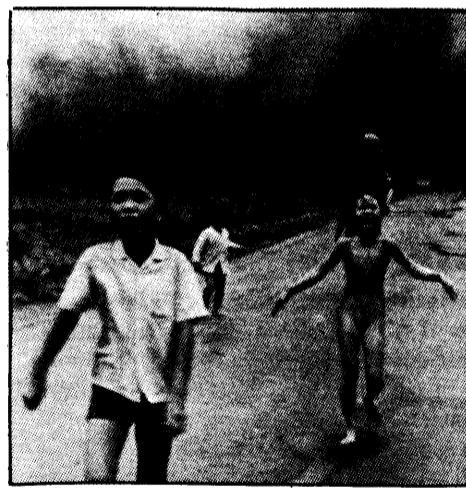
Although the U.S. would pour in millions of troops and finance the puppet Southern government for the next decade, it would be unable to stop the social revolution in the countryside. This revolution, backed by the People's Army of Vietnam and assisted by a worldwide anti-intervention movement, forced the decisive withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Indochina in 1973. Shorn of this prop, the South Vietnamese government fell to the VCP's "Great Spring Offensive" of 1975.

The weaknesses of people's war

Yet for all of its success in the countryside, the VCP discounted the role of the cities and the urban working class in the struggle. The axis of its strategy of "people's war" was the mobilization of the peasantry to wear down the enemy army. Once this was achieved, the countryside would surround and "liberate" the cities.

It is clear, of course, that some form of rural protracted war was imposed on Vietnam by the duration and ferocity of U.S. and French intervention. And one can admire how the VCP utilized peasant war—a millenium-old practice of Asiatic societies—in the interests of national liberation. Yet this does not justify the fact that for the VCP, subordinating workers' aspirations and demands was the flip side of peasant revolution.

In the July-August 1973 issue of the SWP's theoretical journal *International Socialist Review*, Fred Feldman and George Johnson pointed out the historic



Marxist position on "people's war":

"It is impossible, as Lenin and Trotsky taught us, for the proletariat to come to power in countries with large peasant populations without mobilizing the peasantry to do battle against their oppressors."

Nevertheless, they continued:

"The strategy of surrounding the cities and liberating them without the leadership—perhaps even without the participation—of the urban workers carries with it the danger of limiting the mobilization of the Vietnamese masses and unnecessarily isolating the peasant militants."

The cities were not quiescent during the course of the struggle. Diem's dictatorship had alienated many, especially the large Buddhist population. The Buddhists initiated numerous anti-government demonstrations which led ultimately to Diem's fall in a 1963 U.S.-backed coup. Continued Buddhist actions, including the sacking of U.S. offices led to a sharp government crackdown in 1966.

The rapid escalation and terror bombing of the United States led to the



The president of a farming cooperative in Vietnam

depopulation of rural Vietnam and the swelling of the cities. Vietnam, 80 percent rural in 1964, was 65 percent urban by 1972, thus undermining the popular basis for "people's war."

Meanwhile, mass unemployment, inflation, and corruption in the cities made them ripe for agitation on the basis of democratic and transitional demands.

Yet the NLF discounted this potential. Even the Tet Offensive of 1968, the main extension of the revolution into the cities, was a military action which, although supported by the urban masses, did not actively involve them. The Tet Offensive, in fact, was a classic illustration of the highest form of "people's war," the strategic offensive, in which military action takes precedence over political preparation.

For the SWP to embrace "people's war" and to endorse the VCP's substitution of itself for the working class, is to give up the prospect of proletarian revolution—supported by the peasantry and *beginning* as a struggle for national liberation and land reform—in the underdeveloped countries.

How the Vietnamese won liberation

But given its Stalinist background and program, how did the VCP emerge triumphant? The reasons are several. First, the defeats of the European imperialist powers early in World War II ignited nationalist revolutions throughout the colonial countries, allowing the combative spirit of the Vietnamese people to assert itself.

Second, Vietnam, unlike the Philippines, India, or Indonesia, possessed an extremely weak indigenous capitalist class. Thus the most dangerous features of the VCP's class-collaborationist program were unable to assert themselves, and the party was catapulted to the head of the nationalist movement.

Third, the defeat of Japan left an imperialist vacuum in Asia that could not be easily filled by the victorious imperialist armies.

Finally, and most importantly, the VCP realized it had to break with its program and deepen the peasant revolution.

Yet the VCP remained tied to key tenets of Stalinism.

The deformed Vietnamese Revolution

With the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, the long armed struggle ended. The country formally reunified in 1976, renaming itself the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The final assault later began on the capitalist economy of the South. Yet the unified workers' state which emerged continues to be deeply marred by its origins.

Political power in both North and South was won through a peasant war which conquered the cities from without. The working class had little role in its liberation, and had little chance to organize and mobilize itself.

The VCP, enforcing its monopoly of political power, forbade the organiza-

tion of competing parties and independent unions. Workers' and peasants' councils did not become the basis of the new state. Peasant committees—without which the peasantry could not be mobilized—could not retain their autonomy and usefulness to the party once the VCP had achieved power on a national level.

The workers' state which emerged in Vietnam is therefore bureaucratically deformed. Ruled by a party primarily nationalist rather than internationalist, the isolation imposed on Vietnam by imperialism fosters the growth of a parasitic social caste resting on the collectivized economy. The VCP like its Stalinist sister parties still refuses to advance the Leninist program of socialist revolution for every country in the world.

Yet for all of its faults, the Vietnamese Revolution solved some of the central problems facing the country. It won liberation from the West and distributed land to the peasantry. In order to safeguard these conquests, it eliminated capitalism and established the potential for Vietnam, in conjunction with the world revolution, to make the transition to socialism.

Meaning of SWP's new line

The Socialist Workers Party has apparently chosen to turn a blind eye to the limitations of the Vietnamese Revolution under the Stalinist VCP. Its new position on the Vietnamese Communist Party is the logical extension of its adaptation to the political weaknesses of Castroism.

In its correct impulse to embrace the Cuban Revolution, the SWP leadership adopted the political program of the Castroists. This program, the product of the empirical development of Castroism from nationalism to socialism, never came to grips with the problems of Stalinism and workers' democracy and the Leninist perspective of world socialist revolution.

In embracing this program, the SWP itself gave up its key theoretical weapon against Stalinism, the theory of permanent revolution. And in discarding this concept—which rests on the revolutionary mobilization of the workers and peasants in their own interests throughout the world—the SWP began to equivocate on key questions of revolutionary practice.

From uncritical support of the "anti-imperialist" Khomeini in Iran to refusing to mobilize opposition to the Stalinist suppression of Solidarnosc, it was only a short step to embracing "people's war" in Vietnam. In all of these cases, it was a question of turning away from the proletariat as the only class capable of liberating itself and beginning the march toward socialism.

The SWP's new line on "people's war" and its uncritical support to the Vietnamese Communist Party are a disturbing symptom of its evolution away from revolutionary Marxism. ■



By CLIFF CONNER

NEW YORK—New York City police have been caught torturing prisoners in their custody with electric-shock devices. Several youths have come forward to reveal the burn marks left on their bodies by electric "stun-guns," devices that can deliver jolts of up to 50,000 volts. Queens District Attorney John Santucci said the wounds "looked like fried flesh."

The first case to come to light was that of Mark Davidson, an 18-year-old student who had been picked up on April 17 on suspicion of selling \$10 worth of marijuana. Sgt. Richard A.

N.Y. cops torture youths

Pike applied 40 shocks to Davidson while Officer Jeffrey Gilbert held him down. Davidson "confessed" when they threatened to use the stun-gun on his genitals.

Davidson's ordeal came to the attention of columnist Jimmy Breslin, whose revelations touched off a major scandal. Within days, four other men said they, too, had been tortured and displayed the distinctive stun-gun burns to back up their charges.

Juan Rentas, 17, said that while Officer Pike held him and Sgt. Gilbert tortured him, a number of other cops were in the room: "They were eating pizza and laughing."

Some of the victims reported that the white cops used racial slurs while assaulting them.

Pike, Gilbert, and two other cops from the 106th Precinct in Queens were arrested for participating in the torture sessions, although the official charge was merely "second-degree assault."

Also arrested was Lt. Steven Cheswick, the 106th Precinct's "Integrity Control Officer."

Cheswick, whose job was to make sure no brutality or corruption took place at the station house, was himself indicted for beating a prisoner.

Following the revelation that a fox had been assigned to guard the henhouse, the scandal continued to grow. New York City Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward transferred the entire command of the 106th Precinct—15 sergeants, three lieutenants and a captain—and forced three top commanders of the borough of Queens to "retire."

He also announced the "retirement" of the third-ranking official in the New York City Police Department.

Mayor Edward Koch's main concern has been to assure the public that the tortures were isolated incidents. "It is not systemic," he said. "These cases are individual in nature."

That contention, however, is not consistent with the scope of the personnel changes implemented by Police Commissioner Ward, who acknowledged that the four "retired" commanders had been aware of the ongoing tortures. "There were enough signs out there so

that they should have known what was going on," he stated.

A New York *Daily News* article (May 2) pointed out that the torture indictments were but "the latest in an unprecedented wave of violent criminal charges to hit members of the police forces."

According to the Police Department's own Civilian Complaint Review Board, 6698 complaints were filed last year against city cops for mistreatment and excessive force.

An opinion poll conducted on April 29 showed that the public's perception of the cops has been sharply affected by the torture revelations. The proportion of the city's population that disapproves of the way the average cop does his job has risen from 26 percent to 40 percent. Among Black New Yorkers, 59 percent disapprove—up from 39 percent.

The Police Commissioner's transfers and forced retirements—the most extensive shake-up in the department's history—are an attempt to restore public confidence in the cops. In reality, his actions amount to no more than a reshuffling of personnel. ■

... S. Africa

(continued from page 1)

the gold mines owe their high profits—even in the midst of South Africa's worst recession in 50 years—to the cheap labor provided by Black miners.

Beginning in the late 19th century, the gold mines provided the model for the superexploitation of Black people on which modern South African industry is based. The Chamber of Mines, a quasi-governmental agency associated with the six largest mining companies, maintained an elaborate labor recruiting system. Black workers and impoverished farmers were brought to the mines from as far north as Angola and Tanganyika.

The Black miners were restricted to labor camps or hostels, denied union representation, and paid a fraction of the wages received by white miners. According to South African law, for example, only whites may hold blasting certificates—which are necessary for promotion to higher paying jobs.

Even today, no more than 3 percent of Black mineworkers are permitted to live with their families. The law classifies the other 97 percent as "migrants," although the great majority were born within South Africa's traditional borders.

If they should attempt trade union action, which is highly restricted, Black miners may be subject to dismissal and deportation to artificially created "homelands."

Blacks who are deported may find themselves unable to work again. Unofficial unemployment rates in the "homelands" range from 40 to 80 percent.

Independent Black unions

Between 1973 and 1982 approximately 2120 strikes took place in South Africa, but only one was "legal."

An entire system of independent Black unions was organized parallel to the officially registered white trade unions that excluded Blacks. The all-white Mine Workers Union, for example, is notoriously racist.

In the midst of a giant strike wave in 1981, the government passed the Labour Relations Amendment Act, which permitted Black trade unions to register and opened the door to recognition by the employers.

As Minister of Manpower Fanie Botha put it, "We are registering Black trade unions in order to control their activities."



Members of the United Democratic Front (UDF) carrying coffin of victim of apartheid in the Eastern Cape region of South Africa. Since September 1984, over 300 people have died at the hands of the repressive forces.

Sixteen UDF members face charges of treason in the biggest political trial in 25 years. The trial is scheduled to resume in July.

The 1981 Act made the process of applying for government strike sanction so cumbersome that six to nine months must elapse to obtain the "legal" right to strike. Strikes are prohibited outright

in many sectors. Meanwhile, the government has increased harassment, police violence, and arrests of trade unionists in strikes that it defines as "illegal."

... Philadelphia

(continued from page 1)

contradicted by the fire commissioner, William Richmond, who maintained that the original plan was to set the roof bunker ablaze in order to force people out of the house.

Richmond added that, at one point, firemen attempted to put out the fire, but were ordered to stop by police because the spray of water obscured the vision of cops who were shooting at people in the house.

"Children trapped in the flames"

Police Chief Sambor swore that "As far as we're concerned there was no possible danger to the children."

But one of the children who escaped, Birdie Africa, testified that the police shot at people who attempted to flee the burning house.

"The other people were trapped," MOVE spokesman Jerry Africa told

Socialist Action. He said that Ramona Africa, who also escaped, told him that she was coming up the stairs from the basement when she saw that the house was on fire. "She hollered back to the rest of the people," Jerry Africa said, "and the rest tried to follow her out. But the police started shooting."

"When the police cordoned off the community with the children still in the house," Africa charged, "that was a deliberate attempt to see to it that the children were caught in the confrontation."

Police Chief Sambor admitted that he met with agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on May 11 to discuss plans for the assault. The meeting took place *before* MOVE members had finished fortifying their dwelling. According to Jerry Africa, the city refused to acknowledge that attorneys had worked out a peaceful accord several days before.

That's when the coverup began.

The NUM has its origins in strike activities that began in July 1982. At that time the Chamber of Mines fixed wage rates unilaterally. Some 30,000 Black mineworkers came out on strike against the lowest wage increase in several years.

South African police brutally repressed the strike. At least 10 people were killed, hundreds were wounded, and more than 1000 were shipped off to the "homelands."

In response to this strike, the NUM was organized as an affiliate of the Council of Unions of South Africa. Between 1982 and 1985 the new union grew from 6000 to over 100,000 members. It is recognized by 14 mines.

In June 1983 the NUM achieved a major breakthrough when the Chamber of Mines agreed to recognize it. This was the first time that an independent Black trade union had received recognition. Within a week of the signing, negotiations began that obtained a pay increase of between 13.9 percent and 15.7 percent—compared to an 8 percent increase for white workers.

It was not altruism but the fighting strength of Black workers that moved mine owners to recognize the new union. Their strength and spirit is increasing. Both employers and workers agree that a major confrontation is mounting that could shake the entire apartheid system.

"We have more clout this time," says Cyril Ramaphosa. "And they know it."

When a mediator attempted to request that Mayor Goode delay the police mobilization, "his office said the mayor was out of town," Jerry Africa told me. "In fact he was at the police administration building the whole time planning the confrontation."

"MOVE is not a violent organization," Jerry Africa said. "We have been putting out information about the lies, corruption, and graft in the system—exposing all those politicians and judges—and they don't like it. They want us silenced."

MOVE is continuing to demand freedom for nine members of the group who were imprisoned after another police attack in 1978. "We have documentation that the city has violated the law and locked our brothers and sisters in prison," Jerry Africa said. "Why should we have to lose our lives to make the judiciary honor the Constitution? People all over the country should demand that this be investigated." ■

Fighting apartheid

By KWAME M.A. SOMBURU

Recently I had the opportunity to speak with one of the leading activists in anti-apartheid work in the San Francisco/Oakland Bay area. Willia Gray is her name, and she is a founding member of the Bay Area Free South Africa Movement (BAFSAM). Willia was one of the main speakers on South Africa at the April 20 rally in San Francisco.

Willia is a professor at San Francisco State University and has been active on and off campus for many years. She was born in East Texas, where her father was a fighter for political, civil, and human rights. Racist threats forced him to leave the area with his family.

She was involved in several Black struggles during the 1960s and '70s around housing and education and she was elected to the city council in East Palo Alto, Calif.—a majority Black city. In recent years, Willia has been active in the Haitian Refugee Asylum Coalition, the National Black Independent Political Party, and the Rainbow Coalition.

Willia is concerned about the lack of response among Black Americans to atrocities perpetrated against Blacks around the world. "Jewish and Polish Americans react massively and immediately to injustices done to their people," she emphasized. "We should do likewise."

She pointed to the shootings of several Black youth by a racist in the New York City subways last year and the murderous acts of the South African government as examples of racist injustice that require a more active response among Black people.

Willia believes that the policies of the U.S. government that work against Nicaragua and Cuba—as opposed to South Africa—come from a need to maintain the domination of the capitalist economic system. The main goal of BAFSAM, she said, is to end all political, military, and moral support of the U.S. government for the apartheid regime.

BAFSAM is a multi-racial coalition of groups committed to the support of the liberation movements in Southern Africa. "We are supportive of all the groups that are involved in fighting against that oppressive system," Willia told me. "BAFSAM supports the unconditional right of self-determination for the Black masses of South Africa."

For more information write to BAFSAM, 5424 East 14th street, Oakland, Calif. 94601.



Filipina writer still jailed

By NANCY GRUBER

Mila D. Aguilar, Filipina poet, teacher, and journalist who was arrested with two companions in August 1984, remains in jail, after several hearings in January, while awaiting judgment from the Supreme Court.

Aguilar, Cynthia Nolasco, and Willy Tolentino were charged with "possession of

subversive documents," upon their arrest. A Queson City trial court ordered their release on bail, but the military presented the court with a Preventive Detention Action, a presidential decree that allows President Ferdinand Marcos to hold detainees without charges. Nolasco and Tolentino were released in January.

Opposition leaders have protested the continued detention of Aguilar as "a classic example of injustice under the Marcos regime."

And the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists, at a recently concluded meeting of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, referred to her case as an example of how preventive detention is used to circumvent the judicial process.

While in prison Aguilar has written a new collection of poetry, which was used as the basis for a celebration of International Women's Day in

the Philippines. The following is one of those poems, entitled "Reply to a Short Note of Apparent Concern":

*How many hours
ago was it
that this rose
was but a bud
grown to full bloom.*

*Ah, gone is the softness,
the red has turned maroon.
Look now how the petals curl
lip outward in a smile
so very hypocritical.*

*See how its sepals droop,
the stem itself withered
by the weight
of its crown's
lost innocence.*

*Soon
the mere rustling
of some dirty monstrous hand
nearly
shall make
its jaded petals fall.*

The Committee to Free Mila Aguilar would like to enlist the help of *Socialist Action* readers in writing letters urging Mila Aguilar's immediate and unconditional release to: President Ferdinand Marcos, Malacanang Palace, Manila, Philippines.

The Committee is also asking for donations to be sent to: Committee to Free Mila Aguilar, P.O. Box 1726, Cambridge, MA 02238.



Mila D. Aguilar

Amnesty for British miners!

The following statement was adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at its April 25 meeting.

After a year of heroic strike action the British miners were forced back to work. Their strike, the longest mass strike in the history of any imperialist country, inspired working people around the world with its determined intransigence against capitalist policies of unemployment and austerity.

But the cost to the miners and their families was high. Two miners were killed on the picket lines; 11,000 were arrested by the police; over 700 miners have been sacked as a result of their participation in the strike; and nearly 100 miners are serving prison sentences.

Hundreds of other miners will appear before the courts in the next months. Already severe jail sentences of up to five years have been inflicted, such as that of Terry French of the Kent miners. Even harsher punishment awaits some strikers.

However, those found guilty face not only jail sentences but also a lifetime of unemployment. Those sentenced in the courts have been automatically sacked by the coal industry employers. They are also denied state benefits on the pretext that they are still on strike. Demands for an amnesty have been rejected, and instead the sackings are being made part of a campaign to weaken the organization of their union.

There is now a need for an international campaign of solidarity to demand an amnesty from the British government for the sacked and imprisoned miners and to raise funds for their families.

The enormous solidarity that the strike received internationally marked the identification of millions of workers with the miners' struggle. Now the same energy must go into the urgent defense of the victims of that struggle.

The goal of the British state and the coal employers is not solely to victimize militant miners. If this campaign of vengeance is not prevented, the political result will be intimidation of workers in Britain and internationally from fighting in a determined way to save their

jobs. Victory against this wave of victimization would help in a significant way to roll back management's attacks against the National Union of Mineworkers.

The miners' strike was a strike for the whole international working class. The defense of those victimized is a fight to defend all workers, including those millions who will, in the years to come, emulate the British miners' courage, combativity, and determination.

No victimization!
Amnesty!

U.S. Army deals popcorn

"This isn't Dogpatch, and we aren't stupid," the mountain people say in Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau. But if General Carl D. Wallace has his way, the U.S. Army will soon act out World War III games on their land. The general noticed that the plateau resembles terrain in Germany's Black Forest and would make a perfect target range to prepare for the next Big One in Europe.

"I believe the general's desire to protect us from communism has gotten out of hand," protests Floyd Cope, who is one of several hundred people who would lose their homes. But General Wallace is trying to woo the populace to his point of view. He handed out free popcorn and soft drinks at a recent exposition and gave the public a chance to fire machine guns.

"He's good at what he's doing," concedes Dorothy Cope, who is Floyd's mother and a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. "But he's selling Army, and I'm not buying."

Third graders in Clermont County, Ohio, can resume rehearsals of their class drama project, a U.S. district court judge ruled last month. The school board had halted production of "Sorcerer and Friends" after critics charged that the play is un-American, un-Christian, unpatriotic, antimilitary, pro-Satan, pro-homosexual, and pro-treason.

Teachers and parents wonder how last year's third-grade production, "The Pied Piper," was able to escape controversy since it portrays the defeat of a corrupt city council.

Rumor has it that second graders are considering a production of "Cinderella," the story of a malcontented domestic worker who—duped by a fem-lib fairy godmother—assumes a false identity to gain access to the head of state.—MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Nuclear arms haunt Pacific

By MARK HARRIS

SUVA, Fiji—A nuclear reaction is spreading across the Pacific. But it is not the kind likely to please the generals at the Pentagon.

The nuclear-tipped foreign policy of the Reagan administration—and ongoing nuclear testing by France—has provoked a pan-Pacific campaign for a “Nuclear Free Pacific” that is winning widespread support in many of the island nations in the region.

The fallout from the Reagan administration’s bullying policies has even forced close ally New Zealand to take its distance from Washington. Prime Minister David Lange, who only two years ago tried to reverse his Labour Party’s antinuclear stand, has won strong backing at home for his decision to ban U.S. nuclear-armed ships from New Zealand ports.

Protests in Australia, too, have forced Prime Minister Robert Hawke to reverse his decision to allow the United States to use Australian bases for upcoming MX missile tests in the Tasman Sea.

But sensitivity to nuclear weapons in this part of the world stems not only from any future threat posed by the ring of nuclear-armed U.S. military bases that circle the Pacific from East Asia to California. Here the legacy of nuclear weapons has left a trail of victims that far exceeds that of any other area in the world.

It is a legacy that began with the most horrific act of war ever committed—the atom-bombing of the Japanese

“The nuclear ‘promised land’ has meant exile, neglect, and cancer.”

cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and which today continues to claim victims from almost 40 years of nuclear testing.

The close of World War II meant an end to combat on many Pacific islands, but for some islanders it marked the beginning of a menace even more ominous. For the people living at Bikini and Enewtak, part of the Marshall Islands acquired by the United States after the war, this was certainly the case.

The American military governor of the Bikini Islands, explaining his government’s choice of this isolated Pacific region as the site for further tests of the atom bomb, told the people that they were like the children of Israel whom the Lord had saved from their enemy and led into the promised land.

But the nuclear “promised land” has meant only exile, neglect, and cancer. The inhabitants left their islands while the U.S. military exploded 66 nuclear bombs over these atolls from 1946 to 1958. But their troubles have lingered long after the blasts stopped.

In response to repeated requests, the United States eventually agreed to clean up Bikini so the people, who had been living on islands with far from adequate resources, could return to their home. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) declared Bikini safe in 1969, and in 1972 people began returning to the islands. By 1978, 139 of 600 Bikinians had returned to Bikini.

But the AEC failed to take sufficient tests and clean up the islands properly. The 139 people who returned to Bikini had ingested the largest dose of plutonium ever monitored in any population.

But on Rongelap, 100 miles west of Bikini, the people were not even



Antinuclear protesters in New Zealand

warned, let alone evacuated, before the Bravo hydrogen bomb was exploded at Bikini on March 1, 1954. The blast released an explosive force greater than that of all previous wars combined.

A few hours after the blast a snow-like ash covered the island an inch deep. The next day people exhibited signs of acute radiation sickness. They had been exposed to 380 times the legal annual exposure limit. All but one of the 19 children on the island under 10 years old subsequently developed thyroid problems. One died of leukemia.

A 1954 U.S. Defense Nuclear Agency report, not released until 1982, confirms that U.S. officials knew in advance that the winds were blowing toward Rongelap. But the test proceeded as scheduled. Even though Rongelap remained highly contaminated, U.S. officials permitted the islanders to return to the atoll in 1957.

The Brookhaven National Laboratory, under contract to the AEC to perform tests on Rongelap, callously reported: “The habitation of these people on the island will afford most valuable ecological radiation data on human beings.”

Were these people deliberately exploited as nuclear guinea pigs? The answer appears obvious.

Military overlords

But these were not the only people in the Marshall Islands to suffer the consequences of U.S. policy. At Kwajalein the military has forcibly relocated more than 8000 Marshallese onto a 78-acre island to provide room for a missile range, which is used to test MX, Trident, and Minuteman missiles.

The Marshallese, many of whom work at the Kwajalein base, are crammed into one of the most densely populated slums in the world. Here they face rampant discrimination from a hostile U.S. military.

In Belau, which is part of U.S.-controlled Micronesia, the people have since 1979 voted in three separate referendums to keep nuclear weapons and military bases out of their country. But with a wave of his hand, the U.S. ambassador simply decreed the referendums and the constitution null and void.

The price of “independence,” American-style, it became clear, meant the right to base Trident submarines here (which hold the firepower of 408 Hiroshimas), and to set up a training center for Asian police and military. The United States did “concede,” however, that permanent nuclear facilities would be banned, *except* in any case of “military necessity.”

But the United States is not the only nuclear power in the Pacific. France has

been exploding nuclear bombs in the Pacific since the early 1960s. Despite the assurance of the French minister for overseas territories, who announced in 1961 that “no nuclear tests will ever be made by France in the Pacific Ocean,” the government was in fact already looking for a site in the Pacific. A little mishap a year earlier, when an explosion in the Algerian desert sent a radioactive cloud drifting over the Mediterranean toward Europe, prompted this reversal.

The site chosen was at Moruroa Atoll in the colony of French Polynesia, which includes Tahiti. France, which refused to sign the 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, exploded 41 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere here from 1966 to 1974.

The effects of these blasts have been monitored as far away as Mexico, where fish were found to have increased levels of radioactivity, and in Fiji, where the rain was contaminated.

In response to pressure from New Zealand, Australia, and Fiji, the French government discontinued atmospheric tests in 1975. But underground tests continue. The most recent took place just last month, the 69th and largest explosion since underground tests began.

Bombs and colonies

French President Francois Mitterand, who previously opposed nuclear testing in the Pacific, has had a change of heart since taking office. Promoting nuclear bombs, however, means defending French colonialism since French Polynesia is the only place France can explode its bombs. The French rulers, after all, are not inclined to conduct their tests in the south of France.

Many Pacific nations gained formal independence during the 1960s and 1970s after decades of direct rule by foreign powers. But France prefers to keep things as they were—sinking its colonial anchor ever more firmly in the Pacific. This means retaining its colonial posses-

sions in Tahiti, New Caledonia, and Wallis/Futuna.

But things have not been going well for the French overseers. French-sponsored subversion failed to prevent Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides, a joint French-British condominium) from gaining independence in 1980 and declaring itself a nuclear-free zone. And in New Caledonia, where the indigenous Kanaks are waging a fight for independence, the days of French rule appear numbered.

The Kanaks live as second-class citizens in their own land, confined mostly on reservations while the ruling French control the best land and jobs. New Caledonia possesses 34 percent of the known nickel deposits in the world, which is especially important in the manufacture of armaments.

The French government has been encouraging emigration from France to New Caledonia (and Tahiti) in order to reduce the indigenous peoples to a minority in their own lands, thus perverting the democratic right to vote into a device to perpetuate colonialism. Today the Kanaks comprise only 42 percent of New Caledonia’s population.

The last year has witnessed an advancing campaign by the Kanak people to gain independence from France. President Mitterand’s response to the growing strength of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), which is leading the independence drive, has been to talk compromise but steadily fortify the French military presence there.

The French government rightly fears that a successful Kanak campaign will inspire similar efforts in Tahiti, where the fight against nuclear testing and for independence are one and the same.

“The Kanak struggle is our struggle,” says Charlie Ching, leader of the Free Tahitian Party, who stresses that the success of the FLNKS strategy has encouraged Tahitian challenges to French rule. “Our fight will go on until France leaves our country and takes away its bomb” (*Islands Business*, March 1985).

The pattern of French and American intervention in the Pacific region has been a case study in big-power arrogance and callous indifference. A case in point: During the early years of French nuclear testing, General de Gaulle, who had come to French Polynesia to observe one of the tests, reportedly ordered a test to proceed even though the wind was blowing toward some inhabited islands. The impatient de Gaulle, eager to leave, willingly exposed human beings to radioactive fallout. Not surprisingly, the French government has never released any data on this incident.

Small wonder that so many Pacific Islanders would like nothing better than to see these two powers take their weapons and go home. ■

