Supreme Court puts gag on right to choose

Israel after the Gulf war.

Blacks protest stalling by apartheid regime

Defend Reproductive rights!

By JONI JACOBS

On May 24, women’s right to abortion—and free speech rights of all Americans—suffered a devastating blow. In a 5-4 decision, the United States Supreme Court upheld federal regulations prohibiting healthcare workers at federally funded, low-cost family-planning clinics from counseling women on the option of abortion.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who wrote the majority decision, said it is not a violation of the Constitution for the government to selectively fund programs based on what it believes to be in the public interest. "In so doing, the government has not discriminated on the basis of viewpoint; it has merely chosen to fund one activity to the exclusion of the other," Rehnquist wrote. He added that the regulations do not infringe on either the free-speech rights of healthcare workers or the still-legal right of women to abortion.

"Government manipulation" But in a dissenting opinion, Justice Harry A. Blackman called the decision a "deliberate manipulation by the government of the dialogue between a woman and her physician."

"In its haste further to restrict the right of every woman to control her reproductive freedom and bodily integrity, the majority disregards established principles of law and contends this court’s declared cases to arrive at this preordained result," Blackman wrote.

The controversy stems from the 1970 Title X Public Health Services Act, Section 1008 of which states, "None of the funds appropriated under this title shall be used in programs where abortion is a method of family planning." In 1988, the Reagan administration interpreted the law to include counseling and advice on abortion.

According to the revised regulations, healthcare workers in federally funded family-planning projects must tell women who ask about abortion that "the project does not consider abortion an appropriate method of family planning and therefore does not counsel or refer for abortion."

The ruling affects 4000 clinics nationwide, which serve the medical needs for 4.5 million women. Most clinics are in areas with (continued on page 5)

By MALIK MIAH

The white minority regime in South Africa continues to stall, as pressure mounts for it to make major concessions to the oppressed Black majority. As a result, the Afri- can National Congress (ANC), which had been pursuing a process of negotiations with the government, has been forced to take a more confrontational stance.

On May 18, the ANC announced it would refuse to discuss a new constitution with the regime until progress was achieved on its demand that the government put a stop to the violence in the Black townships, which has claimed at least 1000 lives so far this year.

The ANC and other groups supporting a democratic South Africa have announced plans for a consumer boycott, demonstrations, and strikes—focusing on power failures—on June 15-16, the anniversary of the massacre of Black demonstrators during the 1976 Soweto uprising.

Anti-apartheid groups charge that the white regime is responsible for the township violence—which the local and international press falsely call "Black-on-Black" violence. For that reason, when the regime called a conference on May 24-25 to discuss the violence, the anti-apartheid groups refused to participate.

Government security forces, in fact, have aborted attacks by the right-wing Inkatha Freedom Party, which is based among a section of the Zulu population. It is common for Inkatha members and supporters to go on the rampage without any police interference.

But as soon as the community defends itself, the police suddenly materialize to arrest and beat up the victims.

After criticizing the ANC for its call for self-defense units, President F.W. de Klerk announced that traditional weapons (spears and battle axes) used by Black vigilantes would be made illegal in the Johannesburg area. But he did not prohibit the weapons in Natal province, where Inkatha is primarily based.

It is noteworthy that the so-called traditional weapons used by Inkatha supporters had been banned by the white regime for one century until September 1990—that is, after the national liberation groups became legal and active in South African politics. Most of the deaths, as well, have been a result of gunfire—but pointing to police and army complicity in the violence.

Winnie Mandela convicted

Meanwhile, on May 13, the white justice system convicted Winnie Mandela, wife of ANC leader Nelson Mandela, of kidnapping four youths who were taken to her home in 1988 and severely beaten.

Mandelwa was acquitted of the more serious charge of assault to intent commit grievous bodily harm. Instead, she was convicted of the charge of "accessory after the fact." Mandela said she was not present at the time of the beatings, but 200 miles away. There are no juries under South African law. All white jurists were abolished in 1969. The white judge hears the case and decides the verdict.

Mandela was sentenced to six years in prison, which she is appealing. "As long as you know that I did not assault any child," she said afterwards, "that’s all that matters to me."

Whatsoever the facts, it is total hypocrisy for the white regime and its friends abroad to talk of "justice" being possible in the
Alcohol, tobacco ads target minority health and safety? What is your right to protect our children from the tobacco and alcohol profiteers? These rights must be protected as well. Cigarette and liquor advertising must be banned from minority streets by law. The big corporations, through a compulsory tax on their profits, must be forced to pay for clinics to treat people suffering from the effects of their products. The corporations must also pay for a thoroughgoing educational campaign so that people, beginning in grade school, will be informed about the dangers of smoking and excessive alcohol use. Only then can the tobacco and alcohol manufacturers claim the right to talk about our rights.

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SUPREME COURT OUTLAWS HIPPOCRITICAL OATH

Fightback
By Sylvia Weinstein

The U.S. Supreme Court’s May 24 decision has made medical ethics illegal. The El Supremo Court has ruled that any family-planning clinic that accepts federal funds can’t reveal that abortion does exist, even though it is vitally necessary to save the life of the pregnant woman.

Even if a woman is 12 years old, diabetic, AIDS positive, with a serious heart disease, or a hard drug user—and even if the fetus is so deformed it is unlikely to live outside the womb, she cannot be told about the option of abortion. Clinics that receive any federal funds have had their lips sealed when it applies to poor women.

This decision makes an executive ruling by President Reagan in 1988 on the law of the land. This is not something that was pasted by Congress, although those gutless wonders in Congress could have gotten rid of this neanderthal ruling when it was first initiated by President Reagan.

Now the Democrats on Capital Hill are strutting around saying that they are going to pass a bill to abolish the regulations which were first adopted in 1988 by the Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Actually, federal funds have not been used for abortion since 1970. What makes the Supreme Court ruling even more odious is that it says that any clinic which receives any federal funding cannot even mention the possibility of abortion.

For 20 years, the Democrats in Washington have had the opportunity to pass a bill which would have restored federal funds for abortions for poor women. They have not done this, even though the Democrats have been the majority in Congress for all of those years. This proves the futility of relying on so-called friends of a woman’s right to choose.

Why is it in the interests of the capitalist rulers to make forced pregnancy the law—as it was in Rumania under Ceausescu, or as the Pope is trying to impose on Poland? Could it be that Bush is really pro-life and wants to save little children? It is estimated that 400,000 children in Iraq will die this year if that country does not receive aid to save them. Has Bush made even the slightest effort to save these children?

Most important to the capitalist class is to continue receiving massive tax-breaks at the expense of the working class. These are the people cutting healthcare for all workers and poor people, cutting social services down to the bone, cutting the very existence of public education, cuts in the pitiful allowance for the children in the poorest families, and so on. Why?

All of these anti-human measures are designed to decrease taxes for the wealthy rulers of this country. At the same time, taxes are raised on the middle class and working class to pay for more savings and loans, tax, and airline bailouts.

It is necessary to provide poopy “moral issues” like “the right to life” and “freedom of speech” for racist and sexist assaults on Blacks, and against all those others branded by capitalism society.

It is all designed to provide a “moral cover” for the fascist defendants of capitalism who will be set loose by panicked capitalists when the workers and people and their allies inevitably begin to fight back.

That’s what the anti-choice zealots are—the social breeding ground for social incipient fascism.

Our class must organize, massively, independently, and in the streets to regain our rights—if we are not to be pushed down farther and farther. We have to mobilize as we have before, independently of the two political parties in power, to fight for our human rights.

Behind the Lines
By Michael Schreiber

Do you remember the flick in which man-about-town Claude Rains has fallen for wealthy spin- ners Better Fay and her rich husband in Rio? The music rises, if I recall, the moment that Claude Rains snuffs two cigarettes in his mouth, lights them both with one giant inhalation, and then hands one of them, oh, naively to his paramour. And then, with a cigarette in one hand and a hankie in the other, our hero confides his love.

Nowadays (I have it on good authority) cigarettos and alcohol are less accepted as accessories to courtship. In fact, cigarette consumption has been declining over all, dropping 11 percent between 1980 and 1988, according to the Department of Agriculture. And trade publications report that consumption of liquor and wine fell 9 percent from 1980 to 1987.

The tobacco and alcohol corporations are quite alarmed at the threat to their profits. And so, they’re keeping their advertising bureau busy finding new gimmicks and new areas for sales. The tobacco companies alone spent some $2.5 billion a year on their ad campaigns.

Recently, an even larger portion of the advertising has been directed at the poorer working-class communities—especially black neighborhoods. Alchoholism is often widespread in these areas, and tobacco sales continue to flourish (44 percent of black adults smoke).

A study released last month by Oakland, Calif., Supervisor Dan Perata found that 60 percent of the billboards in Oakland’s minority neighborhoods advertise alcohol and cigarettes. In contrast, only 11 percent of the billboards on upscale Piedmont Avenue advertise the products.

One survey in Baltimore determined that 70 percent of the city’s billboards were located in poor, inner-city minority areas. Of those billboards, 76 percent advertised liquor and cigarettes. Researchers in Detroit, Newark, Boston, and other cities have found similar results.

Dr. Harold P. Freeman, a Harlem surgeon, president of the American Cancer Society, points out, “The cigarette industry just wants to make money because they know that poor and unprotected people are their main customers. And Black people are disproportionately poor and unprotected.”

The campaign for the last 30 years, mainly because of smoking, the lung cancer rate has increased four times faster among Blacks as among whites.

At the same time, alcoholism has been identified as the single greatest health threat to Black people and a growing menace to Hispanics, according to a recent Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. A 1987 study found that Black men have the highest death rate from cirrhosis of the liver than whites.

Grassroots activists
But people are fighting back. Last year in Philadelphia, for instance, Black activists spearheaded a successful campaign to keep the R.J. Reynolds company from test-marketing cigarettes in their community.

This year’s Cinco de Mayo (May 5) parade through San Francisco’s Hispanic district had an anti-smoking theme. Bystanders in the crowd were handed brochures describing the dangers of tobacco.

The parade organizers refused all advertising from the tobacco companies (who are generally among the most prominent corporate sponsors of events in the community).

In Harlem, the Rev. Calvin Buttis of the Abyssinian Baptist Church has organized a group of senior citizens at the point of the parade. Every Saturday, they use the paint to cover up alcohol and tobacco advertisements on the billboards within five blocks of any church, school, or playground.

As a result, one liquor firm withdrew its advertising from the area, and a billboard owner agreed to display less offensive posters. Other local fightback campaigns have had similar small successes.

“To protect or to serve?”
A broad national campaign against the tobacco and liquor advertisement has yet to emerge. That the death merchants are clearly worried. After California voters authorized a $2 billion “Proposition 65” campaign to place anti-smoking warnings on billboards and in television spots, tobacco lobby decided to strike back.

In a statement that was printed on the editorial pages of Black community newspapers, Philip Morris charged that the anti-smoking campaign had surrendered to “starch stereotypes.” The proof? The California campaign sought to target African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans—impugning the right of those people to freely “choose” whether to smoke or not without having to listen to government health recommendations.

The death merchants have thus “come a long way, baby” from the days of Claude Rains and Bette Davis. Now, they claim, their message is “pro-choice” and “pro-individual liberties.”

Furthermore, as if we’ve haven’t heard enough, Philip Morris has launched a national tour featuring a copy of the U.S. Bill of rights. This extraordinary stunt (as they intend) will put us on the hook for the very things that we fought in the struggle for human rights.

As we’ve said before, it is the working class and all those people who struggle in the movements taken for “индивидуальностей.”

And yet the fight isn’t over. Health and safety? What is your right to protect our children from the tobacco and alcohol profiteers? These rights must be protected as well. Cigarette and liquor advertising must be banned from minority streets by law. The big corporations, through a compulsory tax on their profits, must be forced to pay for clinics to treat people suffering from the effects of their products.

The corporations must also pay for a thoroughgoing educational campaign so that people, beginning in grade school, will be informed about the dangers of smoking and excessive alcohol use. Only then can the tobacco and alcohol manufacturers claim the right to talk about our rights.

Alcohol, tobacco ads target minority health and safety? What is your right to protect our children from the tobacco and alcohol profiteers? These rights must be protected as well. Cigarette and liquor advertising must be banned from minority streets by law. The big corporations, through a compulsory tax on their profits, must be forced to pay for clinics to treat people suffering from the effects of their products. The corporations must also pay for a thoroughgoing educational campaign so that people, beginning in grade school, will be informed about the dangers of smoking and excessive alcohol use. Only then can the tobacco and alcohol manufacturers claim the right to talk about our rights. —INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT
Antiwar GIs Erik Larsen and Tahan Jones

Face military corps “kangaroo court”

By JEFF MACKLER

Corporal Tahan Jones, one of the nation’s most outspoken GI resisters, turned himself in to the U.S. military at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, on May 15. This time, the handcuffs and restraining belts used the month before to haul him off in a local courthouse were on him.

Jones’ current career as an unemployed lawyer has been interrupted by the “justice” of the Marine Corps. He has been assigned to the Generals and sometime courts-martial. Recent protests included a letter to President Bush signed by 33 Catholic bishops, which expressed “shock and horror” at the treatment of “the brave and just.”

The Marine Corps didn’t bother to inform Jones that he had been charged—that same day, in fact, the Corps at Camp Lejeune on the basis of allegations made by alleged conscientious objectors. He was ordered back to duty and told to return to the Corps facility.

The Corps, which has a long history of preventing conscientious objectors from exercising their constitutional right to refuse to participate in the slaughter of the people of the Middle East, was within 24 hours of reporting to the Marine Corps, and in blatantly disregard of court motions filed on his behalf, Jones was shipped to Camp Lejeune, N.C., 3,000 miles away from his legal advisors.

Five days after Jones reported to the Marines, his attorney, John Marks, was called to court to request a writ of habeas corpus to prevent his client from being separated from his defense support. It was only then that government lawyers bumbled informed him that Jones had been charged with a capital offense.

Kangaroo court

Of the 24 initial GI resisters who were sent to Camp Lejeune, 18 are now imprisoned there with plea-bargained sentences of up to 20 years for the preposterous humiliation of what Erik Larson’s attorney, Robert Rivkin, describes the Marines’ “three-pronged criteria of ‘insubordination, insubordination, and insubordination.’”

The remainder of the Camp Lejeune detainees await court-martial trials.

Rivkin, describing the nation’s most prominent military legal authorities, describes the

by SUZANNE FORSYTH

SAN FRANCISCO—On May 17, a rally was held to announce Socialist Action candidate Joni Jacobs’ campaign for mayor. Fifty people attended the spirited gathering at the Socialist Action headquarters.

Jonas began her speech by explaining the need for a political alternative to the Democrats and Republicans: “Why do people feel the electoral choices are meaningless? I think it’s because we know the candidates of either of the two parties don’t represent our interests.”

“We have candidates,” she pointed out, “from all areas of the political spectrum—conservatives, moderates, liberals, progressives—who are for the right reasons, not to represent us, the working people. But who do they really represent? They represent [those] who want to keep this class system in place.”

Jacobs went on to detail the objectives of “friends of labor” candidates, such as current Mayor Art Agnos: “This year again,” she said, “Agnos has frozen the wages of city workers, claimed the city has no money and has no ‘fair share’ of the budget crisis. The wage freeze will save 70 percent of the budget deficits. Wouldn’t it be more fair if those who made 70 percent of the money in San Francisco, who benefited from 70 percent of the tax loopholes, shouldered 70 percent of the burden?”

Jacobs explained Socialist Action’s alternative. “Our campaign is a campaign of ideas. We think that society and government should be reorganized to benefit the vast majority of people. This is not only possible, it’s affordable—and most of all, it’s necessary to save our planet and all its people from the destruction capitalism brings.”

“That’s what socialism is all about—using our resources, both natural and industrial, for the benefit of the vast majority... We must build a movement which will hopefully lead to an uprising against the capitalist order of government and put in its place a system that puts human needs before profits.”

The program also included comments by supporters of Jonas’ campaign, Lisa Kunstler, who told the meeting she would “be shoes to fill” succeeding Jonas as chair of the San Francisco Socialist Party.

Two students who met Jacobs through campus defense activities spoke about the work of working people of San Francisco, the blood and muscle of this city, declared City College student Christina Dahlby, Mary Doran, a San Francisco State University student, said she supported the campaign based on her belief that “it is not only for women’s rights, but for all human rights.”

Another supporter to address the rally was Hillary Diamond, staff director of the Mobilization to Bring the Troops Home Now, which organized demonstrations against the Gulf War. She is now working to free conscientious objectors Tahan Jones and Erik Larsen.

Diamond criticized the actions of both Democrats and Republicans in support of the war, including current Mayor Art Agnos’ veto of a resolution declaring San Francisco a sanctuary for conscientious objectors. “A strap-on to the military,” she said, “The two political parties ‘can’t even defend our basic rights, it’s time to support one that will.’

Jacobs urged all those against injustice to join the campaign. “We are [asking] students, anti-war activists, feminists, ethnic minorities, and working people to endorse our campaign,” she said. “You don’t have to be a socialist to support our campaign. You just have to believe that human needs must be placed before profits. We need you to act on that belief now and join with us to begin building a better world.”

Throughout June, supporters will be on city street corners petitioning to get Jonas Jacobs on the ballot. Help us reach as many people as possible with Socialist Action’s political alternative. Call (415) 821-0458 to get involved!

S.F. socialists kick off election campaign

IN VIOlATION OF all regulations, the Marines have held two Article 32 (preliminary) hearings in the case of Erik Larsen without Larsen’s attorneys even being present. Another hearing has been set without Larsen’s agreement for June 4.

In a May 23 letter to the assigned investigating officer, Major J.F. Blanch, Larson’s lawyer 2 protected the above violations and Major Blanch’s “capricious” rejection of a defense request for a continuance until June 17.

Major Blanch rejected the June 17 date and ordered the trial to begin later in the week leaving Camp Lejeune on the following day.

“What you seem to have overlooked,” Rivkin wrote, “is that Larson is facing charges that could result in very severe consequences, even a death sentence, and that his right to process rights take precedence over your convenience. If it is inconvenient for you to hear this case, the appropriate action is for convening authority to appoint another Article 32 investigating officer.”

Rivkin pointed out that Blanche proceeded to deny all 24 witnesses requested by the defense “before having heard any arguments by the defense and even before Pfc. Larson’s civilian attorney had a chance to appear for his client.” ... A non-Article 32 investigating officer might have issued such a ruling out of ignorance. For a military judge to have issued such a ruling where the accused faces a possible death sentence is an outrage against the law and the law.

Rivkin reminded Major Blanche that Larsen had secured a Federal District Court order that the Marine Corps had violated his client’s due process rights. The Marines were given 60 days to hold a hearing on Larson’s application for CO status. Apparently, the Marines want to ram through the required Article 32 hearing and the actual court martial trial before this time.

Rivkin is calling on the Marines to “relinquish their current investigating officer of his duties and appoint someone who is fair and impartial,” not to mention acceptable.

The cases of Tahan Jones and Erik Larsen have formed a joint defense committee which is preparing for a long and costly legal and political battle. Estimated legal expenses are $60,000. Contributions are urgently requested.

Checks should be made payable to the “Jones/Larsen Defense Committee,” Box 224, 225 South Park Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone (415) 655-1201.
Boston forum highlights S. African and U.S. struggles

‘Racism is the common experience of these two societies’

By Jim Hene

"A Bananista is the same thing as a ghetto. Police running wild and amok and pass-book laws [are] like stop-and-search [in Boston]. Anyone can walk up to you because of how you look and demand that you go up against a wall and be searched. ... They are so many parallels." These words of the Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler captured the thinking of all the participants in the May 2 Boston Socialist Action forum, "The Transformation of South Africa into a New Society.

At the Rev. Hagler’s Church of the United Community, the forum brought together leaders of the South African movement for liberation and leaders of Boston’s Black community.

Dr. Neville Alexander, Chairperson of WOSA (the Workers’ Organization for Socialist Action, in South Africa) was the keynote speaker. He shared the podium with the Rev. Ellis-Hagler, who is an independent candidate for Boston mayor; Minister Rodney X., assistant minister of Muhammad’s Mosque #11; and Prof. Chris Ntse, a supporter of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa. New Nation, a Boston Black newspaper publisher, gave greetings. Roger Sheppard chaired for Socialist Action.

Dr. Alexander was impressed on Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was held, for 11 years. His appearance in the United States was a unique opportunity to hear a veteran anti-apartheid activist and partisan of the South African workers’ movement.

While noting the new opportunities in South Africa today, Alexander spoke of the current situation as a difficult passage. He said that the white rulers’ strategy is to divert the forces of change through fragmentation among ethnic lines, and also to try to develop a sell-out layer of leaders who will accept minor changes that leave the fundamental power relations intact.

Promoting workers’ interests

The recent founding of WOSA [see Socialist Action, March 1991] represents a potentially important counter-weight to the maneuvers of the ruling class. WOSA, while still modest in forces, was founded to give a political expression to the workers’ movement.

Prof. Ntse remarked that among the many political groups in South Africa, “what WOSA is doing is coming out very clearly that South Africa has to be a socialist state.”

For Dr. Alexander, the current changes must be part of a strategy to form a united front and to gain power for the workers’ movement. “We support and will mobilize support for those aspects of negotiations [with the racist government] as a political strategy which will promote the interests of the working class.”

In regard to the idea of a democratically elected constituent assembly, he pointed out: "support it in the most consistent and radical way—more than any other group in the country, in fact. But the alternative [to negotiations alone] is to continue the class struggle for fundamental social reforms such that the black working class in South Africa is strengthened all the time.

Racism, as Dr. Alexander stated, “is the common experience of these two societies, the United States and South Africa.” All of the speakers saw the closeness of the oppression of Black people in the United States and South Africa. The absence of formal apartheid laws in the United States does not prevent oppression.

The ruling powers of South Africa and the United States, who are very friendly to each other, use common methods to keep Black people oppressed. They encourage “Black on Black” violence to divide and destroy. They selectively attack leaders—from the FBI harassment of Black elected officials to the trial of Winnie Mandela.

As the Rev. Hagler said: “There are so many parallels. Economic segregation... Some people have the benefits and the privilege of that economic system and some people are closed out of that economic system. That is what goes on in South Africa, and that is what goes on in the United States—particularly when it comes to Latinos and Blacks and other people of color.”

Dr. Alexander explained, “Although the demographic relationships are very different, the power relationships in these two societies are very similar.”

“The white minority owns virtually the entire country. The future of South Africa could look like the present of this country 30 years after the civil rights movement thought it had succeeded in freeing the Black people.”

For this reason, the struggle to end apartheid must be connected to the kinds of democratic and social struggles Blacks in the United States must wage.

Bringing forces together

In the struggles, the South African and U.S. anti-racist movements can take inspiration from each other.

Rodney X. Hagler that "understanding the national struggle should clarify what our agenda should be at home." He pointed out that the struggles of people in the United States and South Africa are at a specific time when people rise up and leaders come from the movement to communicate with people. They produce a change—regardless of how many guns you have.

So it’s best for us to get our boats lined and really get in this movement—of a change in the world—and South Africa will change. Make no mistake about it!

Apartheid regime stalls

(continued from page 1)

Mandela case. What right does a white judicial body have to try a victim of apartheid? Only the Black majority could do so in a fair manner. Only in a democratic and nonracial South Africa is that possible.

For 27 years, Nelson Mandela and thousands of others were political prisoners held by an immoral regime. Many exiles are still not allowed permanent residency in the country of their birth.

Thousands of Black South Africans have been or are still prisoners of the state. Since May, some 200 political prisoners have been on a hunger strike to protest their incarceration. Meanwhile, the white and Black vigilante gangs continue terrorize the Black population at will and assassinate anti-apartheid activists—get off scot free. The white regime is under pressure to pardon Mandela because of its bloodstained hands. Will it? De Klerk says justice is in the hands of the courts.

Land claims

De Klerk’s regime is maneuvering on the land question as well. It put out a curve in March when it announced plans to abolish the hated racial restrictions on land ownership. Whites (less than 13 percent of the population) control over 86 percent of South African land and property. Blacks will soon be able to legally buy land, if they can afford it.

But the new provisions do not compensate Blacks for land stolen from them by thepartheid system. In addition, white neighbors can still set their own norms and standards after residential segregation is legally ended. In other words, few if any Blacks will be let in.

After protests, De Klerk announced on May 20 that an advisory commission would be established to review land claims by Blacks. They would appeal to the commission to get their land returned. But H.J. Kriel (the Minister of Planning, Provincial Affairs, and Housing) made it clear that the government would not encourage land returns or compensation. “The government,” Kriel said, “is still of the opinion that a program of restitution is not practical or financially viable.”

Racist white farmers in the Western Transvaal took the law in their own hands on May 11. They used arms to try and drive Black laborers off disused farmland. For the first time since 1922, the security forces shot at the armed white thugs.

Over South Africa, squatters are taking over disused farmland to live on and drive back the government now recognizes the existence of almost 900 squatter camps, with more than 2 million residents, in the country. The government expects a significant increase with the repeal of the "influx control" laws allowing Blacks to freely move anywhere, but there are high unemployment and lack of homes.

It is in this context that the ANC’s first national conference since South Africa was banned in 1960 takes place in July in Durban. The youth wing of the organization especially wants more radical action to win a democratic South Africa. The new National Executive will likely be increased from 55 to 100 to accommodate the new generation of leaders.
NOW holds hearings
on third party idea

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

The crisis in American politics has sparked a debate among those who work for social change. One dimension means the National Organization for Women (NOW) has worked for years within the Democratic Party. But they can no longer ignore the growing sentiment among their own members that the Democratic Party bears equal responsibility with the Republicans for the growing homeles- ses, education cutbacks, and other social crises—as well as for the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment, affirmative action poli- cies, and abortion rights.

In the spring, NOW published a Commission on Responsive Democracy at its last national conference. The conference mandated the commission to hold a four-day tour around the country to assess the two-party system and explore whether or not a new party should be established. The commission will propose a resolution for the July national NOW conference.

Commission members include well-known feminists and liberals. Many mem- bers have long histories in the Democratic Party. Participants in the May 4 hearing in San Francisco included NOW president Molly Yard, United Farm Workers Union President Dolores Huerta, Rainbow Coalition politician Mel King, former California Supreme Court Chief Justice Rose Bird, and others.

For the past two years, the NOW leader- ship has abandoned organizing a women’s rights movement independent of the socialist government. It turned away from the strategy of mobilizing hundreds of thousands of pro-choice supporters in demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and locally, and focusing on pressuring legislators and the courts.

The NOW leadership consistently urged members to support candidates in the Party “pro-choice” politicians. The May 24 U.S. Supreme Court decision banning federally- supported abortions in federal institutions underscores how this strategy has failed.

NOW held a hearing in San Francisco, the Com- mission, may propose a new party. "Nothing will put more feminists on the ballot quickly—and push the Democrats and Re- publicans harder," according to Ellie Smeal, leader of the Fund for the Feminist Majority and NOW.

In the meantime, however, the NOW lead- ership is not going to cut ties with the Dem-ocrates. During the San Francisco hearing, Democratic Party Central Committee member Marla Martinez urged support for a Sacramento Democratic Party Manginy, a candidate for the state legislature.

NOW’s decision to support candidates in the Party is seen as a response to the growing threat of the anti-choice movement. The commission cited the pressure of the pro-choice movement as the reason for its decision.

California NOW, both assured Martinez that NOW was doing everything possible to elect Maniginty to office.

By contrast, Joni Jacobs, Socialist Action candidate for mayor of San Francisco, pro- posed the adoption of a policy of no support to any Democrat or Republican. (See her statement on this page.) Her proposal was not well received by the NOW leadership, which indicated privately that it would support Richard Hongisto—a rich, long-time Democrat—for mayor of San Francisco.

Socialist Action’s candidate advocated a complete break with the Democratic and Re- publican parties. What’s required, she said, is the formation of a party that represents all those whose interests are opposed to the capitalist profit system—in other words, a labor party.

Such a party, which would be the first party some NOW members are seeking, would also represent the majority in the United States—all those who work for a living instead of profiting off the work of others.

Such a party, based on the unions, would be able to move a labor movement that could stand up to the capitalist class.

The Democratic Party gives lip service to being the party for women, people of color, labor, etc., until those interests collide with the interests of big business. And then even the lip service stops.

Think about the gains working people have won in this country. Everything that’s ever been won has been through independent action, by not relying on either of the two capitalist parties. The suffrage movement, the labor movement, the anti-Vietnam War movement all show this. But when these movements began, people at the grassroots level, people in the Democratic Party, they had begun to fade.

The history of the women’s movement’s fight for the ERA proved that the notion of reforming the Democratic Party is obsolete. Remember the Nevada 10? We won and cheered ourselves to death to elect these sup- posedly pro-Era state legislators, not one of whom voted for the ERA once in office.

In fact, according to spokespeople here today, they have pointed out the treachery of the Democratic Party, but they fail to draw the obvious conclusion.

If NOW wants to make real change hap- pen, it must break all ties with the Democratic and Republican parties. It must challenge the economic interests which those two parties represent.

I would like the Commission to take seriously the proposal that whether or not the Commission advocates forming a third party, it advise the National NOW Conven- tion this July to not endorse, fund, or work for any candidates from either the Democratic or Republican parties, and to endorse only those candidates who truly represent the interests of working people.

Luckily for the local chapter of NOW, there is such a candidate for mayor this November—me. I’ll be seeking NOW’s en- dorsement, and I’ll need your help to get on the ballot.

You know, people talk about my cam- paign and my socialist ideas as being utopian. But the idea that you can reform the Democratic Party—that’s utopian. Of course we need a new party. What we should be talking about is the nature and character of that party. Thank you.

The following presentation was given by Joni Jacobs at a commission hearing spon- sored by the National Organizations for Women (NOW) in San Francisco on May 4.

My name is Joni Jacobs. I am Socialist Action’s candidate for mayor of San Fran- cisco. It was my hope to show you how this movement could work. And one of the leading organizers for NOW in San Francisco for clinic defense the past two years.

I hope that this obsolete belief that it’s impossible to reform the Democratic Party will not be a barrier for NOW to endorse my can- didacy. Our campaign is reaching out to stu- dents, feminists, people of color, antirac- ism activists, and working people.

I don’t claim to speak for anyone or to represent anyone or anything other than my ideas. But I think those ideas are shared by the vast majority of people in this country.

Those ideas are that we can build a better world if we put human needs before profits. We think that healthcare, housing, educa- tion, and jobs should be the priorities for San Francisco’s City Hall. And we think those basic human needs are affordable if we stop taxing working people and cut taxing those who benefit from the "welfare for the rich" system we have now.

The Democratic Party won’t offer this per- spective because they’re responsible for the transfer of wealth away from working people and into the hands of the rich.

People talk about the devastating effects of Reaganomics. It should more accurately be called "Democratomics" because the Demo- cratic Party-controlled Congress passed every budget and tax restructuring program Reagan asked for.

The leadership of the pro-choice and women’s movements. The pro-choice and women’s movement should use the May 24 decision to galvanize the overwhelmingly pro-choice sentiment in this country into a politically independent, mass movement.

For opensers, the National Organization for Women, which is holding its national con- conference in New York this July, should issue a call for another huge mobilization in the streets of Washington, D.C.

Mass action is necessary to defend the movements that have relied on the demand federal funding for all healthcare programs, including family-planning clinics that perform abortions.

NOW should organize another mass action to protest court ruling.

April 2, 1989, demonstration of 60,000 in San Francisco, Calif. NOW should organize another mass action to protest court ruling.

... Supreme Court (continued from page 1)

high rates of infant mortality, teen-age preg- nancies, and sexually transmitted disease. NOW leaders, director of San Francisco Planned Parenthood, said 40 percent of the women served by Planned Parenthood receive their only healthcare there. "If they can’t come to a family-planning clinic for their reproductive healthcare, then they won’t get any healthcare."

Directors at some clinics said they would defy the ruling and add forego federal funding rather than abide by the regulations. The Tax Act, funding the largest source of federal funds for family planning, providing about $200 million each year. Many clinics receive 40 percent or more of their funding from Title X. These clinics will be forced to set up completely separate facilities and staff for federal and other services and abortion coun- seling.

Roe v. Wade in danger

The ruling leaves little doubt that the court can overrule Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision which legal- ized abortion for American women. No other issue has been as close to this far-reaching, unprecedented setback.

The ruling also raises questions for other federally funded programs, including the National Endowment for the Arts, public de- fenders’ programs, and schools. The decision gives free reign to the governors and...
How U.S. tax code robs from the poor to reward the rich

By HAYDEN PERRY

"Rape of the Taxpayer" by Philip M. Scios, Random House, New York, 1973, p. 460

After running as an anti-tax candidate for governor of California in 1967, Ronald Reagan promptly raised taxes upon assum- ing office. When he realized how bad the pain these new taxes were inflicting, Reagan declared: "Taxes are supposed to hurt." Reagan spoke as one who was supposedly suffering the pain along with all the other Californians. Then an enterprising graduate student checked the public records and found that the Reagans had paid no income tax the previous year. Their income ran into six fig- ures. Embarrassed by the disclosure, Reagan mulled something about "suffering some business losses." But he did not explain how a wealthy man could escape the tax that al- most every wage earner had to pay. Maybe Reagan read "Rape of the Taxpayer" before filing his return. It can be used by the wealthy as a "how to" book de- scribing intricate schemes for keeping mil- lions of dollars out of the reach of the tax collector.

But this was not the intent of the author, Philip Stern. High-priced tax advisors al- ready know all this, and are probably offering additional tax avoidance schemes to their millionaire clients.

"Rape of the Taxpayer" is aimed at the American public, who have to pay the taxes the millionaires escape. Philip Stern is a short and thick-set man. He is outraged at a tax code that robs the poor to reward the rich. He believes it weakens peo- ple's faith in the system.

This book was published in 1973. Since then, several tax loopholes have been closed, but tax favors for the rich have continued through both Democratic and Republican party administrations.

The income tax rate for the higher income brackets has been lowered from 70 percent in 1973 to 28 percent in 1980. Despite much heralded "tax reforms," numerous tax shelters remain to preserve the millionaires' capital and make tax accountants rich.

Municipal bonds for the wealthy

Perhaps the simplest tax avoidance plan was followed by the late Mrs. Horace Dodge, who inherited $100 million from her auto tycoon husband and her tax advisers put the entire bundle in state and municipal bonds paying an average interest rate of five percent.

This gave Mrs. Dodge an income of $5 million a year for the rest of her life. On all these millions she did not pay a penny of income tax. She had been careful to invest in municipal bonds that were exempt from federal taxes.

The right of states and municipalities to issue such bonds was decreed by Congress in 1913 when the first federal income-tax law was passed. It was intended to sweeten the states' opposition and enable them to sell their bonds at lower interest rates.

Only the wealthy buy these bonds. Al- though municipal bonds pay relatively low dividends, a person in a high tax bracket will come out ahead when the tax saving is factored in.

Corporations can also escape taxes this way. In 1971, the Bank of America owned $3 billion worth of municipals and enjoyed a tax-free income of $150 million. In that year, the government lost $2.5 billion in po- tential revenue.

The capital gains trick

Probably the favorite tax-avoidance scam has been the capital gains tax. Capital gains are the profit investors make when they sell stocks or other property at a higher price than they paid. Income from this source is taxed at a lower rate than ordinary income.

At the time this book was written, the highest rate on ordinary income was 70 per- cent. The profit gained from the increased value of real estate or stocks was taxed a maximum of 50 percent. The first $50,000 of profit was tax-free.

Naturally, the wealthy try to convert most of their income into capital gains. Top exec- utives prefer an option to buy company stock at a set price, rather than getting a salary increase or cash bonus. When the stock rises in price, the executive makes a substantial profit that is taxed at the lower capital gains rate.

There are plenty of sharp operators ready to steer the wealthy into lucrative tax shel- ters developed under the capital gains law. Some offer tax advisers a chance to "rent a cow." These cows are in bonds roaming the western ranges. When the creatures are fat- tened up and sold, the profit is treated as cap- ital gains rather than ordinary income.

 empresa headquarters in foreign countries can save multi- nationals millions in American taxes.

Putting company headquarters in foreign countries with lenient tax laws can save multi- nationals millions in American taxes.

This is not the only tax loophole available to millionaires and corporations. The world- wide mania for modern design opened many ways to shelter income overseas. Putting company headquarters in foreign countries with lenient tax laws can save multi-nationals millions in American taxes.

For countries welcome to become the home of each corporate "guest" producers. They don't even question why the Caribbean headquarters of a giant multinational corporation may consist of little more than a mail box and a part- time employee to collect the mail.

U.S. authorities have been snooping around the better known tax havens, such as the Cayman Islands. Consequently, some corporate giants have moved their foreign "headquarters" to more remote locations. The jungle island of New Hebrides, in the South Pacific, has become a favorite venue for some large tax avoiders recently.

Stem says: "When you're on the right side of international tax manipulation, you step into a realm that is about as real as a Hollywood movie. A Corporation's entire existence on paper will sell assets they possess for only a few minutes to a company that will pay in- flation to establish a dummy or shell for the loss exists only in the papers submitted to the tax collector. All these enti- ties are formalities of a single, individual, and the "sales" are internal paper shuffles.

Stem cites an extreme case of this nature in which a Canadian mine, operated by U.S. Gypsum Canadian, loaded gypsum rock into a ship. As the rock fell from the conveyor, it fell through jurisdictional thin air, and was bought by a paper corporation, U.S. Gypsum Export. Finally, as it landed in the hold of the vessel, it was sold to a third business, U.S. Gypsum, Inc.

Thanks to arcane international tax laws passed by Congress, this fleeting purchase and sale of the rock—while it was in mid-air—enabled all these "corporations," really one multinational, to escape $300,000 in taxes in one year.

Special laws for "special" people

Wealthy tax avoiders can only admire the fiscal gymnastics of U.S. Gypsum per- formed, but many would prefer to be granted a personal exemption by Congress. This has been done frequently through special clauses in tax bills.

Movie Mogul Louis B. Mayer saved $2 million in taxes through the "Mayer " clause that never mentioned his name. He granted tax ex- emptions to anyone who engaged in a certain industry in a certain period, attached special investments, in a certain manner, etc. It happens that only Louis B. Mayer met all these qualifications and enjoyed the tax breaks.

Fourteen such clauses were inserted in a tax bill in 1969. While naming no one, the clauses saved Lookheed $14 million and McDonnell $6.5 million.

Of course, these corporations and individu- als have to make an investment to get these tax breaks. Many of the millions of dollars are invested in greedy and venal Congressmen and Senators.

Stem asks a cogent question: "Why do the wealthy win out over the un-rich many times when reasons he lists are the millions it takes to get elected. Only the wealthy can finance, and thus buy, members of Congress who will support him.

Stem also notes that the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee write all tax bills. Reform- ed Congressmen are screened off these committees.

Since only a score of people have to be reached to influence tax legislation, the ulterior-acracy under which these committees operate makes it easy to slip in special clauses for favored clients. The arcane legal language in which tax laws are written make it easy to write them in such a way that they are unnoticed.

The main and most fundamental reason for tax rip-offs of working people is the absence of any labor representatives in the halls of Con- gress. The Senate and House are filled with bands of men and women committed to the continu- ation of an exploitatory society.

As this system prevails, the wealthy will never tax themselves—however loudly they cry for sacrifices by other Ameri- cans.

The more thoughtful among the ruling rich should ponder European history. It was the refusal of the French nobility to submit to taxation that lead to the French revolu- tion. This resulted in the guillotine and all kinds of other "impalpabilities" for the tax avoiders of that day. —

6 SOCIALIST ACTION JUNE 1991
GE, Westinghouse workers discuss negotiations strategy

"Machinists & Electrical workers will present united front to bosses."

The following excerpts are from the May 31, 1961 issue of Our Voice, the newsletter of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 585 at Westinghouse in San Lorenzo, Calif.

Bill Launer, president of the local, and Jesse Wallace, chairman of the executive board, wrote the article. They attended the Erie, Pa., meeting as representatives of their local. The high point of the meeting was a rally attended by over 2000 workers and their supporters.

Contracts covering General Electric and Westinghouse workers in more than two dozen plants in the United States expire at the same time this week.

The discussion among GE and Westinghouse workers is a reflection of broader tendencies in the labor movement, as exemplified in the recent strike by railroad workers and the ferment among airline and other workers.

The editors of Our Voice believe that the events reported below reflect a growing consciousness of the official union's failure and that a return to the class-struggle methods of the 1930s is necessary to halt and reverse labor's retreat.

Copies of this issue of Our Voice can be obtained by writing to Local 585, 2101 Alameda Road, San Jose, CA 95125—[the editors].

On Saturday, April 20, in Erie, Pa., another step was taken on the national level to unify and strengthen the local unions at GE and Westinghouse in preparation for this year's, as well as future, contract negotiations. The host Local was United Electrical Workers (UE) 506.

This gathering was marked by the attendance of leaders of our union and some of the most prominent representatives of the Coordinating Bargaining Committee (CBC), Bill Bywater. In addition, two national figures from the UE were present, General Secretary-Treasurer Amy Newell and Steve Tompkins, who heads UE's Conference Board. All three spoke at the rally.

The meaning of the locally organized unity meetings was clear from the past three contracts the CBC members have suffered a steady decline in their living standards while being the most obvious to local leaders as well as to the members that an alternative was necessary to the concession orientation that the employers were successfully imposing on union members.

What was needed to overcome this situation was the solidarity of the local unions and the involvement of the membership—national—to the pressure to the employers to provide a decent contract, one that increases the standard of living. The local leaders from different parts of the country embarked on a course of action that led to the formation of this historic unity movement, which is still growing.

New policy required

With the building of solidarity and the mobilization of the members came the recognition that the policy of viewing the union and the corporations as "partners" had to be scrapped if any progress was to be made at all.

The degree to which the companies were successful in propelling the myth of a "partnership" between the workers and themselves facilitated lowering our living standard and dividing and demoralizing our members.

It was further recognized that in order to restore our memberships confidence in their unions and make solidarity real, not a hollow slogan, an alternative policy was needed—one that takes the interests of the members as the union's only concern plus the mobilization of all members as our most effective weapons in our defense. After all, the employers have no illusion that we are in a partnership. Their only concern is higher profits at our expense.

GE, Westinghouse workers discuss negotiations strategy

GE, Westinghouse workers discuss negotiations strategy

More needs to be done

What we need to do from now on is educate and explain to our members that our time is coming and we need to be prepared. There will be a fight back. Just as we are organizing ourselves now, more workers will turn to their unions as the only means for an organized and militant defense of our living standard. More and more people are saying, "Enough is enough!" And they are right. We have to be organized to defend ourselves—no one else will do it for us.

What we can do now is form something like committees of correspondence between Westinghouse and GE locals. This could take the form of a regional (or even interunion) newspaper where we can maintain regular contact. Or we could open the pages of our publications to our union headquarters and have a dialogue on how to better organize ourselves.

The historic goal of the union movement is simple and clear: a higher standard of living, better working conditions, a COLA that keeps up with the cost of living, health care and a secure future in our retirement of all workers, whether organized in unions or not.

None of this will come about by thinking that we are just not strong enough to defend ourselves and therefore we must rely on friendly politicians for our salvation. What a cruel joke! With a fighting and determined union leadership and membership we can stand up to the bosses and win. And that is just what we intend to do.
Castro calls on Cuban youth to defend socialism:

'We are a satellite to principles, a satellite to ideas, a satellite to an ideal'

The following speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro was delivered on April 4, 1991, at a celebration of the 29th anniversary of the Cuban Young Communist League (UJC) and the 30th anniversary of the Jose Marti Pioneer Organization. Some 400,000 young people filled Revolution Square in Havana for the occasion.

The speech, reprinted from the April 14 issue of the English-language Graeme International, has been slightly adapted for reasons of space.

Those meeting here are following in the footsteps of those who in 1868 made up the ranks of our Liberation Army, initiating our struggles for independence; those who, in 1895, under Marti’s leadership, continued the battle; those who throughout the life of the subjugated republic fought in the streets together with Mella, Troyo, and so many of our young heroes.

You are like those who fought against Machado’s tyranny, those who fought against Batista’s tyranny, those who swelled the ranks of our Rebel Army.

You are like those who, when most of you were born, held on to the Revolutionary National Militia, joined the ranks of our Revolutionary Armed Forces and fought at Bay of Pigs—the 30th anniversary of which we are celebrating this month.

You are following in the footsteps of those who fought (the counterrevolutionary bands) in the Escambray Mountains, of those who lived through those terrible, difficult days of the Missile Crisis with an unsurpassed fortitude.

You are like those who accompanied Che in his liberation struggles and in his death, like those who performed extraordinary feats of internationalism, you are like those—some of you are those—who fought over an almost 15-year period in the People’s Republic of Angola, those in Cuba, in Che Guevara, in those who died in the Escambray Mountains, of those who fought for the Cuban revolution.

The reason is quite simple: this Revolution is the revolution of our people: it is the Revolution of our young people; it is the Revolution of our students. We made it together. We defend it together. We are one and the same and we will never stop being so.

For this reason, in recent days, we have been toasting around an idea for every citizen, for every combatant, for every young person, for every student, when we exhort them to think that they are the Revolution, they are the nation, they are the honor and dignity of the nation, that they are nation’s soldiers.

The Revolution has never betrayed its flag, has never betrayed its ideals, has never betrayed its principles. The Revolution has never betrayed itself. This is the secret of our unity, of the total identification of the Revolution with the people, and especially with young people and students.

Cuba said “No!”

We have to add some additional concepts to this idea. We have just gone through the experience of the Persian Gulf War; we have just seen the use of sophisticated weapons, the most modern armaments used by the United States against any country. As I have explained before, that country’s leaders made enormous mistakes. It is not necessary to point that out again, but a solution could have been found to the conflict without resorting to war.

However, the United States wanted to impose a war, it wanted to use its new weapons, to try out its weapons, it wanted to sow terror throughout the world, it wanted to show it to everyone in the world, to act like the masters of the world.

Just today another resolution was approved in the UN Security Council, a resolution, unfair resolution which violates the Security Council’s own rules, violates the principles of the UN as a whole, although, to tell the truth, the UN Security Council has become a double instrument of U.S. policy.

So the United States imposed on the country that said “No,” as it has done many times in the Security Council. This country said “No” to the draft of Security Council resolutions, to the “PJC” to the war declared on Jan. 15 of this year.

We have witnessed the phenomenon of an instrument created to resolve authoritarianism and authorizing the most powerful imperialist country on earth to wage war. For this the Cuba today said “No.” Two other countries abstained.

We have been consistent right to the end. If we had not done that, although we might hesitate to condemn the invasion and annexation of Kuwait, the taking of hostages, and all other things which are, in our judgment, immoral and incompatible with international law, however, within that framework, we knew how to maintain an attitude unprecedented for its honor, dignity, and respect for the nonaligned.

We witnessed that war. In that war, everything that we knew would happen happened;

some questions cannot be avoided

Castro’s speech was addressed particularly to the new generation of revolutionaries. In his speech, Fidel addressed the young, the U.S. imperialism in the wake of its victory in the Gulf war and to grave problems of support extended by the West for the European and Soviet regimes.

In the face of the collapse of the so-called ‘socialist camp,’ Fidel stressed that the Cuban regime’s independence devotion to its principles was proved by its determination to continue to strive for socialism and stand up to the pressures of seemingly triumphant capitalism and imperialism.

This courageous stance highlights the difference of the Cuban revolution from the other socialist states, which have abandoned the so-called socialist bloc. The regime in Cuba is based on a genuine revolution, led by the working class. It has a perspective of worldwide struggle against imperialism.

The bureaucratic leaderships of the other Stalinized ‘socialist’ states are a result of a partial counterrevolution in the Soviet Union fostered by the economic difficulties of an isolated revolution. As the masses were disarmed by diplomacy, they managed to usurp power in the name of defending the revolution. Mainly interested in exploiting their own population, they always have aimed for a deal with the imperialists. This fundamental reality has been made absolutely clear in the present circumstances, and the Cubans have to confront the consequences of it.

Because the Stalinists ruled as usurpers of anticapitalist revolution, the Eastern Bloc bureaucrats have had to defend their base against the imperialists, sometimes being carried further than they intended. Such conflicts made it possible for the Cuban revolution to receive material support from the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc nations.

Now, the Cubans face a far more general betrayal of capitalist perspectives and of anti-imperialist struggles at the hands of the bureaucrats.

Since revolution in Cuba has always been directly threatened by the U.S. economic blockade and military intervention, Castro’s first concerns clearly are that these menaces will sharpen. With respect to them, he issues a ringing defiance, hating himself on the power of great masses of people united in revolutionary conviction.

However, the threats facing Cuba now, like the rest of the workers and revolutionary movements, are not simply economic and military. The political challenge posed by the collapse of the so-called ‘socialist camp’ has to be taken up. It has to be explained why the Stalinized regimes have collapsed, and how such problems can be avoided in the future, in order for the masses of working people to regain confidence in their ability to take control of their own fate. Here, the Cuban leadership has offered only partial answers, but it cannot continue to avoid the basic questions.

Indeed, answers to these questions—in particular, how to build workers’ democracy—are essential to solving the increasing difficulties revolutionary Cuba faces.—the editors
Some questions cannot be avoided

Castro’s speech was addressed particularly to the new generation of revolutionaries. He was speaking directly to the socialists. The regime in Cuba was based on a genuine revolution, led by socialists and later on by the people. The people were the main driving force behind the revolution. The socialists had a clear vision of the future. The revolution was not just about changing the system, but about transforming it into a socialist society.

Some Castro’s speech was addressed particularly to the new generation of revolutionaries. He was speaking directly to the socialists. The regime in Cuba was based on a genuine revolution, led by socialists and later on by the people. The people were the main driving force behind the revolution. The socialists had a clear vision of the future. The revolution was not just about changing the system, but about transforming it into a socialist society.

bureaucratic linkages of the other Stalinized “socialist” states are a result of a partial counter-revolution in the Soviet Union fostered by the economic difficulties of an isolated nation. At the center of these states were the bureaucrats who managed to usurp power in the name of defending the revolution. Mainly, in the case of the GDR and Italy, it was a question of the present circumstances, they always have a goal for the people with their system. This fundamental reality has been made manifest once again by the present circumstances, and the Cubans are trying to confront the consequences of it.

Because the Stalinists ruled as usurpers of anticapitalist revolution, the Eastern Bloc bureaucrats have had to defend their base against the imperialists, sometimes being carried further than they intended. Such conflicts made it possible for the Cuban Revolution to receive material aid from the United States, other Eastern Bloc nations, and the Soviet Union.

The Cuban leaders of the revolution are the ones who have true power. The Cuban Revolution never gave power to the people, but it was conscious of it. The Cuban Revolution is the people. It is the people who are responsible for the decision to fight against the world. When a people is imbued with the ideas, when a people is convinced of these ideas, then it becomes impossible to stop it. The Revolution could not have continued for so long without the support of the people.

We won’t return to the past! It’s clear that there are battles that may be even tougher than military battles and that the United States is thinking that perhaps it won’t even have to invade the country, that the difficulties arising out of that may arise, which are more serious, as a result of the collapse of the socialist camp or as a result of the problems existing in the USSR—a country now trying to preserve its integrity as a great power itself and a country which certainly has very big problems. The United States is hoping that the collapse of the camp and the stagnation of the entire world will cause ineradicable economic difficulties for the Revolution.

The United States is dreaming that these problems will bring back capitalism to Cuba. It is dreaming that all the world will again become private property, that our factories will become private property, that our means of production will become private property. It’s dreaming that perhaps our capital and our capital, our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital will be used to buy goods, to buy goods, to buy goods.

If the United States is dreaming that these problems will bring back capitalism to Cuba, it is dreaming that all the world will again become private property, that our factories will become private property, that our means of production will become private property. It’s dreaming that perhaps our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital will be used to buy goods, to buy goods, to buy goods.

It is dreaming that perhaps our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital will be used to buy goods, to buy goods, to buy goods. If the United States is dreaming that these problems will bring back capitalism to Cuba, it is dreaming that all the world will again become private property, that our factories will become private property, that our means of production will become private property. It’s dreaming that perhaps our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital and our capital will be used to buy goods, to buy goods, to buy goods.
could die a natural death or in war.

Now that we’re talking about war, now that the United States has used its sophis-
ticated weapons, I would like to say in the case of aggression against our country, the Political Bureau could disappear, and I ask very much that the Political Bureau disband, would the Revolution disappear? (Shouts of "No")

Command post could disappear, the General Staff of the army or of the armed forces could disappear in a war, but does this mean that the soldiers would stop fighting? (Shouts of "No")

Any command post, any leadership, any leader of the state, of the party, would disappear in war, but what couldn’t disappear is the Revolution. As long as one combatant re-
main and resist, the Revolution will continue to exist.

When a people is imbued with these ideas, when a people is convinced of these ideas, that people is invincible, and no weapons, no matter how sophisticated, can conquer them. If that principle is inculcated in the heart of each and every person, every man and woman, every commander, every soldier, every militia member, every worker, every young person, every student, the Revolution is invincible. The Revolution is invincible!

For this reason, these concepts are neces-
sary to the present and the future of our people’s political and ide-
ological preparation. We have already said "Patria o Muerte!" and we have to be consis-
tent with this idea, which wasn’t conceived by us. It was conceived by our first freedom fighters and has been the essence of our pa-
triotic spirit, the spirit of struggle that our nation has had throughout its history. The United States has good reason to fear such a people.

"We won’t return to the past!"

It’s clear that there are battles that may be even tougher than military battles and the United States is hoping that perhaps it won’t even have to invade the country, that the dif-
ficulties arising or that may arise, which are more serious, as a result of the collapse of the socialist camp or a result of the prob-
lems existing in the USSR—a country now trying to preserve its integrity as a great multinational state, a country now trying to stabilize itself and a country which certainly has very big problems—the United States is hoping that the consequences of this situation will cause insurmountable economic difficul-
ties for the Revolution.

The United States is dreaming that these problems will bring back capitalism to Cuba, it is dreaming that all our land will again become private property, that our fac-
tories will become private property, that our means of production will become private property.

It is dreaming that perhaps our capital and our credit will once again be teeming with brothels, gambling dens, casinos, barefoot children, beggars. It dreams that perhaps the nation can grow used to having thousands or millions of jobless people. It can see the
country filled again with illiterates, without schools, without technological institutes, without the health system which is now considered one of the best in the world.

It has the absurd and crazy idea that our country will return to the past—a past of injustice, inequality, racial and sexual disc-
rimination. It dreams that women can again become a sort of property in the heart of a society of classes. It is dreaming about these absurd things which perhaps the overwhelm-
ing majority of you never knew but never-
threat never understand, sense, see.

In the rest of the capitalist world, it tries to seduce the peoples with absurd dem-
ers, consumer societies, in places where the riches stolen from centuries for the Third World ac-
cumulated. Capitalism hasn’t created anything but sterile luxury and an incredible wa-
ste of the earth’s natural resources, in order to create super-rich societies where, inci-
dentally, not everybody is rich and there are many homeless people, beggars, and a lot of oth-
er evils.

What capitalism has brought into the

world during centuries of colonialism, neo-
colonialism, and exploitation are four billion human beings living in poverty—four bil-
lion human beings! Every day, 40,000 chil-
dren could have been saved.

The worst kind of atrocities, the worst kind of humiliations, the worst kind of injus-
tice, the worst kind of horrors, unhappi-
ness, suffering, that’s what capitalism has brought into the world. In addition, it has polluted the seas, the rivers, the atmo-
sphere.

I don’t know what kind of capitalist or so-
cialist influences some people get precisely from the Third World lived through, but a Third World country like Cuba, which lived through a period where the ones who lived through centuries of colonialism, which lived through decades of U.S. domina-
tion, in which they were subjected in our country all sorts of abuses—once some U.S. sailors even desecrated the sacred statue of the Virgin in Havana—have to learn what was one more expression of their inso-
ience and arrogance and at a time when they weren’t as unlavishly powerful as they are today; a country like ours, which lived through so much horror, will never resign itself to that past, a people like ours, who learned the meaning of freedom, who for the first time in history learned the meaning of independence, who for the first time in his-

tory knew the meaning of national dignity will never go back to being simply a subject state and capitalism will never go back to being a U.S. possession and colony.

Preparing for difficulties ahead

That’s what you are expressing on a day like today in a rally like this. And there won’t be a return to the past, that idea that the United States will never again be the master of our destiny, that’s the idea, why we must be ready to meet all the difficul-
ties and make all the sacrifices.

No one can imagine what the difficulties we must confront and how the country has man-
aged to get around those difficulties so that now it is thrown into the world market, so that one is left without an income, so that no child is left without a school, so that not a single woman is left without a doctor. I’m absolutely certain that no other coun-

try in the world could have confronted the difficulties as we are confronting them but, we must be prepared to confront even greater difficulties. Yes.

We have to tell the United States: stop your illusions, stop day-dreaming, for if we are brave enough to die and shed our blood, we’re here to ensure that not all the material suffering that may be neces-
sary to save the Revolution, we’ll have the courage to endure the shortages that may be necessary to save the Revolution.

Capitalism and imperialism have nothing to offer us.

You are already witnessing what those countries which used to call themselves so-
cialist got through—millions unemployed, inequality, injustice. They were offered miracles and thought that by the next year they would be on the road to bourg
eousie, Paris, and what they got in stead is the other side of the coin.

Capitalism and imperialism have nothing to offer the peoples but humiliation, inequal-
ity, exploitation, the law of the jungle. And we don’t want inequality, we don’t want ex-
plotation, we don’t want the law of the junc-
gle, we want man to be the brother of man rather than the grim reproducers.

That is why our fighting spirit, our will-

ingness to sacrifice our heroism must be an integral one.

Today we still have many things available and we’re making big efforts, giving re-
sons for the moment when things may be in short supply, what to do if we should have less fuel, less electricity, less of thousands of oxen, in case it should become necessary to plow the land and prepare the land for a new crop. We’re gathering enough fuel for the tractors. We’re distributing hundreds of thousands of bicycles among the popula-
tion and it is not enough for the population, millions, so that people can ride to work on a bike. In other words, we’re getting ready for great difficulties.

That’s why the principle of “I am the na-
tion, I am the Revolution, I am the dignity of the country, I am the army of the coun-
try, I am the army of the country,” must be applied in all aspects, including economic aspects. We have a very great responsibility

(continued on page 11)

U.S. Hands Off Cuba!

In a May 20 radio address marking the 90th anniversary of Cuban independence, President Bush restated the United States’ conditions for “improved relations with Cuba.”

Bush declared: "Ninety-nine percent of the people of this hemisphere live either in a democracy or a communist state, but on the road to democracy, [but] one percent live under the hemispheric last dictator, Fidel Castro. He went on to say, among other things, that Cuba hold "free and fair elections under international supervision." The hypocrisy of this spurious portrayal of democracy in this hemisphere is contra-
dicted by a mountain of facts. Among them is the practical inability of the American people to see and hear the point of view of socialists and other opponents of capitalist race, sex, and class injustice right here in the United States.

It is an open secret that we are as much as getting a place on the ballot for socialists to challenge Mr. Bush and his Democratic counterpart in a "free and fair election" is practically impossible.

Perhaps Bush might appear more sincere if he called for the abolition of the bums, the found think little democratic requirements for gaining a place on the ballot and therefore impossible to block the access by socialists to American radio, tele-
vision, and printed media.

 CASTRO’S SPEECH ON THE SAME PAGE

Castro’s speech on this page is a re-
markable declaration of confidence in the future of the revolution and the same tone, a potentially great threat to the future of President Bush’s New World Order.

CASTRO’S SPEECH ON THE SAME PAGE

Bush’s speech should not be seen as a realistic observation of an historic event, the real threat to the U.S. occupying force and the possibility of the Cuban people seizing control of their country, not be on guard against new violations of this island nation’s democratic rights. Hands off Cuba!—the editors

SOCIALIST ACTION JUNE 1991 9
Western capitalists back Gorbachev against workers

By GERRY FOLEY

As the crisis of bureaucratic rule in the USSR deepens, Western capitalist intervention in it is becoming more evident. After balking at supporting Moscow's coup in August and Yeltsin ("the first hopeful sign in months that radical reform can be revived"), The New York Times editors saw Gorbachev's late May appeal for massive Western aid as still more encouraging.

In an editorial on May 24, they wrote: "The fierce Soviet struggle over reform presents a precious opportunity for President Bush. As Moscow teeters on the verge of transformation, concerted Western action might be enough to tip the political balance toward the reformers."

The New York Times, which reflects the views of the U.S. foreign policy establishment, cited a series of conditions for bailing out perestroika. The first was the window dressing—"progress toward pluralism based on the rule of law and fundamental freedoms." Then it got down to the gritty—"slashing subsidies for inefficient enterprises," "quick decontrol of prices," "convertible ruble, allowing enterprises to trade and sell foreign exchange at fair market value," and "private property" of factories and stores.

Capitalists back Gorbachev

One of these points, "quick decontrol of prices," touched off a now-haunting workers' rebellion in April that badly frightened the Soviet rulers. The Soviet OPD group Pravda warned of the growth of "unconstitutional bodies," that is, strike committees assuming governmental functions. For the first time, there was a development toward a general strike sweeping throughout the Soviet Union.

The Gorbachev-Yeltsin agreement was a desperate move to defer this process. The New York Times editors, and thus the more enlightened section of U.S. capital at least, came out clearly behind the deal, which notably included the threat of anti-strike measures. Thus, the capitalists' parties to the agreement stipulated:

"In order to stabilize the situation in the country's economy, the participants in the meeting declared their support for a special work regime for the industrial enterprises producing necessities, and in rail transport."

"All bodies, the governmental bodies of the republics will take additional measures ensuring the normal working of the national economy."

It is also notable that the conditions stipulated by The New York Times included nothing about respecting the aspirations of the oppressed nationalities in the USSR. Western credits were blocked at the time of the Moscow-sponsored attempt coup d’état in Lithuania.

In the 24 Times, there was also an article reporting on the preparations for the summit of industrialized nations in July. It cited British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as the key, that a Chernobyl-like explosion is coming. And you can't understand our intellectuals who have become depeuties, don't have contacts with those layers, do not understand them. And so, having to choose between these inflamed masses and the vestiges of the regime, they cling to the regime. Indeed, it's no accident that they keep talking about some 'iron hand.'"

Bukovsky went on to say that from the standpoint of Western experience he could not understand what an undemocratic government, was needed to carry through such reforms. He pointed to what Margaret Thatcher could do in a parliamentary system.

In the first place, Bukovsky's hatred of Stalinism blinded him to the social power workers hold in the USSR. Secondly, he failed to appreciate the extent of the sacrifices being demanded of the Soviet and East European peoples in the name of market reform. Cuts of up to 30 percent in the standard of living of workers have not been achieved anywhere without the threat of social explosion.

Anti-Communists like Bukovsky are probably misled also by the fact that the West's current economic struggles grow and radicalize in the Soviet Union, where the idea of socialism is seen in the context of Western capitalism.

This paradox is very revealing. The real obstacles to the capitalist restorationist policies of the bureaucracy are growing in tandem with an ideological reconstruction, which is identified with the bureaucracy's system. This is a glaring and therefore very telling contradiction of the West's publicly opening to buttress Gorbachev will surely help to expel it.
Polish socialists launch newspaper, attack Walesa’s reprivatization policy

The article reprinted below is an English-language version of the lead article from the first issue of Dalej’s (Forward), a monthly newspaper published in Poland. The editors explain that the paper is socialist, in the sense that “we see the possibility of solving the economic and social crisis through a struggle for a new order, one based on direct democracy and ongoing social control over the state.”

“Our socialism,” they write, “has nothing in common with the monstrous Stalinist caricature of ‘socialism’ or with any other version of ‘socialism’ under the rule of the Communist Party. It has nothing in common with the period of “perestroika,” the German Republic, or any other capitalist exploitation and the market system, in which the economy is governed by the law of profit and not human need.

“We are profoundly convinced that the interests of working people cannot be reconciled with the previous Stalinist system or the capitalism that is threatening us. Recognition of this fact will enable working people to win in the struggles with the nomenklatura (bureaucracy) and the capitalists that are being waged today and that will sharpen tomorrow.”

“An essential element in this,” they continue, “is the political reform of the workers movement. Only an organized workers movement has the power to overthrow the rule of the nomenklatura and capital. The first step in this will be a return to the ideals of August 1980 [the emergence of Solidarnosc and the general strike to gain recognition of an independent union movement] and to the conception of a workers movement politically and organizationally independent from the government, from the nomenklatura, from the employers, from the Church and all other forces outside the workers movement.”

The editors state that they would also like their paper to take up causes that have not been given sufficient attention by the workers’ movement. One of these is the situation of women.

“Women today,” they write, “are the first victims of the belt tightening, of unemployment, of cutbacks in social services. The struggle must be a high priority in any attempt to deprive them of fundamental rights and freedoms—above all the right of choice.”

“The struggle against the oppression of women is a fundamental part of the struggle for a just social order. Dalej will be a front line for this battle.”

“Another second such,” the editors state, “is the struggle of working people in other countries in the Eastern Europe, the Balkans, South... So Dalej will be an internationalist publication.”

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Polish auto workers protesting policies of Mazowiecki government.

‘The Balcerowicz plan represents a conscious plan for pauperizing the society. Its aim is clear—to increase the profitability of the enterprises (in other words, increase the exploitation of the workers).’

The statements by ministers and their journalistic stooges that the worsening of the standard of living is the result of objective causes, which cannot be avoided, is a total lie. The most demonstrative proof of these lies is the celebrated poplawka (a positive tax on enterprises that increase workers’ wages). This tax has been raised yet again this year, and it does not at all arise from those “objective causes.” It is the expression of an entire policy designed to cut wages down, to cut the real buying power of our wages.

Need workers’ control

It is true that to a large extent we have a bankrupt state which is penny pinching and needs restructuring. The question, however, is how to accomplish that and at whose cost. For more than a year, Balcerowicz has been doing it at the expense of labor.

The necessary means for restructuring the Polish economy, however, can be found elsewhere—by increasing the state and economic bureaucracy; by taking money from the nomenklatura and the new-rich elite; by recovering the wealth that they have stolen from the society; by liquidating the bureau- crats’ companies, which are parasites on the economy; by reducing arms spending; by doing away with the secret political police; by taking away the factories to self-management bodies and thereby increasing their efficacy; by eliminating the enormous waste of a ‘state’ and labor caused by the present combination of bureaucratic planning and free-market anarchy and by establishing a rational plan of economic development drawn up by a rational council of workers’ self-management; by defending Polish industry and agriculture through state control of foreign trade and against the economic policy of the West; by stopping payments on the Polish foreign debt.

We can be sure that Balcerowicz will not take any of the steps mentioned above. He is simply blinding himself by his dogmatic vision of private capitalist property.

Balcerowicz must go!

We cannot suffer patiently any longer because the Polish economy is being run by a demagogic, mendacious, and fruitless regime, which three months ago lost any social mandate. The fact that only 18 percent of the voters—that is, every fifth one—voted for Mazowiecki in the first round of the presidential elections means that the policy he favors is decisively rejected by the society. The voters rejected his economic policy, and thereby the Balcerowicz plan.

Balcerowicz is back in government solely because of the pressure of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The dominant strand of Walesa, who cynically ignored the wishes of those who voted for him, Balcerowicz must go! And his economic plan must go with him. No more belt tightening. The Polish economy must be restructured in the interests of the majority of society, above all so that the economy serves people and not people serve the economy.

In the longer term, this means socializing the economy, putting an end to the control. The economy will serve us when we can decide ourselves, democratically, about the allocation of resources and about the order of developmental priorities, about means for protecting the weaker and eliminating social inequality.

Today, immediate demands are in the forefront of the program. This demands the most radical, against further pauperization. In the first instance, the trade-union movement, the workers’ councils and the organizations of labor have to fight for:

- eliminating the punitive tax on wage increases.
- full, automatic cost-of-living increases.
- end to layoffs and a guarantee of the right to work.

NO MORE BELT TIGHTENING!

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Castro’s speech (continued from page 9)

resting on our shoulders, we have a very important lesson to learn. The lesson is, this page can only be written with the will to fight and the will to win.

The problems in the history of mankind are today flown on our banners. Our position is the most dignified that can be assumed in the history of mankind.

The difficult times will pass! Truth will win out! The peoples will fight! The bil- lion, two billion, three billion will increasingly more aware and will fight increasingly harder! The peoples are our main allies nowadays.

Occasionally, we have been asked by visiting journalists whether we are alone. I explain to them that we’ve never seen so much solidarity from the peoples, that we’ve never seen so much admiration from the peoples.

The fact that our small country resisted the U.S. imperialists and-and the USSR didn’t have any problems and when the socialist camp existed in Europe, when there were solidarity movements, no country existed, that our Revolution continues at a time when the socialist camp in Eastern Europe has collapsed and when the USSR has enormous problems, this is indeed an unparalleled page in the history of mankind, this is indeed the proof of a revolutionary people, a courageous people!

And the peoples of Latin America, the peoples all over the world admire such courage, admire the greatness of the Cuban people. And we’ll not only endure the spec- tacle, but will also develop and move ahead.

Is Cuba “alone”?

Now we are indeed showing the world the stuff Cubans are made of! For quite a long time we were slandered, they claimed we weren’t even independent but rather a satel- lite of the Soviet Union and now they have come to realize, without any doubt, that we’re a satellite to principles, a satellite to ideas, a satellite to an ideal which is like a sun of justice around which we are revolving and will always revolve.

History has given us the chance to prove to others, to the world, which side we’re on. And let us make sure to proclaim to the world the most independent country on earth. If you don’t believe me, look the other side in the United Nations, how big and small pow- ers are reacting to the manipulations of the government of the U.S. Empire. Now there is one country which knows how to say, “No!” and saying “No!” to the empire today is the greatest act of the most glorious traditions ever carried out.

Because all of that, my dear friend to journalists who asked me if we were alone was: “yes, we are alone, but at the top!” I congratulate our young people for mak- ing 25 of you and for congratulating them for their 25th anniversary.
Israel stepped up repression of Palestinians during Gulf War

By MICHEL WARSCHAWSKY

Michel Warschawsky, a leader of the Israeli section of the Fourth International (the world revolutionary organization, founded by Leon Trotsky) spoke in Paris on March 18, 1991, along with a Palestinian intellectual, Elias Sandur, on the situation of the Palestinian struggle after the Gulf War. The following are extensive excerpts from Rouge, the paper of the French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by Socialist Action.

People say that Israel did not take any part in the Gulf War. The Israeli government is even thanked for its restraint in the face of the Scud (missile) attacks.

This is false. Israel was a participant in the war, involved in a very precise division of labor. Bush assigned the Israeli state and army a very well defined front—the Palestinian front. The latter, moreover, was divided into three zones (the Palestinians) in southern Lebanon, the Palestinians in Israel, and above all the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

In southern Lebanon, the war created a smoker that enabled Israel to resume its criminal bombings of the refugee camps. With regard to the Palestinians who are citizens of Israel in Galilee, the Triangle, and the Negev, this was a chance for an offensive unparalleled since 1976. It involved land confiscations, a plan for building new Jewish colonies in Arab-majority areas, and unprecedented repression on the pretext of dealing with espionage.

“Spies” were uncovered everywhere. People were afraid of using the telephone, of being arrested for spying. People were afraid of saying where they were, of confirming rumors about mysteries landing in Israel for fear of being charged with spying.

The mass terror was such that for three weeks it kept 50,000 Palestinian “citizens” of Israel, who were not under curfew, from going in and fear of pogroms. The result was that for the first time since 1976 there was no Day of the Land. For the first time since 1976, the national leadership of the Palestinians in Israel, the coordinating committee of mayors, the Day of the Land Committee, decided not to call a general strike and to change the name of the event to the Day of Peace. This was after they were threatened by the ministers and the general commissioner of police that they would see blood flow. The Palestinians had to under-

stand that everything had changed, including for them.

The third area of this (Israeli) front is the occupied territories. Since the beginning of the occupation there has never been such a long and strict curfew for a million-and-a-half people. For the first time, in 1968, the Palestinians in Gaza, and to a lesser extent in the West Bank, were threatened with hunger. People did not have anything to eat. Tons of thousands of Palestinians were thrown into unemployment.

Border sealed

The war first of all made it possible to hermetically seal the border with the occupied territories, that is, to cut off the means of existence for 150,000 Palestinians and their families. One of the most optimistic projections today is that 50 percent of them will never get their jobs back. There is talk about “refugees” from the Gaza strip, who don’t have any little plot of land that they could use to compensate a bit for their lost wages. This is a tragic situation.

However, this is not simply a problem of human rights, of the livelihood of the Palestinian; it is a very effective attempt to destroy the entire infrastructure of the Palestinian economy. Agriculture won’t re-

cover. And the small industry that existed and was beginning to grow in the framework of the Idfaju in is dire straits.

In order to wage this battle, this war, the Israeli government had to wage another that began on January 17, 1991—the battle for a national consensus. It had to put an end to what had deeply divided Israel—calling for a military campaign during the Lebanon war, and then, with the appearance and spectacular growth of the uprising in the occupied territories, the Intifada.

Israel peace movement betrayed

It had to win the battle for national unity. And unfortunately, it did so. There was national unity against the Arabs, and we could hear Israeli “progressives”—intellectuals and workers (but also the writer Yehoshua—calling for an atomic weapons (tactical of course) campaign against Baghdad, because “when you’re fighting a Hitler, anything goes.”

The well-known “progressive” writer, Dan Melamed, described Shultz’s of tying the Israeli army’s hands and called on him to “save our honor and end the restraint policy.” Yossi Sarid is a socialist and one of the best-known spokespersons from the Israeli left, announced in September [in his Palestinian interlocutors]: “If you’re interested, you can call me, but for the moment I really have nothing more tosay to you.” A month later, he said: “There is no point on calling me, I really have nothing more to say to you.”

This was a proclamation of divorce by the great majority of the peace movement, of the Israeli left, from the partners that they them-

selves called “the moderate Palestinians,” with whom they had been engaging in dialogue (often not a very honest dialogue). I will come back to this.

I can cite the example of a very courageous (Israeli) woman who over the last years has several times met with PLO delegations inside and outside the country and who, despite the fact that she was a member of the Central Committee of the [Israel] Labour Party, headed the women’s movement against the occupation. She provoked a split of part of the movement when she re-

fused to publish an ad denouncing the fact that Palestinian children had no gas masks. She said: “It is war, and gas masks for Palestinian children is not my problem.”

Yael Dayan had a protest letter published in all the press because another Dayan (this name is a very common one) signed a petition that said “No to hunger in the occupied territories.” Yael Dayan responded, “I never signed such a petition and never would.”

Facing this new national unity, the

Where are your friends now?

Today, the Israeli fundamentalist currents are saying: “Where were your Jewish friends during the month-and-a-half long curfew? When the children were not coming to school, why wouldn’t let them go to the hospital? Where are your interlocutors who say that the Intifada is finished?”

Those of you who read Politia (Parisian commercial left magazine) have seen that one of the best known nationalist leaders in the Gaza Strip, Marya Khaz, announced in very violent terms that she had nothing more to do with the Intifada, that the struggle was finished. Since I know her, I can say that she will resume the dialogue. Perhaps it will be a bit sooner.

Despite this isolation, despite the restrictions and despite the hunger, the fact that Israel waged in the occupied territories has not been won. Far from it. Among other reasons, it has to be said, this is because of the Scuds that landed in Israeli.

The descriptions of Palestinians dancing on the roof and not still getting pro-

paganda. The Iraqi attack on Israel repre-

sented a hope. In the tragic conditions they faced, the Palestinians devoted new attention from it. When there was nothing to eat, they dreamed of Scuds, they dreamed of blows that would give them hope.

Unfortunately, this hope was accompanied by a new illusion of the regime of Israel, about the capacities of the Arab front that formed, for countering the messianic offensive and that would back to begin to bring about a solution of the Palestinian question.

After the end of these illusions, today we see anger and frustration—but not demoral-

ization. We have to be very clear about this.

In Gaza, in the refugee camps, on the West Bank, in Jerusalem, what you feel is very great anger. Anger first of all against the War. And again against the Americans and the British. The Americans did not betray; they played their role.

There is anger against Israelis of course, especially against the Israeli left. There is also a beginning of, if not anger, question-

ing, of a more critical attitude towards the local leadership.

We have last week, when a delegation of Palestinian leaders, with the agreement of the PLO, met Baker. There was indignation in all the sections of the left, and this is not to be the shaking of the hand of someone responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands, or even hundreds of the hundreds (if Arabs).

Nevertheless, Baker is seeking dialogue with Palestinians, in the hope that this will be an alternative to the PLO. Let us not make one mistake. I don’t have a shadow of a doubt that Pashal Hashemi, Elias Safi and Ashrawi (who met Baker last week) told him unambiguously that there is no proposal of peace outside the PLO, that at best, they might offer an intermediary, but that there is no chance of finding an alternative leadership.

Two weeks ago, I did a tour of the occu-

pied territories and I had a very interesting question of the PLO’s role as the sole representative of the Palestinians.

Peace movement still exists

Wars, and especially this war, have an ambiguous aspect. But there is something positive, even in a tragic political develop-

ment such as the Gulf War. What the Gulf War has made possible in Israeli soci-
ety and Palestinian society is to put an end, or at least to push into the background, cer-

tain misunderstandings, certain mis-

understandings.

There was, and there still is, a peace

(continued on next page)
What's behind U.S.-Israelis discord?

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The sparks flying between the governments of the United States and Israel reflect a deepening rift in the historical bond between the two nations, analysts say.

The conflict is one that challenges the alliance; it is not just about the policies of the current governments, but the underlying tensions that have been simmering for years.

The Israeli government's decision to build settlements in the West Bank is the latest in a series of actions that have strained relations between the two countries. Israel has been building settlements in the West Bank for decades, despite the fact that they are illegal under international law.

The U.S. government has long supported Israel's efforts to build settlements, but there is growing concern among some officials that these actions are undermining the prospects for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In recent weeks, the U.S. has taken a more confrontational stance toward Israel, warning that continued settlement construction could jeopardize the prospects for peace talks.

The Israeli government has long argued that settlement construction is necessary to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state, but critics say that these actions only serve to isolate Israel and make it more difficult to reach a lasting solution to the conflict.

The U.S. government has also been critical of the Palestinian Authority's efforts to build up its own military and security forces, which it says is a step toward creating a Palestinian state.

This has led to a tense relationship between the U.S. and the Palestinian Authority, with both sides accusing the other of obstructing peace efforts.

The U.S. has also been critical of the Palestinian Authority's failure to take steps to reduce the level of violence between settlers and Palestinians, which it says is a major obstacle to achieving a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

The U.S. has long been a key supporter of Israel, providing it with billions of dollars in military aid each year. However, the growing tension between the two countries has put pressure on the U.S. to reevaluate its policy toward Israel.

Many experts believe that the relationship between the U.S. and Israel will continue to be a key factor in shaping the future of the Middle East and the international community's efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

But for now, the tension between the two nations remains high, and there is little sign of a resolution in sight.
Labor mov’t holds key to solving NYC budget crisis

By CHRIS BUTTERS

Perhaps no place better than New York captures the state of capitalism in the world today. Side by side with the most fantastic concentration of wealth, you can see poverty, homelessness, and a destitution more commonly associated with that of a Third World country.

Parts of Harlem have higher infant mortal- ity rates than Bangladesh. In the slums of the Lower East Side, the word “medicine” is a four-letter word. The drop-out rate for minority youth in the school system is 60 percent. In a rational economic system, top prior- ity should be given to solving these conditions forever. But capitalism created these hideous conditions at the same time that it created the rich in our office towers.

In the latest chapter of New York City’s unfolding budget crisis, on May 8, Mayor David Dinkins presented his proposed budget cuts for the 1991-1992 fiscal year. The an- nouncement was besieged by months of propaganda and public relations campaign with business media. This included numerous orchestrated reports by supposedly independent “citizens commis- sions” on the need for “leaner city services” in the 1990s.

Dinkins proposed a staggering cut of over $1.5 billion in city services to alleviate the looming $3.5 billion deficit. These include: chopping educational programs for disadvan- taged youth, the abolishment of drug treat- ment and infant mortality programs, and busing libraries, parks, and maintenance for women’s health clinics.

Dinkins also called for layoffs of 22,000 full-time city employees, including 2000 teachers. Many labor activists believe these layoffs, if approved, will take place during summer vacations in August—in an effort to forestall a unified labor-community response.

Couching his budget proposal in the rhetoric of "sacrifice" and "fiscal respon- sibility," Dinkins appealed to the "family of New York" to tighten their belts.

But despite the mayor’s appeals for "sacri- fice," some areas were strikingly exempt. One was the addition of 400 new police to the city payroll to fight "violence, lawless- ness, and drugs." Also exempted was a whopping increase of $400 million in debt service to the banks for the coming year.

Working people should not be fooled. The additional cops have nothing to do with any serious "war on drugs." How could they pos- sibly, since in the same speech Dinkins abolished every city drug treatment program?

Nor will these police have anything to do with any "war on crime." How could they pos- sibly, when in the same breath Dinkins slashed funds for schools, housing, health care, parks, and libraries? This virtually writes off another generation of minority youth to New York’s only growth industr’y—the prisons.

Protests are planned

But the working people of New York City—and especially their children—are not taking these cuts sitting down.

Clearly inspired by the recent student occu- pations of 12 City College Campuses, the Save Our Schools Coalition is calling for a one-day boycott by parents, teachers, and students in District 15 in Brooklyn.

Healthcare coalitions in neighborhoods throughout the city are protesting the closing of the city-funded outpatient pharmacies.

It was there that those without health insur- ance—usually the working poor—could count on filling their prescriptions.

With this usual panache, the Aids coalition, ACT UP, has called for a demonstration at the United Nations. They are appealing to that body for relief, on the grounds that New York City should be considered a disaster area.

Many projected demonstrations will target City Hall, where budget hearings will be held by the City Council in the last week of May. It is imperative for the anti-cuts and anti-layoff movement to be there in force.

It is equally, however, the demonstrations alone will stop the cuts and layoffs.

After all, the decision was made long before, in the boardrooms of Wall Street. Given the powerful forces behind the cutbacks, support of this or that program demonstrating at the budget hearings are relatively power- less if they remain isolated.

But there is a power that can stop the cutbacks, especially if it unites with the anti-cutback movement. It was present in force when 60,000 trade-unionsists marched in Manhattan on April 30 to demand no cut- backs and no layoffs.

The April 30 labor march

Marching down Broadway, one could feel the potential power of the labor move- ment—however lacking it is at this time in leadership and direction. Black, white, Latino, Asian—the labor movement on April 30 was as interracial and multinational as the city itself.

A large spirited contingent from the Public Employees Federation marched. They stand to lose 50 percent of their members if Cuomo’s proposed 100,000 layoffs of state workers are enacted. "Tax the rich" they chanted.

AFSCME District Council 37 members added their voices as well. They had a giveback contract foisted upon them in January—only to have that same contract held up by the Dinkins administration in an effort to get even more givebacks.

Particularly significant was a contingent from Local 100 of the Transit Workers Union (TWU), who have been working without a contract since April 31. TWU president Sonny Hall has stated that there will be strike action if his union does not get a decent contract and improved health and safety conditions on the job. This reflects pressures from the membership.

"I’ve got a weapon," said Hall. "We al- ways have a weapon. The one thing we won’t do is allow transit workers to be taken advantage of. Way before we will let that happen, we will forget about whatever the Troy Law says." (Newday, May 12)

The Taylor Law prohibits strikes by city and state employees. It has long been used by City Hall and Wall Street to keep the union movement weak and divided. But as a labor leader once said, "the only illegal strike is a losing one."

And how about taxing the rich to pay for the budget crisis? The slogan "Tax the rich" can be a springboard for workers to begin to discuss all the other institutions through which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

In the May 7 Village Voice, Doug Henwood revealed that the dominant ele- ments in the labor bureaucracy opposed the demand of "Tax the rich!" as the main slogan of the April 30 demonstration. Instead, it adopted the watered-down call, "For a fair tax system!"

According to Henwood, Barry Feinstein of Local 237 of the Teamsters Union argued that "labor can never support a tax-the-rich platform." Sandra Feldman, president of the United Federation of Teachers, fought it on the ground that "Tax the rich!" would not be an "effective" slogan for the rally’s "real au- dience," Feldman thought that this "real audience" was the mayor and the governor. Behind this decision lies the same strategy of business trade-unionism that led to the de- feat of the anti-cutback movement in 1975.

The labor led’s strategy is to get on the "good side" of management and Democratic Party politicians behind closed doors, rather than to build alliances with other unions, the poor, and the oppressed minorities.

Labor must not be fooled. There is noth- ing inevitable or necessary about this crisis. Nor is there anything inevitable about work- ing people having to take these cuts. It is we who create the wealth of this city every day, in the garment shops, at the transit barns, in the offices and factories.

If we create the wealth in this country, we also have the power to shut it down.
Gandhi’s assassination and India’s ‘democracy’

By Malik Miah

Which Side Are You On?

by Julius Horowitz

LAPD onlookers to King
beating escape prosecution

by Kathleen O’Nan

Activist wins suit against LAPD

A three-week-long civil rights lawsuit ended on May 14 with an unprecedented victory for the Black community and for all social activists. Los Angeles Superior Court ordered the city of Los Angeles to pay $3.8 million in compensatory damages to Black activist Michael Zinnman.

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Zinnman viewed this victory as a victory for all activists fighting police abuse. The jury “sent a message to the city,” he said, “that enough is enough and they won’t be a party to the antics of the LAPD.” —K.O.

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Tragedy in Bangla Desh: Who’s to blame for death toll?

By MALIK MIAH

The major cyclone that devastated Bangladesh early April 29, followed by massive flooding and an earthquake, has brought some 125,000 deaths. The death toll is expected to rise. As much as $600 million worth of food aid has been sent for distribution to the regions hit by the natural disasters. Entire villages were wiped out by waves 20 feet high driven by 145 mph winds. Government officials estimate that more than 30,000 of the 264,000 farmers and fishermen who lived on the Bay of Bengal coastal area perished. Deaths from cholera and other diseases are also anticipated. The disaster Prime Minister Khaleda Zia estimated damage at $1.42 billion.

Relief efforts have been slow. The U.S. government initially only gave $1 million for cyclone relief and 67,000 tons of food. Later, Washington sent 8.000 troops (on their way home from the Persian Gulf) to aid the effort. The eight-ship task force includes 36 helicopters and 4 Hovercraft. They will be used to transport food and supplies, not to build embankments and shelters.

Overall, the international aid has been shameful. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. Some 120 million people live on 55,000 square miles. The per capita income is $180. For much of the year Bangladesh is under water. Yet the country had only 305 cyclone shelters, while 5,000 to 10,000 are needed. A single shelter costs $50,000. It would cost $14 million to build 305 shelters for the rich industrialized countries.

Not surprisingly, many people in the United States and other industrialized countries are numb to the disaster. First the Kurds, the African famine, and now Bangladesh.

There is sympathy especially among working people. But many believe Third World disasters reflect the situation of the people themselves. "Maybe it is their fault. There are floods and cyclones all the same, why didn’t the people there prepare?” is not an uncommon comment. The point is that Bangladesh is growing by 2.4 million people each year; it will take only two to three weeks to make up the 1989 population. Nicholson Kristof of the New York Times wrote, for example, “It is not so much a small colonial outpost for West Pakistan, poverty.” He notes that "about 870,000 Bangladesh children under the age of five die route, a third of them from nothing more than diarrhea caused by impure water.”

Behind underdevelopment

It is true that Bangladesh is a very poor country. It is also true that millions die each year because of food and disease. But is it inevitable?

No. Bangladesh is similar in land size to Europe’s Holland. Holland, too, was once a massive flooding if it were uncontrollable. Yet Holland is now in the newspaper each year suffering from overflowing rivers and massive disasters caused by nature. Why? Holland is an advanced industrialized country that has been able to minimize the impact of nature to prevent major disasters. They have built dikes to control the flooding. The last major storm to cause significant flooding deaths occurred in 1953, when 1850 died in southern Holland. The first dike were built 700 years earlier.

Bangladesh won its independence in 1971 after a national liberation war. But many before 1947 to 1971, for 24 years, Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan and treated as a territorial outpost for West Pakistan, 1100 miles away. Prior to 1947 the region was known as East Bengal, as part of British India. The British imperialists, unlike the Dutch, did not build dikes to control the great rivers—the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, and the Meghna. So year after year in “normal” rainfalls, the rivers overflowed and killed the mostly agricultural people—landholders and those without land. Since 1857, Bangladesh has been hit by some 50 major cyclones, and far more lesser ones. The latest one even gave notice four days before it struck.

But there was little the people could do because they have no dikes, no shelters or places to live. "Where would I go?" asked Aminul Haque, a 27-year-old Goraiyadak village resident in the Bay of Bengal who lost his entire family to the cyclone. "I have land here, and it’s all I have. I have no choice but to stay.”

Since over 50 percent of Bangladesh becomes inundated by annual rain—a做出了 why—cyclones—the real issue is how to limit the damage, since most of the country, with the possible exception of Dhaka, the capital, is hardly impacted. The British magazine, The Economist, makes a telling point in its May 11 issue: “Floods and earthquakes are pure disasters, it seems that only nature is to blame. Yet competent governments, given foresight and funds, can build defenses against them. In the June 80 earthquake struck the remote villages of northern Iran, killing more than 10,000 people. The previous year an equally powerful tremor, striking the packed city of San Francisco, killed fewer than 100 people. Public investment and public compulsion saved the Californians. Tax payers paid for their reinforced highways, regulators ordered that their high-rise buildings might twist but would not collapse. Rich and powerful states can defend their people, in peace as in war.”

Bangladesh, however, has suffered from super-exploitation. Their rich farm land was used to service the British rulers for decades. Then, after Pakistan was formed in 1947, large plantations and jute mills were built to service the Pakistani rulers. Funds were not available for local development.

No shelters

Proof that the “natural disaster” on April 29 could have been less devastating if flood development had been done is seen in one small example provided by a reporter for The Economist:

In the island the people survived. The 650 people on the island of Soanada climbed to a 12 feet high cyclone shelter, the island’s only solid building, and were all saved. When a cyclone struck the island in 1970, all its people were drowned.

Many Bengali fishermen and farmers live on these small islands in the Bay of Bengal. But they are not really islands. They are banks of silt composed of deposits brought down the rivers. As soon as they are formed, they are taken over by farmers who grow rice on the rich soil. Because land is scarce in Bangladesh, the farmers stay despite the cyclones. Yet if brick shelters had been built, most would still be alive today.

How much would it cost to build the additional shelters? Some $46 million. That’s less than one new Boeing 747 aircraft. The crime of imperialism is that it refuses to help countries like Bangladesh to build the dams necessary to prevent “natural disasters.” In 1989, the World Bank held a conference in London to discuss an “action plan” to prevent Bangladesh from being hit by a current disaster. It included proposals to build vast embankments along the coast and the river banks. Old embankments are 12 feet high; they should be 18 to 25 feet to provide protection from major cyclones. Drains would be dug to divert flood water to areas where it could do no harm.

Yet the “countries expected to foot the bill shivered at the astronomical sums being talked about,” reports The Economist. “Promises to start work on the plan in 1990 were clearly unrealistic. It is still in what is described as the “assessment stage.” So much for Bangladesh lives.

Government corruption

Imperialism is not totally to blame for the current devastation. Corrupt and inefficient capitalistic governments have played their part too.

After the independence in 1947, the new Pakistani government refused to give East Pakistan (Bangladesh) fair economic treatment. They developed the country with export surplus earnings with little being reinvested into East Pakistan, the most populated region of the country.

This exploitive relationship between West and East Pakistan fueled the independence movement. Pakistan also refused to develop flood controls. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the independence movement and first President of Bangladesh, made the issue of lack of flood control one of the reasons for revolution. Water, if properly controlled, would freeBangladesh from its severe underdevelopment.

After independence in 1971, however, the new Rahman government took steps to rebuild the Bangladesh capitalist merchant and landholding classes at the expense of the landless peasants and poor working class. He used the government civil service to build up a base of power. Corruption and inefficiency became the norm. No steps were taken to prepare the people for the annual floods or the cyclones. Relief aid was given.

Rahman’s corruption led to a growing leftist movement and divisions in the military. In a way coup was organized in August 1975, and Rahman was assassinated. Two years later in December 1977, the military directly ran the country. The military rulers spent very little of its foreign aid on education or shelter programs.

In the four years from 1986-89, some $5.9 billion was granted or loaned to the government. Shelters were built; and few hundred of emergency food and medical supplies were bought.

A popular movement emerged in the late 1980s, and forced the army out of direct power. Elections were held this past February. The new regime blames the past government for the current problems in relief efforts. Yet the new regime’s minister of finance was a former military ruler killed in a coup in 1981.

The big problem for Bangladesh. Cancellation of the foreign debt would help. Massive executive aid from Washington, London and other imperialist governments was also needed. The World Bank plan, as a start, must be implemented and paid for by the rich on earth.

The merchants and others now becoming rich off the people’s suffering must be put out of business. Bangladesh’s stockholders are profiting from rice (a basic staple) and building materials. In some cases, they are charging twice the market price.

Pressure is mounting on the new regime to meet the needs of the people. If reports of corruption are not met firmly, the government can expect to face not only homeless and starving people, but rebellion.

16 SOCIALIST ACTION JUNE 1991