

A Socialist ACTION



July 1986 Vol. 4, No. 6 50 cents

Congress votes contra aid, raises specter of new Vietnam

100,000 rally in N.Y. against apartheid



The U.S. war against Nicaragua escalated sharply on June 25, when the House of Representatives voted to provide \$100 million in military and economic aid to the contras seeking to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. President Reagan hailed the vote as a "giant bipartisan effort."

The vote contradicts the will of the great majority of people in this country. A *Washington Post/ABC* poll taken on the eve of the vote showed that a two-to-one majority opposed contra funding.

The U.S. government's support of the contras was likewise rejected as "a violation of international law and Nicaraguan

EDITORIAL

sovereignty" by the United Nations' World Court, which rendered its decision barely two days after the House vote.

The approval of military aid to the contras represents a direct threat to the American people as well as the Nicaraguans. With this vote, the U.S. government has spent taxpayers' money for war, instead of human needs. It has also moved one step closer toward sending troops directly into Nicaragua.

Fifty-one House Democrats joined the Republicans in voting to approve Reagan's contra-aid package. But the bulk of those who voted against the proposal, mainly Democrats, were not opposed to aid to the contras. The Democratic Party "opposition" bill would have given the contras \$30 million in so-called economic aid, while considering the additional \$70 million sometime in the fall.

Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega strongly condemned the House vote, describing it as "nothing more than the ratification of the warlike and criminal policy of the United States against Nicaragua." He said that the action repre-

(continued on page 13)

S. African unionists resist attacks; demands for U.S. sanctions mount

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Sit-down strikes and mass boycotts have erupted throughout South Africa to combat the effects of the government's new repressive security measures. The protests come in the wake of the largest work stoppage in the country's history—the successful June 16 general strike marking the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising.

Black retail clerks, farmworkers, food and cannery workers, and workers in the recording industry went on strike last month to back demands that trade-union officials and shop stewards be released from jail. The strikes were coordinated by union leaders from their places of hiding.

Over 70 top leaders of the country's Black and non-racial trade-union movement were jailed in the weeks following the government's state-of-emergency decree on June 12. In all, some 3000 anti-apartheid activists were placed in detention.

But the continuing activism of Black workers, points out Jay Naidoo, secretary-general of the 650,000-member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), shows that it has become "impossible to kill off the union movement in South Africa." The political strikes of recent weeks have been dress rehearsals for major confrontations with the government.

On July 1, fugitive members of the COSATU leadership plan to further challenge the government by returning to their offices and trying to operate normally. On the same day, contracts in the metal industry and in mining come due.

The National Union of Mineworkers has broken off talks with the employers since the state of emergency makes it impossible to consult with the union membership. Strike action in the mines could cripple the country's most important industry and send the economy hurtling.

As *The New York Times* recently commented, "The vulnerable underside of

white power in South Africa is an industrial economy's dependence on 6 million Black workers."

Although the fight for freedom in South Africa will be led by the Black workers of

(continued on page 12)



New England rail strike: Union busters' test run

By J.D. CRAWFORD

A continuing strike struggle on three relatively small railroads in the New England region has sweeping implications and lessons for every rail worker in the country.

Last March 3, Maintenance of Way workers on the Maine Central Railroad were forced on strike when two-thirds of their membership was furloughed and wages unilaterally cut by more than 20 percent. The Maine Central is owned by Guilford Transportation Industries, which also owns the Boston & Maine and Delaware & Hudson railroads.

Guilford negotiators demanded that union members pay 50 percent of their health plan. Permanently laid-off workers, some with 10 to 20 years seniority, were offered no severance pay or compensation. Guilford Transportation also refused to call back furloughed employees in seniority order.

When Boston & Maine workers honored Maine Central picketlines at joint terminals, they received a letter from Guilford on April 23 stating that anyone who failed to show up for work on April 25 would be fired and replaced by scabs. This was a direct violation of the Railway Labor Act. Guilford also announced that

(continued on page 4)

SPECIAL: The Spanish Revolution 1936-39 pp. 7-10



Closing date: June 25, 1986

Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN

Asst. Editor: MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Staff: Amanda Chapman, Paul Colvin, May May Gong, Millie Gonzalez, Mark Harris, David Kirschner, Hayden Perry, Joe Ryan, Carole Seligman, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: DON MAHONEY

Circulation Manager: RALPH FORSYTH

Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$6 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Socialist Action*, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Rates: 12 issues for \$6.00; Canada and Mexico \$12.50; \$30.00 airmail for all other countries; \$14.00 surface mail for all other countries. (Canada money orders or checks should be in U.S. dollars.)

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

Reagan stacks court with abortion foes

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

On June 11, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a narrow five-to-four vote, threw out a Pennsylvania law limiting abortion. The ruling upheld the 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* ruling that established a woman's legal right to abortion.

Although anti-choice right-wingers were defeated, many of them are crowing over the fact that this was the closest vote yet on the issue of abortion. Not too long ago, the Moral Majority held an open meeting where they prayed for the death of some member of the Supreme Court—so that future voting would be tipped in their favor.

God may not have exactly answered their prayers, but on June 18, Justice Warren E.

Burger announced his retirement. Reagan swiftly nominated Justice Rehnquist as chief justice of the Supreme Court. Rehnquist has the court's most conservative record in cases of civil liberties, affirmative action, school prayer, busing, presidential powers, the death penalty, obscenity, and abortion.

Reagan announced he will nominate another ultra-conservative, Judge Antonin Scalia, to fill the Supreme Court vacancy. One of Scalia's colleagues describes him by saying, "This kid was a conservative when he was 17 years old. An archconservative Catholic. He could have been a member of the [Pope's] Curia."

What rights will the Supreme Court of the capitalist class uphold? None if they can get

away with it. But if abortion is again made illegal, it will trigger mass outrage and precipitate massive protest action.

In the meantime, Reagan has given encouragement to the use of terrorism to close abortion and health clinics for women. Joe Scheidler, director of the Pro-life Action League in Chicago, recently went to the White House at Reagan's invitation to ask for pardon for abortion clinic bombers.

In a recent survey of abortion clinics and physicians belonging to the National Abortion Federation, it was found that 26 percent of the respondents have been "visited" [threatened] by Scheidler and 30 percent had experienced serious violence, including total destruction of facilities—some -

times more than once.

In the early 1930s, the working class was restricted in its right to organize unions in this country. All laws were made to be used against them. They changed those laws by thumbing their nose at them. They organized the most

powerful waves of strikes and demonstrations ever seen anywhere.

That's what we have to do today. Women, together with the labor movement and other natural allies, must get back into the streets—independent, strong, and militant. ■

AIDS victims target of LaRouche group

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

In a unique use of California's ballot-initiative process, the LaRouche organization collected almost 700,000 signatures on petitions to place an initiative before the voters that would change the state's health code. The intent of the changes is to curtail the rights of AIDS victims and carriers of the virus.

Capitalizing on the genuine fear of this deadly disease with no cure, the LaRouche organization is attempting to mobilize support for the purpose of further victimizing gay people.

The initiative, which has qualified for the state ballot in November, calls for subjecting AIDS victims and carriers to possible detention, denial of employment in certain industries, school exclusion, travel restrictions, quarantine, and isolation.

The fact that AIDS is not a "gay disease" but a sexually transmitted disease—which just happened to begin with the gay population in this country—is a fact LaRouche wants you *not* to know. Epidemiologists are now beginning to track

the spread of AIDS in the general population.

None of the provisions in the proposed legislation, which purports to protect the population from AIDS, addresses the real issue posed by the AIDS crisis—how do you stop it?

Solutions based on rationality

Several groups in the gay-rights movement have offered initial solutions based on rationality and scientific knowledge instead of fear. The Mobilization Against AIDS, for example, calls for a crash government spending program for research for a cure. The group also calls for extensive public education—because AIDS is a preventable disease when you know how it's transmitted!

The billions of dollars the U.S. government spends on nuclear-weapons research and war, if funneled into research to save human life rather than extinguish it, could produce dramatic results against the AIDS virus—not to mention cancer, heart disease, and a host of other diseases. This is not idle speculation. It is a matter of scientific method and fact.

"Fund AIDS Research, Not War!" is a chant heard on many a demonstration against U.S. intervention in Central America. This is an approach that makes sense—especially now that the House of Representatives has given Reagan \$100 million in military and economic aid to the contras.

The LaRouche Initiative can only pass if California voters remain uninformed and continue to believe that the AIDS virus can be spread through casual contact like influenza or the common cold.

Ignorance and fear are the two ingredients LaRouche hopes to tap in the coming election. AIDS is not spread by casual contact.

Four basic modes of transmission account for all the cases so far: (1) intimate sexual contact, (2) contaminated blood products used in transfusions and for hemophiliacs, (3) contaminated intravenous needles used and shared by drug addicts, (4) and mother to child transmission *in utero*.

Coalition to stop initiative

A statewide organization—California AIDS Network—has been formed to defeat the LaRouche Initiative. Its leaders,

representing a broad cross section of gay-rights and political organizations, spoke out at the group's first "Town Hall Meeting" in San Francisco on June 10.

The 200 participants at the meeting vowed to organize a massive grassroots voter-education campaign against LaRouche and promised complete unity among themselves to defeat this initiative. Every labor union was requested to join the campaign.

On June 11, the San Francisco Labor Council's Executive Committee passed a strong resolution calling on the entire labor movement "to join us in working with the gay and lesbian and other allied movements toward a united, broad-based campaign to

defeat the LaRouche Initiative."

The LaRouche Initiative can be defeated, just as the Briggs Initiative—an attempt to prevent gays and lesbians from teaching in California's public schools—was defeated in 1979.

Reordering social priorities so that AIDS and other killer diseases are eliminated forever, though, will require the independent power of the broad labor movement and all its allies, organized in the political arena.

Reliance on the Democratic and Republican parties, both of which are committed to profit over human needs, will be of no help to those who want to fight AIDS and put an end to the bigotry and fear encouraged by the LaRouche Initiative. ■

NOW pledges renewed women's rights fight

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

The National Organization for Women (NOW), going into its 20th year, held its national convention in Denver, Colo., on June 13-15. It was an upbeat convention with 1500 registered participants expressing the renewed militancy of NOW on the issues of abortion, child care, equal pay for equal work, and affirmative action.

On June 14, NOW organized a march to the State Capitol of over 2500 pro-choice supporters and members. Eleanor Smeal, who was reelected to the NOW presidency at the organization's last national convention, replacing Judy Goldsmith, reaffirmed her commitment toward militant action in the streets.

Smeal stressed in her address to the delegates that the women's movement must remain independent of the two major political parties. "We know something we maybe didn't know a few years ago," she said.

During the last years of the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), NOW shifted its focus from mass action to electing Democrats. Thousands of activists for the ERA were urged to ring doorbells to elect "good Democrats."

Nevada was an excellent example of the futility of this policy. NOW sent women into Nevada by the hundreds to campaign for 10 "pro-ERA" state representatives. All 10 were elected and all 10 voted against the ERA amendment as soon as it came up on the floor of the state legislature.

This tragic farce was repeated in state after state. It was no wonder that NOW

began to lose members and dues. Even worse, the issue of abortion rights was placed on the back burner because NOW spokespersons said it was an "embarrassment" to those who supported the ERA.

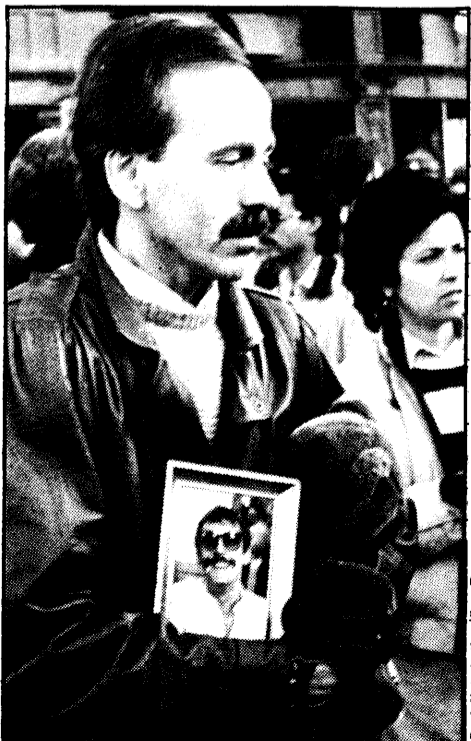
In her keynote address to the delegates, NOW President Smeal noted serious problems, internal and external, confronting the feminist group. But while noting that "some powers-that-be want us to go out of business," she ridiculed their judgment that the country was in a "post-feminist era."

Drawing the lessons of NOW's ERA setback, Smeal declared, "We're going to have to depend on ourselves...we don't want to be an arm of anybody."

The convention approved a strong resolution on abortion rights, calling for legal and mass action against "terrorist activities" at clinics. The resolution called for the creation of a strike force to "systematically track activities of the anti-abortion extremists."

The resolution also called for further demonstrations and conferences to mobilize for abortion rights. NOW voted to fight abortion-related referendums, slated to be on the ballot this year, which restrict "a woman's right to choose."

The convention reaffirmed NOW's support of a number of important women's rights. Resolutions called for "full public funding" for child-care programs, for continued commitment to ending wage discrimination based on sex and race, and for defending the rights of women in marital disputes. ■



Socialist Action/ Joe Ryan

AIDS vigil in San Francisco on May 31

Tax reform promises much . . . but for whom?

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The initial hoopla in the media over the proposed tax reform measures before Congress heralded the coming of a new era of "fair and simplified" income-tax rules. But slowly the truth is emerging: The rich will pay less and the great majority of working people will pay more. Surprise!

For the past year, President Reagan has led the pack of politicians in both parties in a fake campaign against the scandalously unfair tax system. They piously mislabel their tax "reform" a "second American revolution."

But what the capitalist politicians have in mind is not reducing taxes. Their "reform" is a continuation of the nearly half-century-long policy of shifting the tax burden from the rich to the poor.

In 1940 President Franklin D. Roosevelt instituted the withholding tax, which was falsely portrayed as "progressive," that is, according to the principle of the higher the income the higher the tax rate.

In fact, this so-called progressive tax rips off an increasing proportion of wages, but not profits. This happens automatically when wages are forced into higher tax-rate brackets as inflation erodes the buying power of the dollar.

The 1940 withholding tax law was palmed off by Roosevelt as in accord with the progressive rule that provides for the rich being taxed at a higher rate than the poor. But profits were systematically protected from this increased rate of taxation by a maze of specially designed loopholes—for capitalists only.

In the years that followed, workers found to their dismay that Roosevelt's "progressive" tax really meant that inflated dollars led to higher tax rates as well as lower purchasing power.

Reagan has demagogically decried the injustice of this built-in mechanism for increasing the proportion of wages deducted from weekly paychecks. He has been campaigning for a so-called flat-tax rate under which a \$20,000-a-year working class family would pay the same percentage of their income in taxes as a multi-millionaire.

Many workers, wincing each time inflation forces them into a higher tax bracket, have been suckered into supporting the bipartisan drive toward a more openly regressive flat-tax system.

The shysters in the two houses of Congress are presently engaged in a sham battle over which of the two bills gives more tax relief to "the people." But it is absurd to believe that in these days of runaway budget deficits the ruling class will even-handedly reduce the taxes of rich and poor.

Moreover, to the extent that total taxes are indeed less than government expenditures, the "reform's" inflationary effect is the cruelest of any flat-tax. It eats away at paychecks, thus cutting into the amount of food and shelter the lowest paid workers can buy.

Sugar Coating

The tax bill that has received the most attention till now is the Senate version, which was adopted 97-3 on June 24.

New York Times writer David E. Rosenbaum first helps to hype the bill with this now-familiar sugar-coated description: "Tax rates would be dramatically lowered under the bill, hundreds of loopholes would be plugged, 6 million poor people would be removed from the tax rolls altogether and dozens of profitable



corporations that pay little or no tax now would be subjected to a minimum tax" (June 9, 1986).

But don't get your hopes too high, Rosenbaum cautions. "Buried within the bill, which weighs well over five pounds [1489 pages]," he writes, "are 174 items known as transition rules, special provisions that exempt particular companies, communities and individuals from specific conditions that would otherwise apply."

What this means in plain English is that the tax loopholes for nearly 174 highly profitable corporations, including outfits like General Motors and Union Oil, will remain unplugged. One of these corporations, Phillips Petroleum, would save \$100 million in taxes under one of these "transitional rules."

And you can be certain that this will prove to be only the tip of the iceberg of a coming flood of tax exemptions for the richest capitalists before tax "reform" actually becomes law.

As Rosenbaum writes, this part of the bill is "written in such a Delphic prose that, in most cases no one can interpret [who the lucky corporations are] except the author, the taxpayer involved, and the auditors at the Internal Revenue Service."

Also, while claiming to cut away some of the tangle of tax loopholes, the bipartisan Senate has chosen to compensate the wealthy by lowering the maximum rate of taxation from 50 percent to 27 percent for individuals, and from 46 percent to 33 percent for corporations. This means the ruling rich will get many hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks!

More bucks for the rich

According to U.S. law, the Senate and House will have to merge two different versions of the new tax rules to create the final bill. The House, with a Democratic Party majority, cynically pretends to champion the interests of the poor against the rich. Their version has a variety of minor provisions designed to sustain this

illusion. But both versions make the same basic changes in favor of the rich.

Both bills, for example, would make unemployment insurance fully taxable. But the House version would retain sales-tax deductions while the Senate bill would eliminate this in most cases.

The Senate bill would have a devastating impact; for example, on actors. Officers of Actors Equity, the Screen Actors Guild, and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists charge that this tax bill would severely harm members of their unions. The changes that actors are protesting, however, go beyond this particular group of working people.

The new income tax rules would eliminate many categories of itemized deductions workers must pay to get or keep jobs. These include union dues, fees for classes necessary to a given trade or profession, trade publications and equipment, and even deductions for out-of-town living expenses.

The new rules would also eliminate income-averaging, which is an important safeguard for workers who may get an occasional good year sandwiched between several years of half-time pay and therefore have a backlog of debts.

The Senate bill, moreover, can't resist putting a little more icing on the capitalist cake at workers' expense; it takes away deductions for interest on consumer loans—like for cars and refrigerators—but continues to allow them for business loans!

Of course many changes will take place before the projected tax "reform" becomes law. More sugar-coating and some back-tracking is no doubt in the works.

According to the shell game played between the two capitalist parties, a "compromise" between the Republican-controlled Senate and the Democrat-controlled House will eventually be "hammered out."

One thing is for certain, the final result will mean more bucks for the rich and lower living standards for the rest of us. ■

TWA strike left to wither on the vine by IAM, ALPA

By MARK HARRIS

"Where were you when we needed you?" That's a question the 6000 striking flight attendants at Trans World Airlines (TWA) certainly have a right to pose to the AFL-CIO—especially the machinists' and pilots' unions—in the wake of their strike's defeat.

The Independent Federation of Flight Attendants (IFFA), which struck TWA on March 7 over the company's demand for a 44-percent reduction in wages, benefits, and work-rule changes, stuck it out for more than two months before its leaders abandoned the strike in late May.

IFFA leaders decided to end the strike, without agreement on the disputed issues, in an effort to stem the tide of scabs taking jobs from strikers. Still, despite the fact that the union agreed to return to work, the

company told the flight attendants that it only had about 200 "openings" left. TWA Chairman Carl Icahn maintained from the strike's outset that the scabs hired were "permanent replacements" for the strikers.

While TWA certainly suffered substantial financial losses during the strike, the beleaguered flight attendants faced an uphill battle without the active support of the other unions at TWA. A brief but instructive example of the difference such support could have meant came in the first days of the strike, when members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) walked off the job in solidarity with the IFFA—and effectively shut down the airline.

But the company won a quick injunction against the machinists—who then marched back to work on order of IAM President

William Winpisinger. The IAM leader even told the flight attendants that since they had refused to merge with the IAM last year they could expect little help from his union.

The IAM and the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) had earlier granted significant concessions to TWA. But even more was demanded from the flight attendants, which Icahn justified with the argument that female flight attendants are not "breadwinners." As for the 15 percent of IFFA members who are male, Icahn advised them to get a "real" job.

Despite Icahn's arrogant denigration of these workers, there was one thing he could not take away from the strikers—their dignity. They fought with enthusiasm, courage, and remarkable solidarity, well aware that the future of their jobs was at stake. There was a sense that this strike—like the Hormel strike in Austin, Minn.—was over far more than disputed wages and benefits. It was a strike for social justice.

That's why there were impressive

displays of solidarity with the strikers by local unions, rank-and-file unionists, and others also on strike, such as the Hormel workers.

Despite the new sense of militancy among many rank-and-file unionists, the top union officialdom remains mired in the mud of complacency, incapable of formulating any strategy to fight the concessionary trend.

The IFFA, which offered TWA a 15-percent cut, has unfortunately learned the hard way that bending over backwards to convince management of its "reasonable" stance is a futile gesture. Employers are motivated not by a well-argued point, let alone a sense of justice, but by the acquisition of profit. And the more they get, the more they want.

Solidarity must be made concrete. Airline workers have been hard hit by concessions, two-tier contracts, and worsened work rules. It's time they stand together, and strike together, to fight for better wages and benefits, rather than allow every union to be beaten down one at a time. ■

... New England rail strike

(continued from page 1)

they had already hired 600 replacement workers.

While the three railroads involved may seem to be a minor, unrepresentative segment of the U.S. rail industry, Guilford Transportation Industries is not. It is hardly a "maverick" management that does not reflect the thinking, plans, and strategy of the major carriers.

Guilford Transportation is owned by Timothy Mellon, an heir to the mammoth Mellon banking fortune. His total corporate holdings are in the \$30 billion range, and according to *Fortune* magazine he is one of the wealthiest men in the country.

Mellon's major goal is to purchase a 1000-mile piece of ConRail, which would transform him overnight from the owner of three relatively small railroads into the owner of one of the largest rail companies in the nation. This plan has the active collaboration and support of the federal Department of Transportation.

By breaking the unions on his current lines, Mellon intends to prove himself to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) and the rest of the rail owners as a viable candidate for the ConRail deal and a serious participant in the planned anti-union restructuring of the entire rail industry.

A few years ago Mellon commissioned a "White Paper" to devise a strategy for accomplishing these goals. It advised ridding his properties of unions by busting the smallest local on the most isolated carrier and to then extend that process throughout his system.

Through sub-contracting and creating a number of short-line operations on branch lines, Guilford Transportation has consciously built up a pool of non-union employees to be used as strike-breaking scabs.

This is a general and coordinated strategy being followed by major carriers throughout the country in preparation for their planned union-busting moves in 1987-88.

In the meantime, Mellon is not without powerful allies in his present strike struggle. Rail owners throughout the country see this as an important test run for sharpening union-busting techniques. Guilford-owned lines are being provided with money, personnel, and equipment from at least six other major carriers, including ConRail.

Union members stick together

The response of rank-and-file union members to the Guilford strike has been magnificent and something of a shock to Timothy Mellon. Instead of allowing Mellon to isolate the small Brotherhood of Maintenance Way Employees (BMWE) local on the Maine Central, unionists have rallied behind the strike.

In spite of company threats, the picketlines remain solid with the cooperation of virtually every craft. Union members have also organized several impressive rallies, such as a rally of 2000 people on May 3 in Greenfield, Mass., and a march of 1000 people through downtown Boston on May 18.

Unfortunately, the performance of the international union leadership has not matched that of the rank-and-file members. From the beginning, the main focus of BMWE International President Ole M. Berg's efforts was to beg and pressure President Reagan to impose a presidential board. He attempted to enlist the aid of scores of local politicians to accomplish this. Despite the fact that many of these politicians have received election contributions from rail unions, the results were nil.

The International has kept the membership and local officers completely in the dark as to what is happening in the strike. They are given virtually no information on what to expect, when it is likely to happen, and how to prepare for it. Nothing is more frustrating for union members than the realization that management employees know more about what the International is doing than they do.

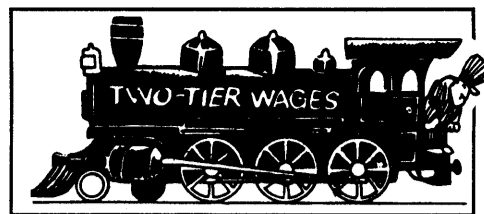
The turning point in the situation

occurred when BMWE members extended the strike to ConRail in retaliation for their strike-busting aid to Guilford. When it became clear that ConRail and other major carriers were about to be successfully shut down—and rail workers were moving toward a major victory through their powerful strike weapon—the government immediately intervened to give Berg what he had been begging for, his presidential board.

There is an important lesson to be learned here. When the *company* appears to

of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC) Local 1089 (Amtrak and ConRail) and one of the organizers of the Boston solidarity march. When asked if the imposition of the board was a victory, he replied, "Not so. In fact, it is a dagger pointed at the heart of the strike. Mellon will use the extra time," he predicted, "to sell off his short lines, dump smaller customers, and consolidate his position."

Mellon did this and more. Correctly understanding that the dangerous extension of the strike to ConRail, which could have led to a quick victory for rail labor, had been effectively turned back by the presidential board; and taking the measure of Berg's leadership with his complete



to work because of a strike by another union would be subject to dismissal.

- Membership in railroad unions would be at the option of the individual employee, destroying existing union-shop agreements on the railroads.

- All involvement by the National Mediation Board and the National Railroad Adjustment Board in disputes and grievances would be ruled out.

- This new single contract would run until March 31, 1999. In other words, there would be no further negotiations on these matters until the turn of the century.

Mellon understands better

Ole Berg was obviously stunned by the move. The company, he said, "must be out of its mind."

But Timothy Mellon is far from being mentally impaired, as Berg contends. On the contrary, he has done a qualitatively more astute job in leading his side in this struggle (that is, rail owners) than Berg has done in providing leadership for rail workers.

At the nation's largest railroad, the Burlington Northern, President Darius Gaskins hardly thinks Mellon is "out of his mind." Over the last five years, despite an increase in traffic, Burlington Northern has cut over 20,000 jobs. Through speed-ups and the elimination of work rules, Gaskin's stated goal is to cut the remaining 37,000 workforce in half again.

"We would rather do it peacefully," Gaskin says in *The Wall Street Journal* (May 30, 1986), "but we have to be prepared for confrontation." Guilford's stand, he says, has been "an eye-opener."

Berg is typical of a whole layer of international union officers whose entire union experience spans the long post-World War II period of relative labor peace. They spent their lives making speeches about how labor and management are in a common partnership and if the company does well, the membership will do well.

They spent their careers hustling money and votes for political "friends of labor" in return for supposed "fair treatment" under the Railway Labor Act.

They think that's what unionism is and that's what union leaders do. It's the only game they know.

Now that the carriers, with the collaboration of the government and the courts, have returned to open warfare on the unions, the Bergs of the union movement are at a complete loss.

Rail labor has the power to turn back this union-busting attack. A glimpse of that power was seen with the move to extend the Guilford strike to ConRail and the other collaborating carriers. This country cannot operate very long with the railroads shut down.

But rail labor has to be prepared to use this power to defend itself. It cannot let the courts, through injunctions, and the government, through the Railway Labor Act, hog tie the unions while the Mellons and the Gaskins butcher them at their leisure.

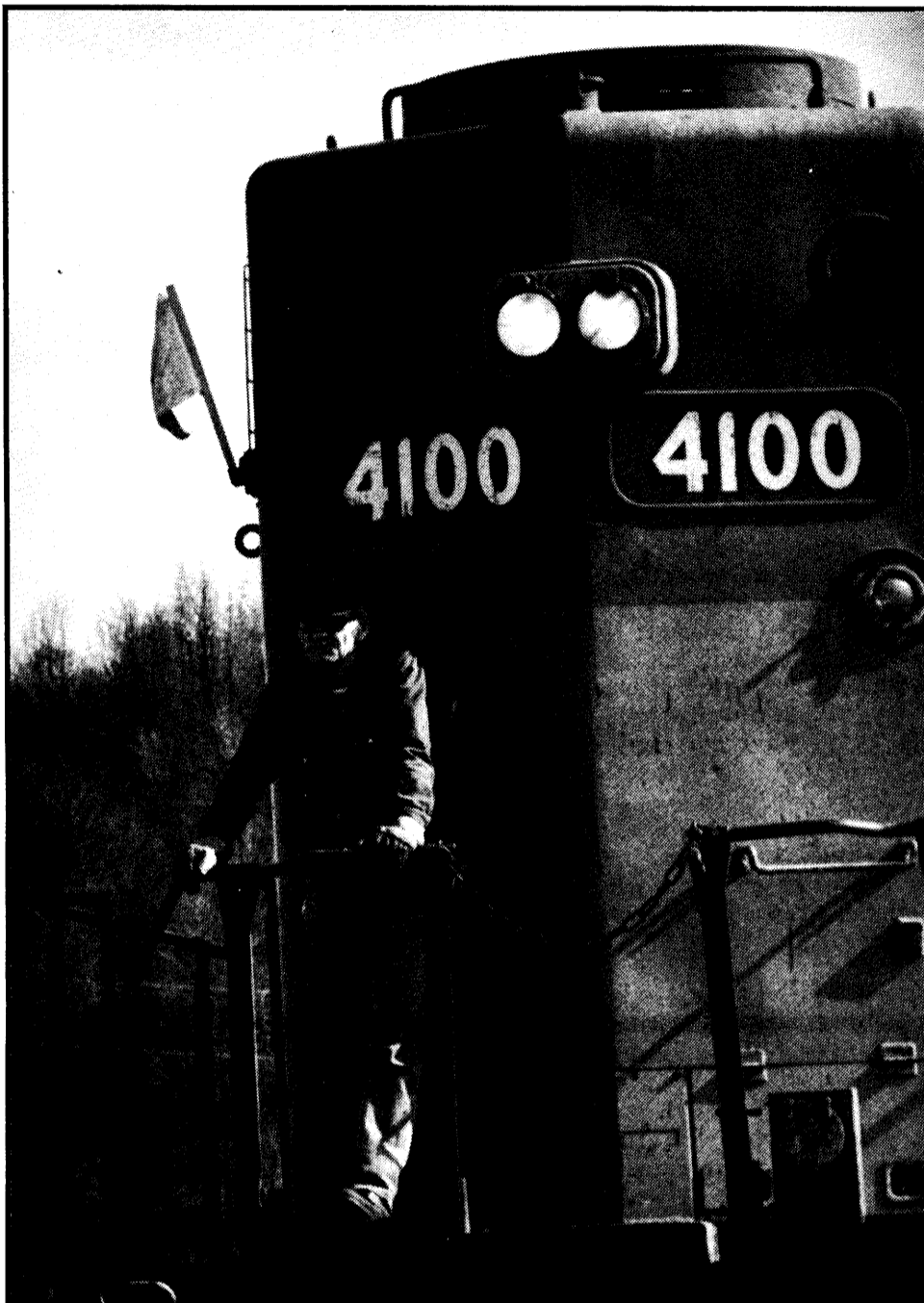
BRAC Local 1089 President Walsh again hits the nail on the head in explaining:

"Rail unions have got to take a stand against these planned moves now. We cannot rely on the courts, the Railway Labor Act, or any presidential board.

"We have to say to the carriers and the courts: 'Not one more mile of union railroad converted to non-union road by subcontracting, short lines, phony bankruptcies, leasing or whatever method. Not one more union rail job converted to a non-union job.'

"We have to develop a nationwide rail solidarity behind this stand and let the courts and the government know we do not intend to stand idly by while injunctions prohibiting our right to strike pave the way for smashing our unions." ■

J.D. Crawford is a brakeman/switchman at Burlington Northern Railroad.



Socialist Action/Joe Ryan

"Rail labor has the power to turn back this union-busting attack... This country cannot operate very long with the railroads shut down."

be winning, the politicians always find a way *not* to invoke a presidential board or a "cooling-off" period. When the *union* begins to win, they immediately impose such measures.

A dagger aimed at the strike

Berg has hailed the imposition of the presidential board as a victory for the union, but what are the facts?

Supposedly, during the 60-day "cooling-off" period everything was to revert to the pre-strike situation, with everybody returning to work. But Mellon has refused to take back over 2000 union members on this small railroad. He claims: (1) that the railroad lost business because of the strike and, (2) during the strike a number of switching yards were subcontracted out to non-union labor. Mellon explains that he still "owns" the yards, but he no longer "operates" them.

So the presidential board, before it has even issued its report, has sanctioned a further drastic reduction in the work force and the official replacement of union members by scab labor. That's some victory!

A more accurate assessment was made by Dave Walsh, president of the Brotherhood

reliance on the courts and presidential boards, Mellon went on the offensive with a vengeance.

In late May, Mellon served "Section 6" notices on all the railroad brotherhoods as required by law, informing them and the government of changes he intended to make in his labor contractual agreements.

Those notices called for a single contract to cover all the unions on Guilford lines.

Among other things, the company would eliminate all present job classifications. The only "job classification covered by this agreement is railroader," the notices say. Management would be given the right to assign employees to jobs in any craft it likes.

The main points of the Guilford notices include:

- Seniority protection would be virtually eliminated.

- The carriers would be allowed to hire non-union contract employees to do the work of their own workers.

- Although no wage for the "railroader" classification is mentioned, management would have the right to raise wage rates for individual employees.

- Employees who honor picketlines set up by other unions or who refuse to report

"Mass picket line is key to ironworkers' strike victory"

By MIKE JACOBS

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—A two-week strike at the Haven-Busch Co. ended in victory on June 16, as ironworkers here voted by an overwhelming majority to accept management's third "final offer."

The strikers were able to defeat the company's demands for major concessions in benefits. We voted to accept a wage increase of 3 percent, 3 percent, and 4 percent over three years plus an additional lump-sum payment that will vary according to seniority.

I need to give you a little history to understand why we went on strike. At contract time three years ago, we gave up a lot. The company said business was really bad. So the union, Ironworkers Local 688, AFL-CIO, agreed to take around an 8-percent cut—which put us at the level of six years ago.

The union understood at that time that we should take the cuts so the company could survive. The company supposedly would make up the cutbacks when business got better. Well, even the company will admit that business got real good.

At the end of May, the company proposed a long list of cutbacks in benefits, especially around insurance. We were ready to strike half-way through the reading of what they wanted to take away. On the second shift the last night of the contract, a lot of people did not even go in. Others left early.

Most people took their tools out of the plant. Most of the welding machines were "readjusted" so management would have no "trouble" using them during a strike. Other things were also "fine-tuned" to "help the company out."

The union called on us to show up at 6 a.m. on June 2

to show our solidarity on the picketline. We had 80 to 100 people there at a time; people were coming and going. Bear in mind a lot of people live quite a way from the plant.

The picketline was very militant. At the main road to the plant, 50 of us would swarm on the cars of management trying to get in. Bounced them up and down, kicking tires. We made it hard for them.

Some of the guys set up a game of horseshoes across the main road in. Shoes were flying back and forth across the road.

The Teamster truck drivers refused to cross our line. One guy left his steel truck parked right in the middle of the road while he called for instructions what to do. Finally, he took the steel back to Pennsylvania.

My feeling when we went out was that the company wanted us to strike in order to break the union. To bring in scabs. But they miscalculated. The work we do not everyone can do. It would have taken a long time to get much going with "green people."

The union leadership made some mistakes. They did not prepare the workers by setting up a strike committee or a strike fund. But our spirited picketline helped to bring us victory. ■

By MARK HARRIS

AUSTIN, Minn.—More than 1000 people rallied in Austin, Minn., on Saturday, June 28 in a show of support for the embattled packinghouse workers of Local P-9, who have been on strike against the George A. Hormel & Co. since Aug. 17, 1985.

A motorcycle brigade of "union riders" led the way as Local P-9 members and supporters marched through downtown. As the various contingents of unionists from more than 15 states marched, many bystanders gave the thumbs-up sign.

The march and rally culminated a week of activity at Solidarity City, where the union set up a tent city just outside Austin to dramatize their continuing strike against Hormel.

One thing was evident to everyone at Solidarity City—the spirit and resolve of the strikers remains firm.

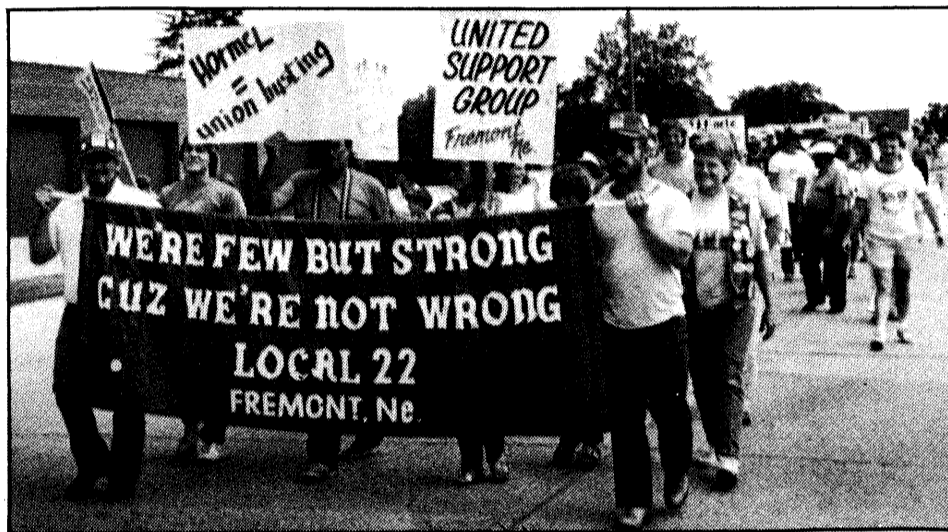
The turnout at the Friday night event, and the march and rally on Saturday afternoon, were a defiant response to the ongoing effort by the courts, Hormel management, and the International leadership of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) to muzzle these courageous union men and women.

On June 2, federal district court Judge Edward Devitt upheld the trusteeship imposed on Local P-9 by the UFCW. But Judge Devitt went beyond simply granting the UFCW's request to take over the local—he imposed sweeping restrictions on the First Amendment rights of the local.

Lynn Huston, vice-president of Local P-9, told *Socialist Action* that the judge "decided that not only was the trusteeship valid, but it is now a federal crime to picket, to boycott, to tell anybody that we're on strike." Huston explained that "the previous officers of P-9 can't act in any type of a leadership role."

The court upheld the appointment of Joseph Hansen, director of the UFCW's Region 13, as legal trustee of the local. The judge's ruling also slandered P-9 by charging that it has threatened, harassed, and intimi-

Attacks mount on P-9 strikers; but labor support remains strong



Hormel workers from Fremont, Neb., on June 28 solidarity march.

dated International union officials. Huston explained that the judge threatened stiff prison sentences for any P-9er convicted of violence against UFCW trustees.

The UFCW International considers the strike over. It is now attempting to negotiate a contract on the basis of Hormel's original offer and a federal mediator's proposal, both of which have been rejected by the membership in past voting.

"The worst thing," Huston warned, "is that they could sign a contract with the Hormel company without it even being ratified by the rank and file." The UFCW has also said that it cannot promise that the striking P-9 members will get their jobs back in any agreement it might reach with the company.

The UFCW has tried to establish a de facto dictatorship over Local P-9. At the request of the UFCW, the bank accounts of the local and the United Support Group were frozen (the latter are now unfrozen), phones were turned off (for a week-and-a-half), and mail delivery to the local was stopped.

While the trusteeship ruling is being appealed, Local P-9 has gathered enough signatures from its members to petition the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for a "recertification" election to organize a new union. The strikers have mapped out plans to inform and convince those working in the plant to join them in a reconstituted union.

If an election is held, both strikers and those working in the plant would have the option of voting for "original P-9," as the strikers call themselves, "UFCW P-9," or "no union."

The response by the original P-9 was perhaps best summed up by one executive board member, who told the crowd at Saturday's rally that UFCW official Jay Foreman had threatened "to go after their ass" if anyone in the striking local didn't kowtow to the International's wishes. "I'll tell him this much," the P-9 leader said, "I'm quite a bit older than he is and if he wants to start kicking fanny—he can start with mine."

All evening on Friday, and all day on Saturday, speaker after speaker sounded the

same defiant theme in answer to those out to destroy Local P-9.

The crowd got a real boost at the Saturday rally when a number of P-9ers who have been traveling around the country took the stage to describe the warm response they've received from rank-and-file unionists.

Frank Vit, who was fired by Hormel for refusing to cross the picket line in Fremont, Neb., told the crowd, "I've been out on the West Coast in the Bay Area, and I'll tell you those people are great. I also want to tell you that we have people out there on the West Coast in Watsonville, Calif., cannery people, who have been on strike for a long time. I want them to know that my heart is with them and I hope that your hearts are with them too. Viva la huelga!"

The importance of solidarity with other struggles, from South Africa to the picketlines at AT&T, was understood all-too-well by the strikers, who have relied on support from other unions after having their strike benefits cut off by the UFCW.

Local P-9 Business Agent Pete Winkels captured this idea when he spoke on Saturday. "On my way into town today," Winkels said, "I saw a red-tail hawk flying, which is for those of you who aren't from this area, the king of the air. Anything it wants it can have—something like the Hormel company."

"But there is something else that goes on at this time of the year, when the small birds have their young—and they'll protect them from anything. They'll take after this red-tail hawk. They'll chase after it until they drive it completely out. It's not just one small bird that does it, but it's a group of birds and they all gather their strength to chase that hawk until it's far from the nesting grounds of their young. That's exactly what you people are doing here today."

Other speakers at the Saturday rally included Vernon Bellecourt from the American Indian Movement, Krista Lee Sutton, who is the real "Norma Rae," and representatives from a number of union locals from around the country.

P-9ers and their families were enthusiastic

at this impressive display of support—more often than not giving a standing ovation to those who came to Austin to stand with the original P-9.

A sign of the mood among the strikers and their supporters came unexpectedly on Friday night, moments after Monsignor Charles Owen Rice from Pittsburgh finished an especially moving defense of the strikers cause. As the next speaker was about to be introduced, a low-flying helicopter buzzed over Solidarity City—it was a Hormel helicopter. The crowd stood up, waved and shook their fists, and began chanting "P-9, P-9, P-9."

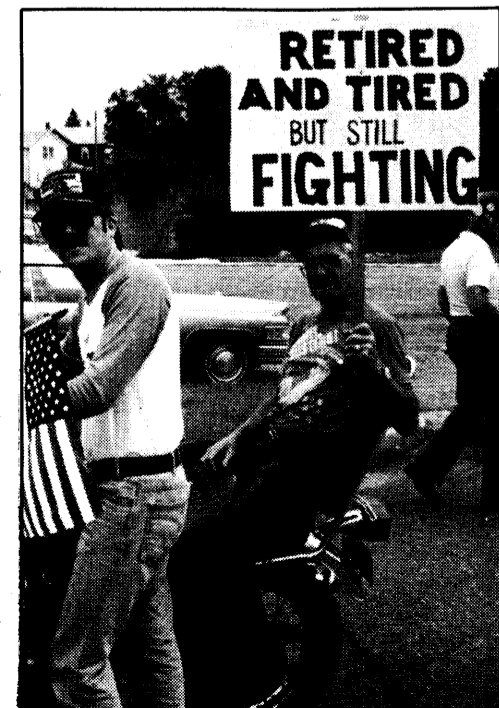
Despite the powerful forces arrayed against them, the strikers have not given up. They are holding the fort—and as long as they continue to resist company-imposed concessions and UFCW company unionism—the possibility remains that they can link their strike with the workers at the other Hormel plants, whose contracts expire soon.

Original P-9 President Jim Guyette captured best the feeling among those at Solidarity City. "We are going to continue to tell the truth, we are going to continue to struggle until right overcomes might," said Guyette. "There are no quitters here. There are people who are saying, 'If not here, where? If not now, when? If not us, who?'"

"To Judge Devitt, we're not through. To the Hormel company, the UFCW won't save you."

"Might never makes right, we've only begun to fight. We will overcome your injustices. There's too many people here, too many people elsewhere, that will make sure that we're going to win. Not just for P-9, but for all of us." ■

Donations and support for the original Local P-9 should be sent to American Labor Relief Fund, c/o, NRAFC, 312 21st St., Newport, Minn., 55055.



Union Leaders Must Not Go To Jail!

RALLY SUNDAY, JULY 13

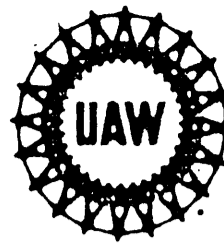
5 PM—Program

UAW Hall, 2129 Ford Parkway St. Paul, Minn.

Speakers:

**Jim Guyette, defendant
Ray Rogers, defendant
Cynthia Burke, Pres.,
BRAC Local 1310
Pete Kelly, Pres., UAW
Local 160
Tony Mazzochi, former
Health & Safety Dir.,
OCAW
and others**

Saturn contract, elections stir UAW convention debate



By STEVE DANIELS

ANAHEIM, Calif.—The United Auto Workers (UAW) met here June 1-6 for its 28th Constitutional Convention. As in the past few years, the union was once again meeting in the face of many serious problems. Plant closings, loss of jobs in remaining plants, new technology, and the increased tensions between the union and the Democratic Party were just a few of the problems that the 2000-plus delegates attempted to confront.

A large number of resolutions were passed during the week dealing with topics both domestic and foreign. None, however, pointed to any new course for the union, either politically or on the trade-union front.

The resolution on domestic politics, for example, reaffirmed the UAW's reliance on the Democratic Party. It was passed with no debate and only a handful of delegates actually voting or even listening to the resolution.

The international affairs resolution, in a section on Nicaragua, attempted to take an "even-handed" approach by condemning both the Sandinistas' "attacks" against trade unions and the press, and U.S. aid to the contras.

For seven months leading up to the convention the union opposition, centered largely in locals among the Big Three auto makers in Michigan, Ohio, and other Midwestern states, held a number of planning meetings to decide on a united course of action at the convention.

Is Saturn the pattern?

The opposition delegates agreed to support a resolution that would strengthen the union constitution against any further Saturn-type contracts. Last year, the UAW signed a contract with General Motors to produce the new Saturn small-car venture. The contract includes drastic slashes in work rules and wages.

By far the most important debate occurred on the subject of the Saturn contract and on the related issue of "whipsawing" by the auto makers. "Whipsawing" refers to the practice of pitting one local against another by threatening to close a plant if it refuses to make concessions, sending the work to another plant.

For a time during the debate it appeared that the international leadership was on the run. A large majority of the delegates seemed to be very sympathetic to the opposition's demand to "not make Saturn the pattern." After the question had been called, however, UAW President Owen Bieber made an impassioned plea for the Saturn-type agreements.

These helped the union, so Bieber claimed, to organize workers in the new plants "from the inside rather than from the outside." After his speech, the resolution defending the leadership's strategy with the Saturn contract was adopted overwhelmingly. Opposition delegates acknowledged that Bieber had single-handedly turned the tide in the discussion.

Elections for all offices were held on June 4. Following the nominations of Bieber for president and Ray Majerus for secretary-treasurer, the convention was interrupted for an hour as a "spontaneous demonstration" was held to support the candidates.

The "demonstration" consisted of stone-faced delegates with signs, walking around the hall as the other delegates talked among themselves. As there was no opposition, the candidates were elected by acclamation.

Region 5 challenge to Bieber

The election which drew the most attention, however, was the race for director of Region 5, covering the Midwestern and Southwestern states. Ken Worley, the

longtime incumbent, came to the convention in deep trouble. His assistant director, Jerry Tucker, had announced his candidacy for Worley's position and amassed a huge amount of support among many young, Black, and women members in some of the largest locals in the region. Tucker was fired from his union post after he announced his intention to run against Worley.

Tucker's New Directions Movement, which issued a report in March calling for

more aggressive organizing activity, has criticized the international leadership for its "failure to work with our local unions."

Delegates pledged to Tucker's campaign held a slight edge as the convention began. International officers from Bieber on down canvassed the Region 5 delegates for Worley during the three days leading up to the vote.

When the dust finally settled on Wednesday afternoon, Worley emerged the winner by a vote of 324,577 to 324,416 for

Tucker! [Each local has a certain number of votes, based on membership, which can result in fractional votes.]

On Thursday Tucker filed a challenge to the credentials of delegates from two small Region 5 locals who voted for Worley, citing irregularities. Although President Bieber responded by urging the delegates to approve the auditor's report to seat the regional directors, Bieber's motion was soundly defeated by voice vote.

The leadership was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, Secretary-Treasurer Majerus stepped to the mike and announced that the vote would be taken again because "not enough delegates voted."

He was hooted down. A pro-Worley delegate then urged that the vote be taken again because "many delegates didn't know what they were voting for." The delegates proved him wrong by hooting him down.

Bieber then asked for a motion to approve the report with the exception of the results from Region 5. He said the Region 5 results would be sent to the credentials committee, which would report its findings later. This motion passed.

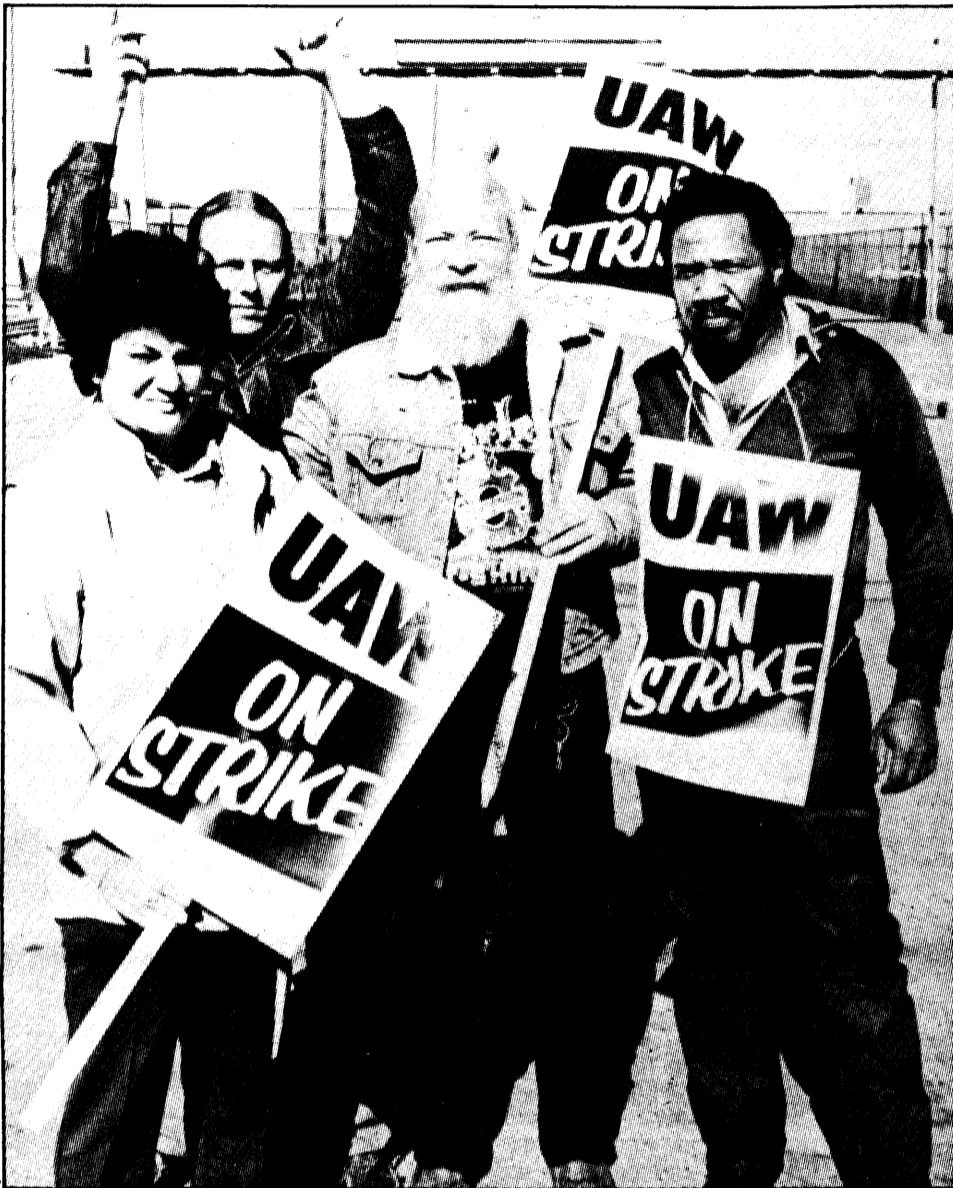
On the last day of the convention, however, Bieber announced to the delegates that the chairperson had made a mistake in allowing the delegates to vote on the auditor's report. He cited the proceedings of the 1980 convention to back his point.

A quick check of past proceedings proved Bieber wrong. The delegates had always been allowed to vote to approve regional elections. However, the remaining delegates—concerned about wrapping the convention up and going home—narrowly approved a motion to end debate.

In short, Tucker's challenge was effectively buried by a bureaucratic maneuver.

In response to a question about Jerry Tucker's status and options in the union, Bieber replied that Tucker was "separated from the Region 5 payroll" and that Tucker could take his complaints "outside the union," that is, to the courts.

Despite Bieber's "victories," many opposition supporters expressed satisfaction with the convention. Victor Reuther said it had been a long time since he had seen so much stirring among the rank and file. It will take a lot more stirrings, though, to put this great union back on the right track.



Chrysler workers demanded wage parity with Ford and GM in 1985.

AMC tightens screws at Toledo Jeep plant

By PAUL GESHOS

TOLEDO, Ohio—American Motors Corporation (AMC) has been tightening the screws on workers at its AMC Jeep plant here. The company wants to obtain work-rule, wage, and benefits concessions. In May, the company began an outright effort to unseat the union leadership.

In 1982, AMC was able to force workers to accept a deferment on payment of part of their wages under a concessions package called the Employee Investment Plan (EIP). The company wants to divert the wages withheld from workers between 1982 and 1985 into a profit-sharing scheme. But the union, United Auto Workers Local 12, notes that "profit sharing" is an illusion, since the company claims to be losing money.

In April and May, Jeep employees were sent letters that threatened to relocate the Jeep facility if the union refused to renounce a formula of direct repayments—called the Wheel Tax plan. When the union continued to press for the Wheel Tax instead of profit sharing, AMC announced the relocation of its "J" line, which builds profitable four-wheel-drive vehicles, to its plant at Kenosha, Wis.

All Jeep employees received letters with the company's demands for further concessions: 1) fewer union stewards; 2) a no-strike clause; 3) forced overtime; 4) revisions in seniority and job-bid rights; 5) cuts in negotiated bonuses and paid holidays; and 6) elimination of "all restrictive work practices."

AMC callously refused to offer even a "sugar pill" promise of job security to sweeten the task of union leaders who ultimately have to sell the concessions package to the ranks. Instead, AMC has taken the attitude that it has a right to demand labor agreements that conform to patterns established at General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler.

In the week before the union election scheduled for May 20, the company brought out its big guns and openly stated in the *Toledo Blade* newspaper that it would prefer to deal with another union chairman besides the incumbent Danny Wilson.

Committeeman Ray Okdie is Wilson's main rival. Okdie has defended the EIP, which was railroaded through when he was union chairman in 1982. Wilson's approach was to label Okdie a "puppet" of the company. Okdie's approach was to label Wilson as irresponsible and unconcerned

with the "future" of the Jeep plant in Toledo.

The news media in Toledo predicted a close vote in the union election. They were wrong. In a record turn-out, the Wilson slate took 10 of the 14 executive committee seats, with the Okdie slate picking up four. Most workers were not taken in by the company's threats that a vote for the Wilson slate would force it to close the plant.

But the workers still have not been repaid any of their money. Meanwhile, AMC and Chrysler have negotiated a deal to build Chrysler products at the Kenosha AMC facility. No one at Jeep really believes there will be room to put the "J" line there as well.

It seems that AMC's bluff tactics have run out of steam and that the company is scrambling into alliances with the Big Three to effectively bully the workers at Jeep to get in line with the concessions contracts in the rest of the industry.

The workers' experience and instincts tell them that a big fight is brewing and they are aware that AMC is desperately scrambling to avoid a confrontation.

A victory over the EIP and against General Motors and Chrysler-type concessions—as the smallest auto maker is forced to turn back from its offensive against autoworkers' living standards—could spell the end of the whole concessions game in the industry. A victory at Jeep could be an inspiration for all autoworkers to take back the takebacks and bury concessions once and for all.

Steve Daniels is a long-time activist and officer of the UAW in Ohio. He was a delegate from his local to the convention.

Burnett Bolloten's landmark study:

The Spanish Revolution

This month we are devoting a special section to an examination of the Spanish Revolution and the reasons for its defeat. This section features: (1) A review of Burnett Bolloten's "The Spanish Revolution"; (2) "The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning," written by Leon Trotsky in 1937; (3) An analysis of the role of the Anarchists and the POUM in the Spanish events; and (4) An interview with a veteran of the Spanish Civil War—The Editors.

BOOK REVIEW

By BILL WILNER

The Spanish Revolution: The Left and the Struggle for Power During the Civil War, by Burnett Bolloten, University of North Carolina Press, 664 pages, 1979, \$9.95.

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. It was on July 17, 1936, that the fascist uprising began in Spanish Morocco and spread to Spain, engulfing the country in three years of war between General Francisco Franco's fascists and the Republican forces of the People's Front government.

Much has since been written about the Spanish Revolution, but unfortunately a great deal of misrepresentation concerning its nature still exists. Burnett Bolloten's "The Spanish Revolution," however, is one book that does much to illuminate the facts behind the social revolution at the heart of the Spanish events.

Bolloten was a United Press correspondent in Spain during the Civil War, and in the years since has devoted himself to researching the history of the revolution. "The Spanish Revolution" is actually a revised and vastly expanded version of his original study, "The Grand Camouflage," which was published in 1961.

Bolloten sets the theme for his study in the opening lines to "The Grand Camouflage": "Although the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936 was followed by a far-reaching social revolution in the anti-Franco camp—more profound in some respects than the Bolshevik Revolution in its early stages—millions of discerning people outside of Spain were kept in ignorance, not only of its depth and range, but even of its existence by virtue of a policy of duplicity and dissimulation of which there is no parallel in history.

"Foremost in practicing this deception upon the world," Bolloten observed, "and in misrepresenting in Spain itself the character of the revolution were the communists," who grew from a small minority at the outset of the Civil War into the dominant force in the anti-Franco camp.

Heritage of backwardness

Spain in 1936 remained a barely industrialized country. Ownership of land was highly concentrated and the majority of the population lived at a starvation level for most of the year. Near-feudal social relations in the countryside were combined with, and in fact, reinforced by the links connecting the propertied classes with the capitalist world market.

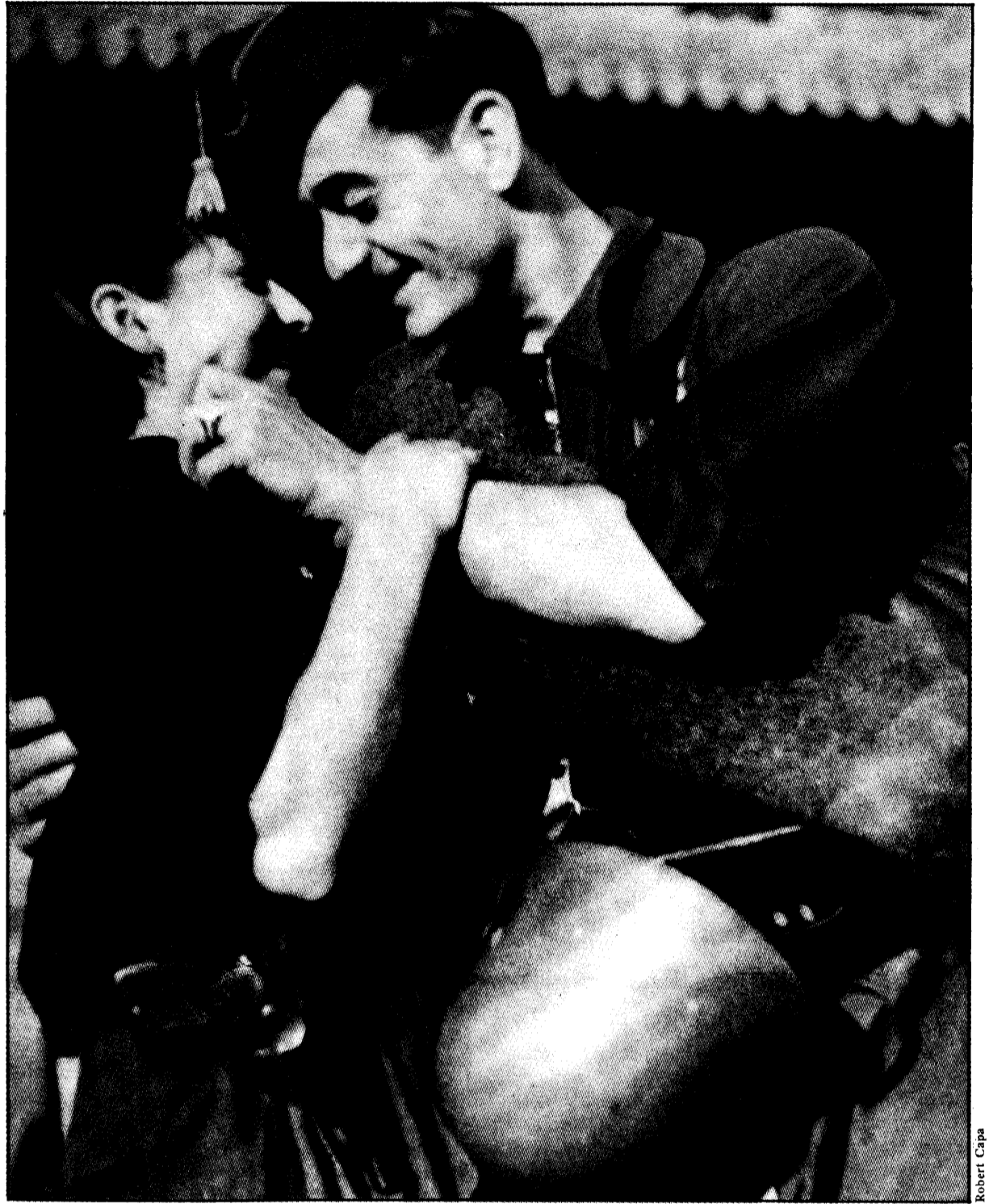
After the dictator Primo de Rivera was forced to resign in January 1930, the workers and peasants in Spain began a relentless drive to improve their lives. It was a struggle that, with the outbreak of civil war in 1936, rapidly accelerated into a challenge to the capitalist system in that country.

Alvarez del Vayo, a "left-wing" socialist and ally of the Communist Party during the Civil War, explained that after the fighting broke out, "the state collapsed and the Republic was left without an army, without a police force, and with its administrative machinery decimated by desertions and sabotage."

A Communist Party leader put it even more bluntly: "The whole state apparatus was destroyed and state power lay in the street."

"Landed properties were seized," Bolloten noted, "some were collectivized, others divided among the peasants, and notarial archives as well as registers of property were burned in countless towns and villages."

In the cities, Bolloten described how "railways, street cars, and buses, taxicabs and shipping, electric light and power companies, gas works and water works, engineering and automobile assembly plants, mines and cement works, textile mills and paper factories, electrical and chemical concerns, glass bottle factories and perfumeries, food processing plants and breweries, as



Robert Capa

well as a host of other enterprises were confiscated or controlled by workmen's committees...."

Mikhail Koltzof, a leading Soviet journalist and Stalin's personal agent in Spain, wrote in *Pravda* (Sept. 26, 1936) that approximately 18,000 industrial and commercial enterprises had been taken over by the workers' unions and by the state.

Committees of workers or local bodies under the authority of the unions and the left-wing parties assumed control of the ports, borders, municipalities and other local governing bodies in the Republican zone.

In the navy, authority was exercised by committees largely under the influence of socialists and anarchists. Hundreds of churches and convents were burned to the ground since the Catholic Church was so closely identified as a pillar of the reactionary state. Even jails were raided, their records destroyed, and inmates freed.

People's Front aids capitalists

Things were looking bad for the industrialists, bankers, and landlords. However, the People's Front government that was elected to power in February 1936 had as its common program the establishment of a liberal democratic state based on capitalist property relations. This coalition government, which the Communist Party entered in September 1936, included the Socialist Party and forces from the bourgeois republican left.

Communist Party leader Dolores Ibarruri explained in the party's newspaper *Mundo Obrero* (July 30, 1936) that "the revolution that is taking place in our country is the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution that was achieved over a century ago in other countries, such as France."

The Communist Party's line stemmed from the adoption of the Popular Front policy by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935. As the fascist threat gained momentum in Europe, Stalin had tried assiduously to cultivate an alliance with the "democratic" capitalists in Britain and France. This meant, according to Stalin, that the Republican forces

had to reassure France and Britain that the Spanish Revolution posed no threat to the capitalist system.

An anti-capitalist, socialist revolution that would break the power of the landed aristocracy and the industrialists was thus opposed by the People's Front government, even though the workers and peasants were in actual fact taking over factories and occupying land.

As exiled Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky noted at the time, the Stalinists "wanted to eliminate the need for fascism by proving to the Spanish and world bourgeoisie that they were themselves capable of strangling the proletarian revolution under the banner of 'democracy.'"

These efforts were in vain, however, as France and Britain refused to assist the fight against the Spanish fascists. Moreover, the program of limited social reform advocated by the communists and socialists forced the People's Front to actively sabotage the unfolding social revolution—and subsequently undermine its ability to mobilize the population against the fascists.

Even those parties that stood to the left of the communists and socialists—the anarchists, who controlled the National Confederation of Labor (CNT), and the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM)—failed to provide a clear alternative to the People's Front, giving "critical" support to its limited program.

Bolloten provides ample documentation of how the People's Front actively sabotaged the social revolution. In Barcelona, on May 3, 1937, the communist police commissioner ordered an attack on the telephone exchange, which had been occupied by the CNT since the start of the Civil War.

Immediately, barricades went up all over the city. POUM militia members, anarchist workers, many of whom had broken with their leaders over support to the Republican government, and others took control of most of Barcelona. But by May 7, the anarchist leaders quelled

(continued on page 10)

The lessons of Spain: The final warning



Anarchist peasants at a collectivized farm in Catalonia

By LEON TROTSKY

According to the Socialists and Stalinists, the Spanish revolution was called upon to solve only its "democratic" tasks, for which a united front with the "democratic" capitalist class [Popular Front] was indispensable. From this point of view, any and all attempts of the working class to go beyond the limits of capitalist democracy are not only premature but fatal. Furthermore, on the order of the day stands not the revolution, but the struggle against the insurgent Franco.

The revolutionary Marxist point of view, definitely expressed only by the young section of the Fourth International, takes the theory of permanent revolution as its starting point, namely: that even purely democratic problems, like the liquidation of semi-feudal land-ownership, cannot be solved without the conquest of power by the working class; but this in turn places the socialist revolution on the agenda.

Moreover, during the very first stages of the revolution, the Spanish workers themselves posed practically not merely democratic problems but also purely socialist ones. The demand not to transgress the bounds of capitalist democracy [private property] signifies in practice not a defense of the democratic revolution, but a repudiation of it.

Only through an overturn in agrarian relations could the peasantry, the great mass of the population, have been transformed into a powerful bulwark against fascism. But the landowners are indissolubly bound up with the commercial-industrial capitalists and the intellectuals dependent on them.

The party of the working class was thus faced with a choice between going with the peasant masses or with the liberal capitalists. There could only be one reason to include the peasantry and the liberal capitalists in the same coalition at the same time: to help the capitalists deceive the peasantry and thus isolate the workers.

The agrarian revolution could have been accomplished only *against* the capitalists, and therefore only through measures of the dictatorship of the working class. There is no third, interim regime.

The political alliance between the working class and the capitalists, whose interests in the present epoch diverge upon basic questions at an angle of 180 degrees, is, as a general rule, capable of only paralyzing the revolutionary force of the working class.

The workers and peasants are capable of assuring victory [in a civil war] only if they wage a struggle for their own emancipation. Under these conditions, to subordinate the working class to the leadership of the capitalists means beforehand to assure defeat in the civil war.

The modern history of capitalist society is filled with all sorts of Popular Fronts, i.e., the most diverse political combinations for the deception of the toilers. The Spanish experience is only a new and tragic link in this chain of crimes and betrayals.

Alliance with the shadow of the capitalists

Politically most striking is the fact that in the Spanish Popular Front the place of the capitalist class was occupied by its shadow. Through the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists, and Anarchists, the Spanish capitalist class subordinated the working class to itself without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades went over into the camp of Franco [the fascists].

Without any theory of "permanent revolution," the Spanish capitalists understood from the outset that the revolutionary mass movement, no matter how it starts, is directed against private ownership of land and the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures.

That is why only insignificant splinters from the possessing classes remained in the republican camp—attorneys for the capitalists, but not the capitalist class itself. Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able at the same time to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyze, disorganize, and afterward strangle the socialist movement of the masses in republican territory.

However, thanks to their allies—the Socialists, Stalinists, and Anarchists—these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply. By incarnating the principles of the "democratic revolution," i.e., the inviolability of private property. The task of the retired leaders of the left wing of the capitalists consisted in checking the revolution of the masses and thus in regaining for themselves the lost confidence of the capitalists and the landowners.

Counterrevolutionary role of Stalinism

The interests of the republican capitalists fully coincided with the interests of Stalin, who needed to gain the confidence of the French and British ruling class by proving to them in action his ability to preserve "order" against "anarchy." Stalin needed the republican capitalists as a cover before the workers. The republican capitalists needed Stalin as an experienced executioner, with the authority of a revolutionist. Failing this, so insignificant a crew never could nor would have dared to attack the workers.

How and why did the Communist Party of Spain, so insignificant numerically and with a leadership so poor in caliber, prove capable of gathering into its hands all levers of power, in the face of the incomparably more powerful organizations of the Socialists and Anarchists.

The usual explanation that the Stalinists simply bartered Soviet weapons for power is far too superficial. In return for munitions Moscow received Spanish gold. According to the laws of the capitalist market, this covers everything. How then did Stalin contrive to get power in the bargain?

The customary answer is that the Soviet government, having raised its authority in the eyes of the masses by furnishing military supplies, demanded as a condition of its "collaboration" drastic measures against revolutionists and thus removed dangerous opponents from its path. All this is quite indisputable but it is only one aspect of the matter and the least important at that.

Despite the authority created by Soviet shipments, the Spanish Communist Party remained a small minority and met with ever-growing hatred on the part of the workers. On the other hand, it was not enough for Moscow to set conditions: Valencia [republican capital] had to accede to them. This is the heart of the matter.

Not only the republican capitalists, but all wings of the Socialist Party, were more or less ready to accede to the demands of Moscow. Why? Because these gentlemen themselves wished to keep the revolution within capitalist limits. Neither the Socialists nor the Anarchists seriously opposed the Stalinist program. They feared a break with the capitalists. They were deathly afraid of every revolutionary onslaught of the workers.

Stalin with his munitions and with his counterrevolutionary ultimatum was a saviour for all these groups. He guaranteed them, so they hoped, military victory over Franco and at the same time he freed them from responsibility for the course of the revolution.

These gentlemen could henceforth justify their betrayal to the workers by the necessity of military agreement with Stalin. Stalin on his part justified his counterrevolutionary politics by the necessity of maintaining an alliance with the republican capitalists.

When the workers and peasants enter on the path of *their* revolution, i.e., when they seize factories and estates, drive out the old owners, conquer power in the provinces—then the capitalist counterrevolution—democratic, Stalinist, or Fascist alike—has no other means of checking this movement except through bloody coercion, supplemented by lies and deceit.

The superiority of the Stalinist clique on this road consisted in its ability to apply instantly measures which were beyond the capacity of the capitalists in the republican camp and their left allies.

Stalin confirms "permanent revolution"

Two irreconcilable programs thus confronted each other on the territory of republican Spain. On the one hand, the program of saving *at any cost* private property from the working class, and saving *in so far as possible* democracy from Franco; on the other hand, the program of abolishing private property through the conquest of power by the working class.

The first program expressed the interests of capitalism through the medium of the labor aristocracy, the top petty-bourgeois circles, and especially the Soviet bureaucracy. The second program translated into the language of Marxism the tendencies of the revolutionary mass movement, not fully conscious but powerful. Unfortunately for the revolution, between the handful of revolutionary Marxists and the revolutionary workers stood the counterrevolutionary wall of the Popular Front.

The republican government had promised the capitalists to defend property by "democratic" measures but revealed, especially in July 1936, its complete bankruptcy.

The Spanish revolution once again demonstrates that it is impossible to defend capitalist democracy against the revolutionary masses otherwise than through the methods of fascist reaction. And conversely, it is impossible to conduct a genuine struggle against fascism otherwise than through the methods of the socialist revolution. ■



Robert Capa

All the conditions for victory existed but...



Robert Capa

By DAVID KIRSCHNER

The main lesson of the Spanish revolution was that all the conditions for a victory by the working class over both the "fascist" capitalists and their "democratic" counterparts in the Popular Front were in place—save one: a revolutionary party.

In addition, the Spanish revolution exposed forever the bankruptcy of two political tendencies in the workers' movement that had a mass following in Spain and represented the left wing in the struggle against Franco. The first was anarchism, represented by the CNT/FAI (National Confederation of Labor/Iberian Anarchist Federation); the second was centrism, represented by the POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification).

It was through these organizations that the most militant Spanish workers sought to find their way around the political obstacles posed by the betrayals of the Popular Front. Both these organizations, however, because of an erroneous political doctrine and an incorrect political orientation, were not up to this historic task.

Anarchism

For a number of specific historical reasons, the largest tendency among the Spanish workers was anarchism, or more correctly, anarcho-syndicalism. The Anarchists rejected politics and party-building and substituted the trade unions as the instrument for making a revolution.

The main working-class base for the Anarchists were the landless agricultural workers of Andalusia, who were spread over a large geographic area, and the industrial workers of Catalonia, who were concentrated in the factories of Barcelona.

The principal Anarchist organization was the CNT (National Confederation of Labor). Founded in 1911, the CNT claimed 1.5 million members by 1931. It was the largest labor organization in Spain, with its closest competition coming from the UGT (General Union of Workers), which was controlled by Socialists and Stalinists.

A central tenet of Anarchist belief, which ironically would destroy Spanish anarchism as a social movement, was opposition to all forms of state government.

In opposition to the capitalist state the anarchists were capable of militant mass action. But more than that was needed. In the course of the revolution, the working class, if it was to be victorious, had to form its own alternative state structures; i.e., create a workers' state based on democratically elected workers' and peasants' councils.

The leaders of the Anarchists—right wing and left wing—rejected this basic necessity in theory as well as action and capitulated at every juncture to the Popular Front.

During the course of the revolution the Anarchist leaders abandoned their own doctrine of implacable opposition to all state structures. In the elections of February 1936 they supported, albeit with hesitation, the Popular Front.

In July 1936 the Anarchists held power in Catalonia—Spain's industrial heartland. The CNT and its militias had defeated the fascists at great cost in lives. Subsequently, they gave the power back to the Popular Front government and provided a left cover for the dismantling of the soviet-style institutions the Anarchist workers had created.

And in May 1937, when Anarchist workers responded by the thousands to a Stalinist attack in Barcelona, the Anarchist leaders demobilized their ranks and thus set the stage for the final triumph of the Popular Front government. Two months later they were rewarded for their collaboration by being thrown out of the government.

"After all", the Anarchists said later, "we could have taken power in July 1936 or May 1937, but we didn't, not because we were unable, but because we did not wish to, because we were against every kind of dictatorship."

The goal of every revolution, however, is to put a new class in power. The Anarchists, therefore, by not taking power were leaving the "dictatorship" in the hands of the old ruling class—the capitalists.

Trotsky maintained that the Anarchist rank and file instinctively yearned to make a revolution but were kept from this road by their leadership. "Thus Anarchism," Trotsky said, "which wished merely to be antipolitical, proved in reality to be antirevolutionary, and in the more critical moments—counterrevolutionary."

The POUM

The POUM has long been identified by Stalinist and bourgeois historians as a "Trotskyist" party. The POUM did not regard itself as such, and Trotsky and the Fourth International did not accept this characterization.

The POUM, however, was the biggest obstacle to the plans of the Stalinists and the Popular Front government to defend capitalist property relations under the guise of limiting the civil war to a fight against fascism.

At the height of the revolution (from July 1936 to July 1937) the POUM and its militias had nearly 40,000 members and was second only to the Anarchists in influence among the revolutionary masses of Catalonia.

The POUM appeared to be a revolutionary-socialist party because it attacked Stalinism and the Popular Front government from the left and, most importantly, advocated socialist revolution as the most effective way to fight Franco.

But actions speak louder than words, and, unfortunately, during the most important periods of the revolution (July 1936 and May 1937), the POUM leaders failed the most important test for a revolutionary leadership: What to do next.

For lack of a clear revolutionary program, the POUM was doomed to be a centrist party—an organization that vacillates between reformist and revolutionary positions. This paralyzed the leadership of the POUM.

Additionally, the POUM leadership inflicted isolation on its membership by refusing to form its own nuclei of supporters in the CNT for fear of friction with the Anarchist leaders. To avoid antagonism, they would build "their own" institutions and not penetrate the mass institutions that were led by reformists.

Trotsky's criticisms of the POUM on this question were unequivocal: "By isolating the revolutionary

vanguard from the class, the POUM rendered the vanguard impotent and left the class without leadership."

The POUM could have played a revolutionary role for the masses—but it didn't. Its errors stemmed not from lack of courage or heroism, but from errors in political orientation.

Origins of the POUM

The POUM was founded in 1935 by a fusion of the Spanish section of the International Left Opposition (supporters of Trotsky) with the Workers and Peasants Bloc, a group that had been the Catalan section of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and was expelled for its opposition to Stalin in 1929.

Trotsky insistently advised *against* this fusion because it was consummated on an unclear political program. The Spanish Trotskyists had called for a socialist revolution as the main task of the workers, while the Bloc up to 1935 agreed with the Spanish Stalinists that only a "democratic" revolution was necessary and governmental alliances with "left" capitalists could be tactically correct.

Trotsky warned that this regroupment of the revolutionary left was unprincipled because even though the program of the POUM claimed to be Marxist and working class on paper, the party would be indecisive *in action* because of different positions on Stalinism, reformism, and anarchism. This proved to be the case.

One year earlier, Trotsky proposed that the Spanish section, which had grown to 1500 members by 1934, accept an invitation extended by the left-moving youth group of the Spanish Socialist Party to do common political work. The Socialist Party youth group was attracting thousands of young workers because it appeared to be a revolutionary alternative to Stalinism.

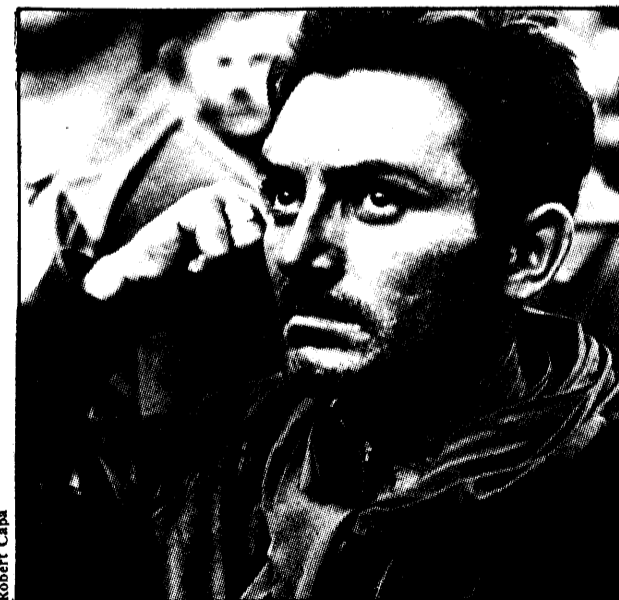
By this "entry" into the SP youth, Trotsky argued, the Spanish section could become a pole of attraction—based on a clear program—for thousands of radicalizing young workers. The leadership of the Spanish section rejected this perspective for growth. Ultimately, the Stalinists would organizationally capture the Socialist youth and win 20,000 of their members.

The POUM underestimated the role and influence of the Stalinist, Socialist and Anarchist organizations. And because it preferred fusion on an amorphous minimum program, the POUM was condemned, in the last analysis, to tailending, that is, capitulating to the Popular Front.

As predicted by Trotsky, the POUM supported the Popular Front in the February 1936 elections and participated in the Catalan Generalitat—the semi-autonomous Popular Front government of Catalonia.

Despite the unquestionable revolutionary initiative of POUM members, their hands were tied because of their "critical" support of the Popular Front. They were unable to take the offensive and lead the masses. In fact, their policies helped the capitalist class reassert its rule over the workers and peasants, thus assuring a military victory for the fascists.

After the Barcelona events, which was the last chance for the POUM to play a revolutionary role, POUM members were murderously repressed, slandered, and disarmed. The Stalinists spread the frame-up in their international press that the POUMists were "agents of



Robert Capa

the fascists" and "Franco's fifth column." With the liquidation of the POUM, the Stalinists were able to eliminate the only revolutionary current that could have challenged them.

The Spanish workers and peasants tried mightily to break out of the straitjacket imposed on them by their leaders. In July 1936 and May 1937 they ran far ahead of their leadership.

But tragically, the workers did not have enough time to build the indispensable instrument—the revolutionary party.

Today, in South Africa, the Philippines, El Salvador, and all across the globe, working people are faced with the same historic challenge. If revolutionary parties are not built in time, the inevitable struggles of the masses for self-emancipation will be derailed by the same forces that crushed the Spanish revolution. ■

Civil War veteran recalls fight as Trotskyist in Spain

By ALAN BENJAMIN

When Harry Milton came back from Spain in August 1937, the U.S. Communist Party (CP) put out a leaflet accusing him of having "betrayed the heroic struggles of the people of Republican Spain by plots, sabotage and counterrevolution, and selling out to Franco."

Milton, who in 1929 was expelled from the CP for refusing to repudiate the so-called "counterrevolutionary" politics of Leon Trotsky, had gone to Spain in January 1937 as part of the Eugene V. Debs column of the Socialist Party (SP). He was a supporter of the Trotskyist group in the SP and was, in fact, the only American Trotskyist to fight in the Spanish Civil War.

In a recent interview with *Socialist Action*, Milton, who is 81, denounced this accusation by the CP as a Stalinist slander. "I went to Spain to fight totalitarianism," Milton said. "I joined the British contingent, Centuria A, 3rd Regiment of the 29th militia Division. And for this activity, Stalin's G.P.U. [secret police] arrested me together with hundreds of other anti-fascist fighters. I was imprisoned and barely escaped with my life."

Fought alongside George Orwell

Milton arrived in Spain in early 1937 through the French border. "I had a letter from Carlo Tresca [editor of the New York-based Anarchist paper *Il Martello*] and a picture of Leon Trotsky," Milton said. "When the guards saw this, they kissed me and pulled me right through."

Upon reaching Barcelona, Milton went directly to the barracks of the POUM's [the Workers Party of Marxist Unification] 29th Division. There he was assigned to the British contingent, which was sponsored by the British Independent Labour Party.

"There I met George Orwell," Milton said. "Orwell had gone to Spain to write and fight."

In his book "Homage to Catalonia," Orwell refers to Milton frequently, identifying him only as the "American." "Yes," Milton said, "every reference to the American in 'Homage to Catalonia' is to me. I was the only American in the contingent."

Orwell, according to Milton, was very naive politically. "He had no political orientation," Milton said.

But the May Days in 1937, during which the Popular Front Catalan government opened fire on the Anarchists and POUM militia members, made a deep impact on Orwell. "These events woke him up," Milton said.

"We were on furlough in Barcelona in May," Milton continued. "Suddenly Orwell found himself dodging bullets in the street, but not enemy bullets."

The Stalinist-controlled Civil Guard, Milton explained, had attempted to take control of the Telephone Exchange, which had been occupied by the Anarchists since the fascist uprising. Milton and Orwell were staying at the Continental Hotel, which was next door to the POUM headquarters, and came under fire from Civil Guards who had occupied a cafe across the street.

When they returned to the Huesca front overlooking Zaragoza, Orwell wanted an explanation of the fighting

in Barcelona. He naturally turned to Milton, who in April had been unanimously elected director of political education of the regiment.

"Orwell listened to me because I had anticipated the May events," Milton said. "I had told him that the Popular Front government would disarm the militias and wouldn't let us exist."

One morning before sunrise, during one of these political discussions, Orwell was shot in the neck by an enemy sniper. "I heard the crisp sound of a high-velocity shot and Orwell toppled over. He landed on his back," Milton said.

In "Homage to Catalonia," Orwell pays tribute to the American who saved his life. "I simply stopped the bleeding," Milton said. "I raised him slightly and held him in my arms while waiting for the stretcher bearers."

After being shot, Orwell could have been discharged, but he decided to stay on in Spain and fight. "Orwell wasn't class conscious in any real sense," Milton continued, "but he believed in justice and had an iron determination. He was a wonderful man."

While in Spain, Harry Milton wrote a number of letters which sharply pointed to the dangers of the Spanish Popular Front government.

In a letter to the National Committee of the Socialist Party dated April 5, 1937, Milton wrote the following:

"Both the Madrid-Valencia and Catalan governments are capitalist and anti-revolutionary. Every day both governments become increasingly reactionary. They are preparing to destroy the institutions of the working class by armed force.

"The POUM and its institutions have been destroyed, its headquarters closed, its radio stations silenced, its paper suspended and its membership persecuted and arrested.

"These are conscious and organized counter-revolutionary incidents and the policy of the Popular

Front government, inspired and wholeheartedly supported by the PSUC, the Stalinist Party of Spain.

"The political situation is dark indeed. Almost nothing is left of what the workers won since the revolution."

Imprisoned by Stalinists

Milton had been a Trotskyist since 1929—and was known as such while in Spain. "The Stalinist intelligence knew exactly who I was," Milton said. "Every foreigner not a Stalinist was suspect. Scores and scores of revolutionists were arrested and killed."

"The Communist Party, which controlled the police force, was concocting a giant frame-up," Milton continued. "All those arrested were being charged with criminal political conspiracy with the German and Italian fascists. I myself was running around like a hunted rat."

Milton was picked up by the Stalinist police in early June 1937 while attempting to escape from Spain. He was in uniform and easily identifiable. He was interrogated and beaten repeatedly.

"I anticipated I would be killed," Milton said. "The Trotskyists, Anarchists, and POUMists were being arrested and killed. We were told they had died of 'appendicitis.' I thought I too would die of 'appendicitis.'"

Three months later he was released from jail as the result of a telegram campaign waged in the United States by the Socialist Party.

Upon his return to the United States, Milton toured the country to explain the lessons of the Spanish revolution. The tour was organized by *Socialist Appeal* newspaper, which supported the views of the Trotskyist group in the Socialist Party.

Today, 50 years after Franco's army rose up against the Republican government, Harry Milton is proud of the role he played in the Spanish revolution. Although he left the Trotskyist movement in the mid-1940s, Milton still considers himself a fighter for the interests of working people and all the oppressed.

With a great deal of pride, Milton pulled out a letter Trotsky had written him on Oct. 4, 1937. The letter stated, "I have read virtually all your letters from Spain and about Spain and enjoyed very much your clarity and firm position together with your militant mood."

At a time when attention is being focused once again on the Spanish revolution, it is not only worthwhile—but necessary—to tell the story of Harry Milton. ■



- International volunteers at headquarters of POUMist 29th Division in Barcelona

...Spain cont'd

(continued from page 7)

their more militant followers, and the barricades were abandoned in the face of the government's attack.

Agrarian revolution

In the countryside, the People's Front government sought to restrain the struggle against the landed property owners. Vicente Uribe, the communist minister of agriculture, had issued a decree in October 1936 giving legal status to land expropriations carried out earlier.

The decree, however, exempted from confiscation property belonging to landowners who had not identified with the fascist military rebellion. Many owners who had been forced to accept collectivization now demanded and got restitution of their land.

In addition, as Bolloten noted, "to the anguish of both anarcho-syndicalists and left-wing socialists, the communists used the decree to encourage tenant farmers and sharecroppers, who before the war had been in conflict with rural wage workers but who had been swept up involuntarily by the collective farm movement, to recover their former parcels.

"After the defeat of the anarchists in Barcelona,

attempts were made to dissolve some of the collectives, but this met with such resistance that it endangered the harvest and these actions were called off and support was pledged to the collective farms."

Bolloten explained further: "But no sooner had the crops been gathered than the government dissolved the anarchist-controlled Defense Council of Aragon...and appointed as Governor General of the region, Jose Ignacio Mantecon, a member of the Left Republican Party, but a communist supporter. Using the Eleventh Division, commanded by the communist Enrique Lister...Mantecon also broke up the collective farms."

One result of this action was that in March 1938 when General Franco's forces launched their biggest offensive of the war on the Aragon front, the resistance was demoralized and crumbled immediately. The Franco forces reached the coast on April 15, splitting the Republican territory in two.

The People's Front government was intent on demonstrating to Britain, France, and the liberal capitalists in Spain that its goal was a "respectable" democratic revolution. To that end, it tried to suppress the "radical" actions of the workers and peasants, rather than put forward a bold social program to end capitalist exploitation of the workers and distribute land to the peasants.

The People's Front government also maintained Spain's imperialist claim to the colony of Spanish Morocco, which was Franco's rear base. By refusing to

support self-determination for this brutally oppressed colony, the Republican government ensured Franco a stable rear base for supplies and recruits. Stalin did not want to alarm the ruling class of Britain and France because they possessed vast colonies in Africa.

Leon Trotsky explained toward the end of the Civil War that only the workers "could have rallied the oppressed masses, above all, the Spanish peasantry...[who would] direct all their forces to smashing fascism only if, at the same time, they are able to realize new and better conditions of existence."

For Trotsky, the success of this perspective—establishing a workers' government and socialist power—was reduced, in the last analysis, to the necessity of constructing a revolutionary party that could lead such a revolution. That, however, was the missing ingredient in Spain.

Burnett Bolloten's "The Spanish Revolution" provides precise documentation, as historian Raymond Carr notes in his foreword to the book, of the "spontaneous revolution" that swept over much of Spain—especially Catalonia and the Levante—in the first weeks of the Civil War as a proletarian response to the military rising."

With impressive thoroughness Bolloten details how the Republican government, guided by the Communist Party, fought to turn back the achievements of this social revolution, often by quite violent methods. It is a book well worth reading. ■

When Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law in Poland on Dec. 13, 1981, the top brass of the U.S. capitalist class strongly supported the Polish government's brutal action—despite appearances to the contrary.

Business Week reported, "Western banks privately applaud martial law because they believe the army's action will end the political impasse that has paralyzed the economy."

A *New York Times* article stated that the U.S. banks had pressed for martial law, hoping that a military takeover would enable the Polish government to repay its \$27-billion debt. "The only thing we care about is can they pay their bills," Thomas Theobald, chairman of the board of Citibank, was quoted as saying.

Four-and-a-half years later, Polish government spokesman Jerzy Urban has revealed that the Reagan administration actually knew in advance about plans to institute martial law but decided not to make this information public.

In an interview with *The Washington Post* (June 16, 1986), Urban stated, "The U.S. administration could have publicly revealed these plans to the world and warned Solidarity. Had it done so, the implementation of martial law would have been impossible."

Urban stated that a senior Polish staff officer, Col. Wladyslaw Kuklinski, had been on the CIA payroll at the time and had leaked information on the military crackdown to the U.S. government.

Reagan administration officials questioned by the *Post* did not deny having been informed about the preparations for martial law. "We had everything in the plan but the date," one U.S. government official told the *Post*.

Urban's revelation, which exposes the hypocrisy of the Reagan administration's alleged "support" for the Polish workers, came only days after Poland was admitted into the International Monetary Fund. The IMF is the international watchdog for U.S. finance capital. It oversees loans to debtor countries and imposes strict austerity measures as the price for restructuring payment on the debt.

The IMF, according to *The Herald Tribune* (Dec. 20, 1985), agreed to take Poland into membership "after observing with satisfaction that the economic and financial program carried out by the Polish government since martial law had enabled it to surmount its financial difficulties."

Poland joins IMF, plans austerity, and rounds up Solidarity activists



Poland will now receive new credits from U.S. and European banks to help reschedule \$800 million of foreign debt falling due this year.

In turn, the Polish government has agreed to impose even harsher austerity measures on its population. Earlier this year, the government announced price increases of 40 percent in flour, cheese, and rice. In late May it announced a 30-percent increase in the price of fuel and other energy sources.

Under the new IMF package, the Polish government will now have to raise the prices of all basic foods—particularly butter and meat—and eliminate state subsidies to all consumer goods. Wages, moreover, will have to be kept at their 1985 levels. In addition, a new fund based on a special tax on all nationalized industry, will be created to pay back the debt to the imperialist banks.

Solidarity, the trade-union and social movement that organized up to 10 million

workers, emerged in 1980 after a gigantic strike that swept the country to protest the government's hike in the price of meat.

Fearing that the new austerity program could ignite the Polish powder keg once again, the ruling bureaucracy has stepped up its repression against Solidarity leaders and activists. More than 300 activists are currently imprisoned in Poland, according to *The Washington Post*. The number of detainees has grown at the rate of more than one a day since January.

On May 31, two days before Poland joined the IMF, the Polish political police arrested the main underground Solidarity leader, Zbigniew Bujak, along with well-known activists Konrad Bielinski, Henryk Wujec, and Ewa Kulik. [See accompanying story.]

The right-wing Paris Daily *Le Figaro* explained that with these arrests, "the Polish government hopes to be able to get the population to accept unpopular but necessary reforms." *Le Figaro* understands that the ruling bureaucracy is the driving force for capitalist penetration into the Polish workers' state.

Still, the Polish bureaucracy has been unable to crush the resistance of the Polish workers. Solidarity is still alive, even though its main leaders are in prison and its structures have been forced underground.

The *International Herald Tribune* in its Dec. 20, 1985, issue described Polish reality well when it stated: "The Polish crisis is far from being resolved. Gen. Jaruzelski is discovering that his victory is far more apparent than real. Poland today is a nation of 35 million dissidents." ■

'In Poland, it's part of life to go to prison.'

The following is an interview with Göran Jacobsson, a Swedish Trotskyist who was detained by Polish authorities at the end of 1983. Jacobsson is a worker at the Saab plant in Linköping, Sweden, and a member of the Socialist Party, the Swedish section of the Fourth International.

Jacobsson was interviewed last month in San Francisco by Joe Ryan at the start of his U.S. speaking tour.

Socialist Action: How and why were you imprisoned in Poland?

Göran Jacobsson: I was bringing printing equipment to Solidarity, the trade union in Poland. There are about 500 underground newspapers in the country. The publishers are denied access to the state-owned presses and have to get presses wherever they can.

I was caught at the border. I came by ferry from Sweden to Swinoujscie [Poland]. Our car was searched by the customs, the army, and the security police.

S.A.: What were the conditions like in prison? Were you tortured?

Jacobsson: I was put into a cell that measured 12 square meters at the special prison of the security police in Szczecin. There were three guys there who were all accused of having some connection with Solidarity. They got real nervous when I arrived because they felt "another one had been caught."

In that cell I learned that Solidarity really means solidarity. My cell mates gave me food and clothes because it was cold in the cell. All the time, they were giving moral support to a woman prisoner who was in the next cell. She had been beaten

and was having a hard time.

However, they didn't use physical torture on me; they just threatened to. The room where this high official was talking to me was sound-proof. This was scary. They oppress people psychologically.

S.A.: How were you released?

Jacobsson: I got out after six weeks because I was Swedish. Support groups had formed in Sweden and they went to the Swedish government and to my trade union to try to get me released. But if a Pole faced the same charges I did, he or she would be in prison somewhere between three and 15 years.

S.A.: How has this repression affected Solidarity's activities?

Jacobsson: At first, martial law was able to break down a lot of the structures of Solidarity. People were afraid and didn't dare organize. But after a year, the organization had a new national leadership and kept organizing. Despite the repression, Solidarity was alive and strong.

The new protest actions took many different forms. For instance, in a suburb of Warsaw, people would go for a walk every evening when the TV news came on because they didn't want to see the news—which they thought was propaganda for the regime. Then the government put a curfew on the people so they couldn't go out. So the people put their TV sets in the streets.

Of course, people are a bit afraid and more careful than before martial law. But they are still organizing, and nearly every family in Poland has somebody who has been to prison. It's part of life in Poland to go to prison. ■

Free Zbigniew Bujak!



Tadeusz Jedynak from Silesia.

Bujak, who was a factory worker at the Ursus tractor factory in Warsaw, had led the first strike in his plant against the government's food-price increases in July 1980. Elected chairperson of Solidarity in the Warsaw region, he soon became an important person in the union's national leadership.

When martial law was decreed in December 1981, Bujak narrowly managed to escape arrest. He was sheltered by the railworkers in Gdansk and was on the run ever since, living in dozens of apartments with false identity cards and various disguises.

In Warsaw, Wrocław and Gdansk, the news of Bujak's arrest provoked spontaneous demonstrations of thousands of workers. In Wrocław alone, 2000 youths gathered to demand Bujak's immediate release.

Soon after Bujak's arrest, the TKK put out a national leaflet signed by Jan Andrzej Gorny and Marek Muszynski which stated that the underground structures of Solidarity had not been destroyed. On June 5, *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, the main underground Solidarity journal in the Warsaw region, appeared as usual.

Despite increasing repression, massive resistance to the Polish bureaucracy is continuing. Today more than ever, the Polish workers need the solidarity of working people around the world. Zbigniew Bujak must be freed!—A.B. ■

Zbigniew Bujak, the main underground Solidarity leader, was arrested in Warsaw on May 31. Three of Bujak's close associates—Konrad Bielinski, Ewa Kulik, and Henryk Wujec—were arrested on the same day.

Two weeks later, 30 more Solidarity activists, including Anna Walentynowicz, were rounded up and imprisoned.

The Polish secret police have been mobilized for over four years to try to track Bujak down. The police captured nine other leaders of the Provisional Underground Leadership of Solidarity, known as TKK, between mid-1982 and this year, but Bujak consistently eluded them.

The other TKK leaders currently in prison include Wladyslaw Frasyniuk from Wrocław, Bogdan Lis from Gdansk, and

Polish Inprekor

In this issue you will find articles on:

- The economic demands of the underground leadership of Solidarnosc (TKK).
- "Reformism and social democracy — have they any political space in Poland?" Contribution from an activist of the Polish revolutionary left.
- Debate: Solidarnosc and the Ukrainian issue.
- A balance sheet of the "Yugoslav" road — self-management imprisoned by bureaucratic power.
- Special dossier: the Black working class in the struggle against apartheid and capitalism in South Africa.

To order Polish *Inprekor*, write to 2, Rue Richard Lenoir, 93100, Montreuil, France. One copy: 2.5 dollars or £1.20. Subscriptions (six issues): 12 dollars or £7.50. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to *International Viewpoint* and marked "for Polish *Inprekor*".

INPREKOR

ROBOTNICZY POLUDNIOWEJ AFRYKI
W WALCE Z APARTEIDEM
I KAPITALIZMEM



By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

NEW YORK—On June 14, about 100,000 people gathered here in Central Park to express their opposition to apartheid. It was the largest anti-apartheid demonstration in U.S. history. Sixteen buses came from Philadelphia and several buses came from as far away as Atlanta to join the event.

Two large spirited feeder marches—one from the United Nations building, the other from Harlem—were joined by smaller marches from the Latino community and by thousands who only attended the rally.

Signs and chants denounced apartheid as murder, expressed opposition to racism at home and abroad, supported the Shell Oil boycott, and demanded total divestment of all U.S. holdings in South Africa.

The rally was called by the New York Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council, which is headquartered in the United Auto Workers District 65 offices. In addition to District 65, other trade unions with sizable contingents included the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Workers (AFSCME); International Union of Electronic Workers; Professional Employees Federation; and Hospital Workers Local 1199.

Student activists participated from numerous colleges and high schools in New York and New Jersey. Many Black community churches helped publicize the demonstration and organized participation by their congregations. A Central American contingent pointed out the relationship between U.S. foreign policy in Central America and South Africa.

The speakers' platform reflected the breadth of support for the march and rally. Thomas Van Arsdale, president of the 1.2 million-member New York Central Labor Council, pointed out that a resolution condemning apartheid was adopted at the 1955 AFL-CIO merger convention.

Saying, "We denounced apartheid then and we denounce it now," Van Arsdale added, "We look to the trade-union move-



100,000 in New York blast apartheid

IMPACT VISUALS/Linda Eber

ment of South Africa for their guidance as to when and how we can help."

Cleveland Robinson, chairman of the

New York Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council and secretary-treasurer of UAW District 65, said it's ironic that Reagan

talks about the plight of people in Poland and Afghanistan but has nothing to say about the millions of Blacks who constitute the majority in South Africa.

Amon Masane—a leader of the Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers Union in Johannesburg—delivered a message on behalf of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. Alfred Nzo, secretary general of the African National Congress, updated the current situation in South Africa. Theo Ben Gurirab, a representative of SWAPO (the South West African Peoples Organization), described the freedom struggle in Namibia.

A message was read from Winnie Mandela vividly describing the murderous assault on protesters in Soweto on June 16, 1976, and the continuing repression in her country.

Mpho Tutu, daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu, delivered a stirring message from her father. The letter declared: "We are waiting for the international community to act now and act decisively. It's our last chance. Are you on the side of justice or injustice? Good or evil?"

"We shall be free and live as Black and white members of one family—the human family. I ask for your continued support not only today, but Monday and every other day."

Other speakers included NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks; the Rev. Jesse Jackson; Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins; Victor Gottbaum, executive director of AFSCME District Council 37; and Barry Feinstein, president of Teamsters Local 237. Several musical groups participated in the program—which concluded with a performance of "Sun City."

Other marches and rallies commemorating the anniversary of the Soweto rebellion took place in Chicago; Los Angeles; Toronto; Oakland, Calif.; and other cities. Meanwhile, activists in London were preparing for "the biggest anti-apartheid demonstration ever in Britain" to take place on June 28. ■

... S. African unionists resist

(continued from page 1)

that country, international action can help to aid their struggle. In the United States, well over 100,000 people participated in demonstrations last month in solidarity with the people of South Africa.

These demonstrations have bolstered the campaign to force the U.S. government to order strong sanctions against the Pretoria regime. In face of the Reagan administration's stance against sanctions, the slogan, "Embargo South Africa, Not Nicaragua" is increasingly being heard.

A vigorous policy of sanctions requires that the U.S. government cut all diplomatic and trade channels to South Africa and withdraw all U.S. investments from the country. The resolutions recently passed in the House of Representatives and introduced in the Senate, however, pointedly exclude an embargo on purchases of strategic minerals from South Africa.

Last year, the U.S. government bought \$1.3 billion worth of minerals from South Africa. The platinum, manganese, chromium, and cobalt imported via South Africa are essential in the manufacture of tanks, ships, aircraft, and electrical circuitry.

The viewpoint of U.S. defense

contractors and other capitalists is clear enough. "None of us are anxious to see apartheid continue, but we must have open lanes to acquire these materials," explained T.S. Ary, an executive with the Kerr-McKee Corp. and member of a congressional advisory committee on strategic materials.

Furthermore, the U.S. stockpile of chromium "is insufficient to tide us over for a conventional war," a congressional aide pointed out to *The Wall Street Journal*.

South Africa derives 75 percent of its foreign exchange earnings and 26 percent of its Gross National Product from mining. "If you don't block strategic minerals, then to talk about sanctions is ridiculous," says Charles Ebinger of Georgetown University. "Any bill that doesn't block these minerals won't put pressure on the South African economy."

The anti-apartheid movement must redouble its demands that the U.S. government authorize full sanctions against South Africa. The June 14 demonstration in New York City—which brought 100,000 anti-apartheid protesters into the streets and was endorsed by dozens of trade unions—points the way forward.

National coalition needed

Massive demonstrations in the streets are the most effective way to express the viewpoint of the majority of Americans on this issue. Now is the time to construct a nationwide coalition that can organize further anti-apartheid actions on the scale of the New York event.

An authoritative coalition must necessarily be open to all groups and individuals willing to unite against apartheid—regardless of differences they have on other issues. The coalition cannot take a stand in favor of any exclusive point of view that

might deter people from participating.

Some forces in the movement, however, advocate that support to the policies of the African National Congress (ANC) become the axis of anti-apartheid work in this country. This was the line put forward, for example, at the Conference on Solidarity with the Struggling Peoples of Southern Africa, held June 27-29 in San Francisco.

This perspective is limiting and exclusionary. It ignores the question: What is the best way to mobilize masses of people in the United States into *action* against apartheid?

Most people in this country will readily solidarize with the struggle in South Africa but not necessarily with the goals of one particular organization within that struggle. Although people will come into the streets by the millions demanding "End Apartheid Now" and "Full U.S. Sanctions," it is difficult to mobilize them around the slogan of support to the program of the ANC.

Also, in order to best educate people in this country, it is important that the anti-apartheid movement in the United States give a hearing to representatives of all organizations fighting for freedom in South Africa—not just the ANC.

Two-party trap

But there are other pitfalls confronting the project of building a mass anti-apartheid coalition. Some groups have proposed short-circuiting mass action into lobbying and electoral activities.

Henry Winston, national chairman of the Communist Party U.S.A., had this to say: "The solidarity movement must be both strengthened and linked with wider electoral struggles, with the aim of defeating every member of Congress who opposes sanctions. A shift of even four or five Senate votes could mean that this body would no longer rubberstamp Reagan's strategic partnership with Botha..." (*People's Daily World*, June 13, 1986).

The Communist Party's proposal to tie the anti-apartheid movement to the electoral

campaigns of "pro-sanctions" or "anti-Reagan" candidates is nothing new. During the Vietnam War, many activists were sucked into pushing doorbells for so-called peace candidates of the Democratic Party.

The electoral campaigns served to periodically sidetrack large sectors of the antiwar movement from building mass actions and thus let up the pressure that the movement had placed on the U.S. government.

The anti-apartheid movement will only gather strength if it remains independent of Republican and Democratic Party politics. The New York June 14 demonstration provides an example of what can be done. ■

**WANTED:
100 NEW
SUBSCRIBERS**

**International
VIEWPOINT**

a biweekly magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International. We offer a special introductory offer of three issues for \$3. A six-month subscription is \$22, and one year of *International Viewpoint* is available for \$42. Subscribe now!

Write to 3435 Army St.,
Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA
94110

**REVOLT
IN
SOUTH
AFRICA**



A SOCIALIST ACTION PAMPHLET

A Marxist analysis. Order your copy today. \$1.10 includes postage. Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco CA., 94110

Black unionists say workers must lead apartheid fight

We reprint below major excerpts from an interview with members of the executive committee of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The interview first appeared in SASPU FOCUS, Vol. 5 No. 1.

Question: COSATU and many other organizations say they will fight to build a democratic South Africa, free of oppression and economic exploitation. What do you mean by that?

Answer: COSATU knows all about the daily problems of workers—their experience of hunger, starvation, of no political rights, of Bantu education—which was made to keep workers in wage slavery.

We want our new society to be the complete opposite of that. It must be a non-racial and united nation. It must be a democracy where all people have political rights. And freedom from economic oppression must go with these political rights.

So change does not mean only a new government with a different color skin. It must be a change to a real democracy that benefits the people that produce the wealth of the country—the working class.

Workers must lead the struggle for freedom. And after liberation they must be the leaders in the making of a new society.

Question: That means we must build democracy at grass-roots level?

Answer: We strongly support democratic ways of working in our organization. Worker leaders must get mandates and direction from members. Workers must control their trade unions. We believe these methods of worker control must be also be used when workers take part in township struggles.

There must also be democracy in the running of factories. Today, the bosses alone make decisions about how to run the factories and how to share the profits.

COSATU says this is undemocratic. Workers must have control over the way production is planned and over the profits that workers make. That is the way we see the building of democracy—in our organizations and in the whole of our society.

Question: COSATU talks about the



"wider working class." What is this?

Answer: We know we are not the only force in the struggle. People are fighting over many different issues. We will look closely at the struggles of other organizations. If we agree with them, then we will fight in a disciplined alliance.

But we want a clear idea who our closest friends and allies are. These are the people who have the same feelings and interests as the workers. The unemployed are part of the working class. Poor people in the rural areas, the farmworkers, and the militant youth are also part of the working class—not only people who work in the factories.

But other classes and groups, outside the working class, are fighting for freedom. We

will join their fights. They are our friends. Like the End Conscription Campaign, which is an important part of the struggle. It is made up mostly of whites.

Question: Can you tell us about some of the joint struggles workers are fighting outside the factory floor?

Answer: We have seen students in the townships and workers in the factories fighting together before—like in the Simba chips boycott when students and workers fought together for workers' rights. Then, in November 1984 [during a three-day general strike in the Transvaal region], workers stayed away from work to support the demands of the students.

Workers and other organizations are making the same demands—for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political

prisoners, the unbanning of banned organizations, and the lifting of the state of emergency.

We have seen the joint action in the Vaal around rents...In the Eastern Cape, trade unions and community organizations have worked together on the consumer boycott. In the struggle for a better education, unions and organizations are beginning to work together at the national level through the National Education Crisis Committee structures.

Question: What has been the response of workers and other groups to COSATU's formation?

Answer: The launch of COSATU [in November 1985] made organizations feel stronger at a time they were being attacked in the middle of the State of Emergency. Our decision to join political struggles outside the factories encouraged people to fight back.

Thousands of workers came to our offices when they heard about the decision to set up a farmworkers union. The unemployed also want to be organized. We were powerfully strong when we started—and now, after four months, we are over 650,000 strong. But we have a problem—we don't have the people and the resources to handle all the new members.

Question: What links would COSATU like to have with the world trade-union federations?

Answer: We would not join any of the world trade unions or confederations. They are complicated organizations and we believe they are fighting a war of different ideologies and political ideas.

We don't feel we have enough experience or understanding of that fight.

And in South Africa we don't have the freedom to choose openly. If we join a confederation that the government does not like, then the government could crack down on us.

But we won't stand back and not join up with workers in other parts of the world. This is an important way to build solidarity. For us, solidarity means more than help with money. Solidarity means workers in different parts of the world taking part in each others' struggles.

This is beginning to happen—like CCAWUSA [Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers Union], who supported the 3M strike in America; during the Coca Cola campaign in our country; and the solidarity action of the Volkswagen workers in West Germany with VW workers in Uitenhage. ■

... Congress votes contra aid

(continued from page 1)

sented the opening of a "new Vietnam War" in Central America.

Speaking shortly after the House vote, Ortega also said that the Sandinista government would not tolerate internal oppositionists who act as "spokesmen for U.S. imperialism."

"Should we continue to tolerate those who, in the name of political pluralism or freedom of the press, are trying to create an internal front in favor of the terrorist policies of the U.S. government?" he asked a crowd of Sandinista youth in Managua. "No!" was the resounding answer.

Ortega said the approval of contra aid would compel the Nicaraguan government to revise some of its domestic and international policies "to confront the new threats that exist."

Soon after Ortega's declaration, the pro-capitalist daily, *La Prensa*, was closed for an "indefinite period." *La Prensa* has been the main mouthpiece of the contras and the U.S. government within Nicaragua.

The Sandinista government said the paper could not be published because it continued to campaign for negotiations between the Sandinistas and the contras and was asking the United States to intervene in Nicaragua.

The entire U.S. rationale for contra aid has been to force the Sandinistas to the bargaining table with the contras. A major argument in Reagan's appeal for the \$100 million in aid was that the Sandinistas had refused to seek "internal reconciliation as offered under the Contadora regional peace

plan." By this, Reagan means some form of power-sharing with the contras that would eventually remove the Sandinistas from power.

The Sandinistas have steadfastly resisted these U.S. imperialist pressures. They have vowed never to talk to the contras and have said that only traitors support such talks.

7th anniversary of revolution

On July 19, hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguan workers and peasants will gather in Managua to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. This celebration comes at a time when the danger of U.S. military intervention is greater than ever.

In this country, numerous marches will be held on July 19 to commemorate the triumph over Somoza and to demand an end to U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. This is an important occasion to show that the American people reject the bipartisan war against Nicaragua.

The successful antiwar demonstration on April 19, 1986, in San Francisco and the nationwide demonstrations in April 1985 show that it is possible to build an independent movement in the streets capable of mobilizing existing mass anti-intervention sentiment.

Unfortunately, at a time when Nicaragua faces increased military attacks, there has been a downturn in public protest activity against U.S. intervention. Most coalition groups have begun to focus their efforts on

the November 1986 elections in the hopes of electing "pro-peace" Democratic candidates.

These groups continue to ignore the "pro-war" record of the Democratic Party and the warnings of leading Sandinista Commander Omar Cabezas, who stated that the only difference between the Democrats and the Republicans is that "some want to kill us one way, [while] the others want to kill us another way."

Reliance on Democratic Party

politicians, or fall campaigns to elect "anti-Reagan Democrats" will do nothing to halt the increasing use of U.S. state terrorism against Nicaragua.

Anti-intervention organizations should respond by organizing mass rallies and demonstrations this fall opposing aid to the contras and protesting all forms of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. This is the best way to defend the Nicaraguan revolution.—The Editors

Celebrate 7th Anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution



Sat., July 19, San Francisco
Assemble, 25th & Potrero, 11 AM
Parade, 12 PM
Rally, Dolores Park, 1:30 PM

San Francisco Mime Troupe in top form with "Spain/36"



Franco appeals to Nazis in new play.

Photo by: Chris Gulker

By KATHLEEN O'NAN

The San Francisco Mime Troupe's newest production, "Spain/36," premiered last month at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. Those who are familiar with the Mime Troupe's work over the years will be pleased to see that they are better than ever as they take on a formidable task—the telling of the Spanish Civil War in music, dance, and mime.

It is no accident that this political theater group has chosen this particular time to produce this topic. They too are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War and they warn us all that "those who do not remember history are condemned to repeat it."

The play spans the period in Spain from the coming to power of the Popular Front in the elections of 1936 through its ultimate bloody defeat in 1939. We see on the stage the peasants, workers, and students united against Franco, Hitler, and their allies.

We also see the despicable role of the "neutrals": Leon Blum, socialist prime minister of France; Winston Churchill, future prime minister of Britain; and Franklin D. Roosevelt, president of the United States.

The true role of the "neutrals" is best shown in the "Non-Intervention Dance," a well-choreographed satirical minuet. Hitler and Mussolini urge Blum and Churchill—as well as Joseph Stalin, secretary general of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—to join them.

Initially reluctant, the latter three do join in the dance, making it clear by their mime that, while they are hesitant to combine with the forces of reaction, they would rather dance with them than be ostracized wallflowers in the view of the world powers.

Stalin's representative in Spain, a Pravda correspondent, attempts to justify the Soviet Union's lack of political direction and inadequate material aid. By 1938, he excuses his government's decision to cut back aid by saying that because of the conflict with Japan, the Soviets "can't fight on two fronts."

Unfortunately, it is not mentioned that less than a year later the infamous Stalin-Hitler Pact was signed, a fact, in my opinion, not incidental to the decisions made about Spain.

The Roman Catholic Church does not escape the scathing satire of the troupe. The pompous hypocrisy of the Church is seen in a scene in which a priest's crucifix is revealed as a scabbard sheathing a knife to be used against communists. At the play's

opening, one comment says it all: "The people may have spirit but they'll need it; wait till they see the Church they get."

The three main figures on the other side, "the people's side," are also historical figures: Buenaventura Durruti, an anarchist leader; Emilienne Morin, an anarchist militant and Durruti's companion; and Juan Negrin Lopez, socialist prime minister of Spain's last Republican government.

Almost from the beginning, we see conflict between the radicalism of the

anarchists and the conservative approach of the social democrats. Durruti and Morin want to fight on for revolution, while Negrin backs off.

Negrin's vacillation is summarized in his lines, "The other side [the fascists] is only marginally more competent than we are. But they are not plagued by indecision." This misleadership is seen in good part as responsible for the defeat of the revolution and the loss of the Civil War.

On this point, I would like to see some

Dictators, torturers out of tune at Amnesty shows

By MILLIE GONZALEZ

Amnesty International recently ended a six-city tour designed to get the word out about their 25 years of activity. The tour was billed, "Amnesty International—A Conspiracy of Hope."

The tour ended on June 15 in an 11-hour rock concert before a standing-room crowd of 100,000 people at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. I tuned into MTV to watch the live telecast of the event.

Initially, my main interest was in the caliber of musicians who were performing—such as the likes of Jackson Brown, Peter Gabriel, Ruben Blades, Sting, and U2. One of the performers was Fela, a musician released from the prisons of his country due to the intervention of Amnesty International.

I could see this was no ordinary concert. Throughout its course, continual reference was made to the current struggle in South Africa. The state of emergency cast over the recent 10th-anniversary commemoration of the Soweto uprising was remembered by placards held by the audience, "Remember Soweto." Pictures of Nelson Mandela were also held up.

Christopher Reeves, star of the "Superman" movies and one of the moderators of the program, stated, "We are speaking for those in South Africa who cannot speak due to P.W. Botha's declaration of a state of emergency."

During his performance, Jackson Brown touted a book published by Amnesty International. He said, "You should read this book. It tells of the plight of political prisoners in other countries. Countries which are supported by the U.S. government—and you should know that."

A particularly sobering mood prevailed over the crowd when Peter Gabriel sang "Biko." The song was dedicated to the spirit of Stephen Biko, a founder of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa who was brutally murdered in his prison cell. Part of the lyrics are as follows:

*"You can blow out a candle,
But you can't blow out a fire.
Once the flames begin to catch,
The winds will blow it higher."*

During U2's performance of "Sunday Bloody Sunday," about the Belfast uprising of 1969, the leader of the new-wave Irish group, cried, "Are you tired of reading lies in the newspapers? Are you tired of reading lies about Nicaragua, Belfast, Beirut? Then say no more!" The crowd shouted back, "No more! No more! No more!"

Now, some cynics might charge that the

strengthening of this work-in-progress. While their political analysis is basically accurate, I think it would benefit the audience to be shown more clearly the betrayals of the Spanish people by social democracy and by Stalinism. These lessons are as timely today as then.

Masterful and inspired

The mime and choreography of "Spain/36" are masterful. So too is the use of fantastically wonderful masks worn by all the "bad guys." "The Fascist Dance" performed by the entire ensemble is almost as frightening as seeing newsreels of Hitler's troops goose-stepping down the streets of Paris.

On the other hand, the dance entitled "Madrid" is an inspired and inspiring work which brought tears to my eyes. This dance salutes the bravery of Spain's workers and peasants as well as the International Brigade volunteers who fought and fell for Spain's freedom 50 years ago.

The music of "Spain/36" is also inspiring, although the lyrics at times were a bit uneven. But knowing the Mime Troupe, I am sure this will be improved as the play progresses. I look forward to their putting together an album of the same caliber as the one produced by their previous play, the Obie Award-winning "Factwino: the Opera."

As always, the Mime Troupe seeks to enlighten and educate. They give an overview of the Spanish Civil War which draws the audience into understanding history and to seeing parallels in the world today.

In a recent interview, Dan Chumley, director/troupe member, said, "It is important because of what our country is doing in Central America. The fascist powers of Italy and Germany were rising up on their hind legs, moving all over Europe—and Spain was the testing ground. Many Americans don't understand what happened there, how a small country can be affected by foreign intervention."

Spain/36 continues through July 13 at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. Telephone (213) 627-5599 for tickets and schedule. The play will open in San Francisco in early 1987. ■

crowd was just there for the music. But, boy, did they get more! This viewer came away with the sense of participating in an antiwar and anti-apartheid rally with some very good performers lending their talents to the cause.

In the last two years, we have witnessed a number of political music events, including "Live Aid"—a concert to help end famine in Ethiopia—and the release of the "Sun City" album by artists united against apartheid. What does it mean?

Contrary to what the media would have us believe, there is a growing sentiment for social justice out there. Unfortunately, because the organized movement is in a let-down, this sentiment has not manifested itself in mass demonstrations.

The concerts reflect an emerging social consciousness. This consciousness is a cause for optimism; it discredits the myth that people are only out for themselves. There's an expression that seems appropriate to insert here: Artists tend to sense a change in the wind before others. But it's people putting the poetry into action that brings change. ■

WHERE TO FIND US

Boston Socialist Action
P.O. Box 1046 GMF
Boston, MA 02205
(617) 389-4075

Chicago Socialist Action
Box 80B, 2520 N. Lincoln
Chicago, IL 60614

Cincinnati Socialist Action
P.O. Box 27053
Cincinnati, OH 45227
(513) 242-9043

Cleveland Socialist Action
P.O. Box 6151
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 429-2167

Detroit Socialist Action
P.O. Box 19613
Detroit, MI 48219

Grand Rapids Socialist Action
P.O. Box 3505
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

Los Angeles Socialist Action
P.O. Box 60605
Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, CA 90060
(213) 250-4608

Minneapolis Socialist Action
P.O. Box 14087
Dinkytown Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414

New York Socialist Action
P.O. Box 20209, Ca. Finance
693 Columbus Ave.
New York, NY 10025

Phoenix Socialist Action
P.O. Box 5161
Phoenix, AZ 85010
(602) 263-5190

San Francisco Socialist Action
3435 Army St., Rm. 308
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-0458

Deregulation

Dear editor,

I am writing because of the very interesting article on deregulation and air safety in the February 1986 issue of *Socialist Action* ("Deregulation in the airline industry: Is it safe to fly?" by Mark Harris).

I am a maintenance worker at Scandinavian Airlines System's (SAS) engine overhaul shop in Stockholm, Sweden, and I have a professional as well as political/union interest in these matters.

Deregulation and union busting among the American carriers are relatively well-known among union people here. Europe is heading the same way as the United States, with some small but very important differences.

First, all main European carriers are more or less controlled by the state. British Airways, KLM, and Lufthansa are said to be going private but still, these companies are a matter of "national business," which means, of course, that deregulation could not be allowed to completely destroy one or another.

SAS is owned by Sweden, Norway and Denmark, partly by the government but mainly by private investors.

The main target of deregulation in Europe are workers' benefits. Spokespersons for European companies state very clearly that "in order to compete with the leading American carriers, we must be more cost-efficient."

Iberia Airlines of Spain has cut an estimated 30 percent of its workforce, as well as slashing salaries across the board. KLM and Lufthansa have been struck by several conflicts in recent years because of cuts.

SAS is, of course, faced with the same future, but there has not been any major attempt on the

part of the bosses to attack the workers. This is because SAS is highly profitable and there is no immediate threat to this. But in order to clear the ground for what has to come, a number of programs to beef up "competitiveness" have been launched.

This has, in combination with the general trend toward a belt-tightening policy in Sweden and Denmark, provoked a number of conflicts. Only this spring, flight attendants, check-in clerks, maintenance workers and catering workers in Stockholm and Copenhagen have been involved in struggles against management's attempt to cut staff, change the work rules, etc.

I look forward to reading more on this subject in *Socialist Action*.

Göran Karrman
Stockholm, Sweden

On Swabeck

Dear editor,

In my opinion, the memorial article on Arne Swabeck (May 1986) *Socialist Action* was not worthy of this pioneer revolutionary socialist.

The young generation of working-class party militants in the Socialist Workers Party looked to Arne Swabeck and the older generation of working-class leaders of the Trotskyist movement as role models for their behavior in the labor movement and in the building of a revolutionary socialist current in the United States.

Arne Swabeck was one of the stalwarts who broke with Stalinism to create a vanguard that would build the necessary leadership to advance the working-class struggle on the road to socialism. In his long life, he never veered from this course.

Swabeck exhibited those qualities most admired by work-

ers: conscientiousness in party-building activity and a natural modesty about his role in the struggle for socialism. He knew that it is the working class that must make the fundamental changes to liberate us from the chains of wage slavery.

It would be well to remember that Trotsky and Lenin parted ways in 1903. They were fortunate that the Russian working class took only 14 years to challenge Czarism, thereby reuniting them. In this country the struggle is taking a little longer.

We should keep this in mind when we consider Arne Swabeck's differences with our historic views on Chinese Stalinism.

The memory of Arne Swabeck, for his devotion to the cause of socialism, should remain green for the next generation of worker militants.

Henry Austin,
Detroit, Mich.

A response

Dear Henry Austin,

In writing the Arne Swabeck obituary for *Socialist Action*, I tried to place the emphasis on his positive achievement and contributions to the socialist cause. The article contains 14 paragraphs describing his political history before he became a Maoist and only five describing the last 20 years of his life.

I believe that this was a division that was more than fair to his memory. It is incorrect to make a comparison of Swabeck's life with that of Lenin and Trotsky. Trotsky spent his last 23 years as a Leninist, but Swabeck moved from Leninism to Maoism. This is a big difference.

Milton Alvin,
Los Angeles



Socialist Action/Dave Walsh

Over 200 people attend a memorial meeting for George Breitman in New York City on June 7. Breitman, a major leader of the U.S. Trotskyist movement, died on April 9 of a heart attack.

Breitman

Dear editor,

On June 1, comrades and friends of George Breitman met in Los Angeles to commemorate his life and to celebrate his more than 50 years in the world Trotskyist movement. The meeting was organized by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and was attended by several political organizations, including Socialist Action.

The speakers all highlighted George's tremendous contribution to the fight for socialism in this country. Many spoke about how George's writings had helped them find the road to socialism. But one speaker, a young blind Black man, Muhammad Karriem, made a special impact on the gathering.

Reading his prepared comments from braille, Muhammad, who was this year's class valedictorian at Narbonne High School in Harbor City, Calif., said he first studied George's books in 1981

when he was seeking information on Malcolm X's life and ideas.

He told the meeting how George had helped him understand through telephone conversations and letters, that there is "not just a struggle between races...but the struggle is really between avacious capitalists who use racism and sexism as weapons in order for them to continue their exploitation and oppression of the working class of the world."

He went on to say, "Let us keep in mind the memory of George Breitman as we go into a sometimes hostile world to battle the forces of oppression."

Muhammad concluded his remarks by reading the moving lines from what is popularly known as the Black national anthem, the song "Lift Every Voice and Sing":

*"Facing the rising sun
till a new day is born,
We must march on
Until victory is won."*

Kathleen O'Nan,
Los Angeles

Socialist Action sponsors West Coast conference

By AMANDA CHAPMAN

On Saturday, June 14, Socialist Action hosted a highly successful West Coast Socialist Educational Conference. The event, which took place in San Francisco, drew participants from throughout California.

The conference was preceded Friday night by a report back from Nicaragua given by Hector Tobar, a bilingual teacher; Rod Holt, an antiwar activist; and Alan Benjamin, the editor of *Socialist Action* newspaper. The speakers had been invited to tour Nicaragua by the leadership of the pro-Sandinista Rural Workers Association (Asociacion de Trabajadores del Campo).

The conference on Saturday consisted of three sessions. The first was a lecture on the relevance of Marxism today by Ann Robertson, a professor of philosophy at San Francisco State University and a member of Socialist Action.

Robertson's lecture revolved around the question: "Does the working class always need to maintain its political independence?" She concluded, "Once workers are mobilized, the capitalist class always becomes counterrevolutionary, so that workers have to fight them politically and economically through their own independent organizations."

Following a buffet lunch, there was a lecture on the revolt in South Africa by Michael Schreiber, assistant editor of *Socialist Action* newspaper. Schreiber's lecture mainly dealt with the question: "Is socialist revolution on the agenda in South Africa?"

Schreiber demonstrated that the root cause of oppression in South Africa is capitalism and that the revolution in South Africa must, therefore, be a socialist revolution as well as one for national liberation.

Carl Finamore, antiwar activist and member of Socialist Action, was the last speaker at the conference. Finamore spoke on the prospects for socialism in America, giving a history of the lessons of Marxism from the Paris Commune of 1871 to the Second World War.

Regarding the apparent malaise in the movement today, Finamore said, "The obstacles to revolution are on the level of political understanding and of leadership—not of fundamental changes in the working class or the capitalist class."

At the end of each session, there was time for an open-mike discussion. Two participants asked to join Socialist Action. Newcomers from the Bay Area were invited to attend weekly classes on socialist perspectives at Socialist Action's San Francisco headquarters.

For more information call: (415) 821-0458. Transcribed portions of the educational conference will be printed in future issues of *Socialist Action*.

We've reached our goal!

Socialist Action has just completed another successful subscription drive. Since the drive began in February, 258 new subscribers have begun reading *Socialist Action* every month.

Socialist Action members around the country sold subscriptions to many of the activists they met while building actions against the U.S. war drive and for a woman's right to choose abortion. During the drive, as *Socialist Action* continued its featured coverage of the strike by Local P-9 against Hormel, several P-9 workers and supporters in Minnesota decided to subscribe.

Many readers who find that they agree with the ideas in our paper have sent in contributions to aid our efforts. Several branches of *Socialist Action* have been able to organize ongoing classes for new readers who are interested in discussing socialist ideas.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

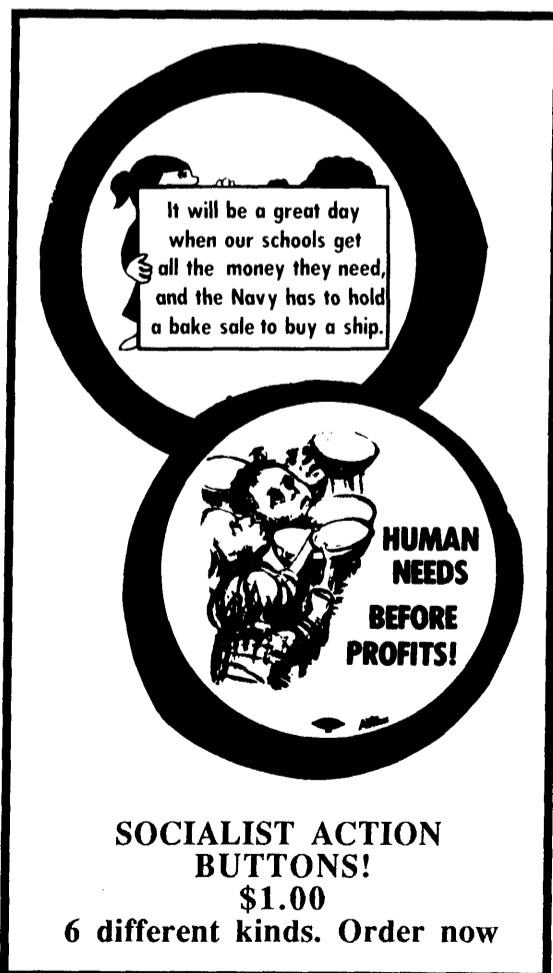
12 issues for \$6.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____



Socialist Action, 3435 Army St. Rm. 308, San Francisco, Ca. 94110

You're in not-so-good hands as insurers extort public

By HAYDEN PERRY

While Reagan points to the menace of terrorists overseas, citizens at home are facing fear and extortion from one of the most rapacious bands of conspirators to plot against the American people. This is the insurance industry, which is holding consumers for ransom by raising insurance costs to exorbitant levels or refusing to insure at any price.

Insurers in 1985, for example, raised a Florida plumber's premium from \$12,794 a year to over \$27,000, although he has never filed a claim. They have raised liability insurance costs for the city of Miami Beach from \$750,000 to almost \$2 million. They have refused insurance to 100 ambulance service operators in California.

Thousands of professionals and small businessmen have been put in an impossible dilemma. The law says certain enterprises must carry liability insurance. But the providers of insurance have gone on strike. An ambulance operator who was refused insurance wailed that "it does not jibe with normal business practice."

Normal business practice is to maximize profits at all costs. The insurance business is no exception. However, only part of the insurance companies' profits come from collecting premiums. Their major profits come from investing the premiums wherever the returns are highest.

The insurance industry has plenty to invest. In 1981 more than 4800 companies took in a combined \$200 billion. This gave them a total capital of \$700 billion, more than the combined assets of the 50 largest American industrial corporations. Only the banks handle more money than the insurance companies.

Invisible bankers

Andrew Tobias, in a critique of the insurance industry, calls the insurance companies "invisible bankers." Unlike depositors in a bank, who expect to get their money back with interest, buyers of property/casualty insurance cannot get any of their money back unless they meet with misfortune. Their money becomes the property of the insurance companies to use as they see fit.

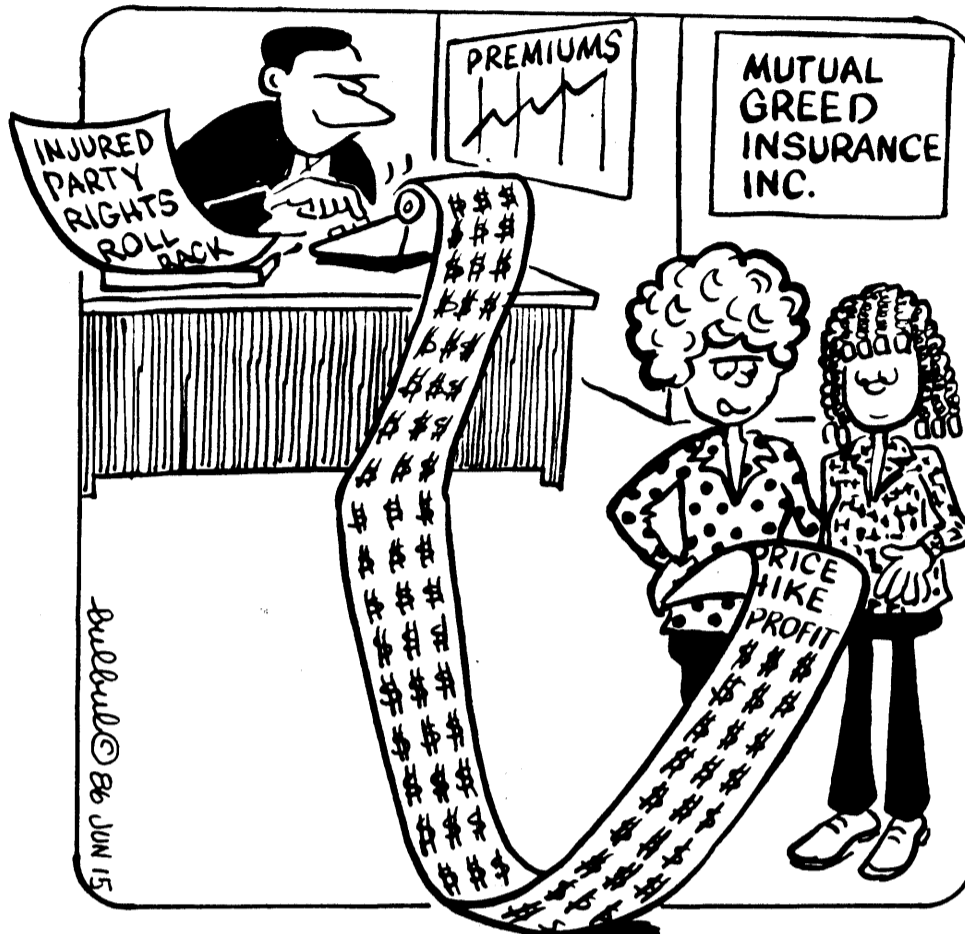
The insurance companies have staggering sums of money at their disposal. It is estimated that the Prudential Insurance Co. alone invests \$38 million a day. They dominate trading in the stock market, causing wild gyrations as they move vast sums in and out of stocks and bonds. They decide the shape of our cities as they finance construction of major office buildings. Many buildings are owned outright by the insurance behemoths.

Insurance capital has merged with industrial capital as most of the major corporations have bought into the industry. International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. alone owns 22 insurance companies.

The insurance executives operate behind such a curtain of secrecy that no one has been able to establish the true costs or profits of these corporations. Officers of mutual-fund companies, where the policy holders are the legal owners, elect themselves to office, determine their successors, and are accountable to absolutely no one for their actions.

Political clout

For over a hundred years the federal government has been unable or unwilling to regulate the insurance industry. In 1979 the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) began to publish statistics on insurance costs. The insurance moguls did not like this and exerted a little of their political



THE INSURANCE CRISIS

clout. They got the Senate Commerce Committee to ban the FTC from further work in this area.

Later, the Senate passed legislation to further protect the insurance industry's privacy. Under the McCarran-Ferguson Act the insurance industry is exempted from provisions of the antitrust laws.

Only 50 state commissions, usually dominated by the industry, "regulate" this multibillion dollar industry—with all its national and international ramifications. In

California it takes over four months for the insurance commission to even respond to consumer complaints. The insurance crisis and public pressure forced the insurance commissioner to quit last June. His deputy took over. She is a former vice president of an insurance company. The fox still guards the chicken coop.

add office costs, salesperson's commissions, and reserves for possible future claims to arrive at a loss. But they don't include their income from investments. When this is factored in, the \$5.5 billion loss becomes a \$1.7 billion profit.

Despite this, the insurance industry complains it has been paying more in claims than it has taken in from premiums. It says it lost \$5.5 billion in 1985.

Actually, the companies have never paid out more than they took in. They have to

"The insurance industry has tremendous financial and political power. But their arrogance will backfire on them."

California it takes over four months for the insurance commission to even respond to consumer complaints.

The insurance crisis and public pressure forced the insurance commissioner to quit last June. His deputy took over. She is a former vice president of an insurance company. The fox still guards the chicken coop.

Trivial claims?

With so much money in their coffers and such a cozy relation with the regulators, why are the insurance companies raising rates and refusing to write policies? Insurance companies say they are losing money because greedy citizens sue for the most trivial injuries and soft-hearted juries award them million-dollar settlements.

The real reason is that the insurance companies are no longer reaping the super profits from investments that they did in the early 1980s. At that time they lowered premiums to compete for insurance dollars. Now they want to soak their customers to bring up the overall return on their capital.

While a few multimillion dollar judgments have made headlines, most large awards have been reduced by judges or

overturned on appeal. The Consumer Federation of America has concluded that there has only been a modest 15 percent to 20 percent increase in malpractice settlements—in line with the inflated costs of medical care.

add office costs, salesperson's commissions, and reserves for possible future claims to arrive at a loss. But they don't include their income from investments. When this is factored in, the \$5.5 billion loss becomes a \$1.7 billion profit.

Greed without limits

But corporate greed has no limits. Insurance companies dislike paying on claims. Their model customer is the safe driver who pays them \$300 a year and never has an accident. In the course of 20 years the customer has given the company a gift of \$6000 with nothing to show for it except "peace of mind."

The insurance companies cannot eliminate all claims by all policy holders, but they are determined to make those claims as small as possible. They would like to eliminate all compensation for pain and suffering. Put a cap on awards in malpractice suits. Fine people who file "frivolous" suits. Make any large award by a jury look like a criminal ripoff of the insurance company.

The industry has launched a powerful offensive to convince the public that greedy claimants must be curbed before reasonably

priced insurance becomes available. Every section of the establishment has been enlisted in the campaign against victims of misfortune. As expected, President Reagan calls for federal restrictions on claimants benefits, but opposes federal regulation of the insurance industry.

AFL-CIO defaults on leadership

More disappointing is the stand of the AFL-CIO. The trade-union leadership has lined up with the bosses on this issue, and urges that caps and limits be put on workers who seek compensation for losses and injuries.

California citizens last month were stampeded into voting for Proposition 51, which restricts the ability of accident victims to collect judgments already won when more than one party is at fault. Californians voted this concession to the insurance industry because they believe they will get lower rates.

They will be disappointed. Nebraska and Iowa passed similar laws, but insurance rates in those states continue to climb. The insurance companies have said this one concession is only the beginning. They will keep up the pressure—raising rates and refusing insurance—and increasing the volume of their propaganda barrage until the costs of accidents are borne mainly by the victims.

The insurance industry has tremendous financial and political power. But their arrogance will backfire on them. Enraged customers are turning a spotlight on the practices of this industry that dictate whether an enterprise survives or not. The industry is being challenged and there is talk of more effective regulation.

In June, the state of Florida told insurance companies to cut their rates 40 percent on some coverage. The insurance companies' response was swift and arrogant. Eight companies declared they would no longer write policies for Florida citizens.

Obviously, it takes more than action by individual states to bring the insurance companies under control. Federal legislation is demanded.

But an industry that wields the economic and political power of the insurance conglomerates will not easily submit to regulation by anyone. The ultimate solution to the insurance crisis must be the nationalization under workers' control of the insurance industry and the industrial/financial complex that controls it.



A Mass Action Strategy for Peace, Jobs and Justice

This pamphlet by Carl Finamore discusses the road to building a mass movement to stop the warmakers. (24 pp., 75 cents; \$1.10 + postage)

Order from: Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110