

DEMOCRATIC LEFT

EDITED BY
MICHAEL HARRINGTON

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INSIDE

Pope Meets Popular Religion, p. 3

Despite all the best efforts of conservatives to "rig" the recent Latin American Bishops Conference, the left wing of the Catholic Church made itself heard. Rosemary Ruether looks at the Church in Latin America and implications for the future of socialism there.

We're Alright, Jack, p. 5

From Deborah Meier's den to less than palatial quarters on Union Square, Jack Clark has been with DSOC from the beginning. As he prepares to leave his staff position, DEMOCRATIC LEFT asks about DSOC's past and future.

Burned Up About Energy, p. 6

Consumers have been blowing fuses throughout the country as energy costs skyrocket. Bob Lawson talks about a grassroots coalition response.

SALT II: Boldness or Blunder? 8

Can the inheritors of the peace-loving traditions of Debs and Thomas help in the campaign to limit the arms race? Harry Boyte and Pat Lacefield open a dialogue on the merits of SALT II and the potential for democratic Left involvement.

Statistics Don't Lie, p. 11

Figures can tell a lot of different stories. Bogdan Denitch looks at a new wall chart that tells you everything—the Census doesn't.

Golden State Brown Buries Welfare State

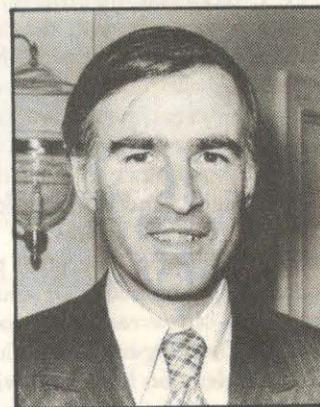
By Harold Meyerson

THE SIGNIFICANT QUESTION," Jerry Brown was telling Joseph Kraft last month, "is how to instill a sense of discipline in the country, a determination to build for the future, not steal from it." The formulation is a classic piece of Brownery, not only for what it explicitly says—discipline being very close to the heart of the Zen Jesuit Governor—but also for what it merely hints at: the even more significant question of who is to instill the discipline, and in whom it is to be instilled.

Discipline and denial, a constitutional spending limitation and a more powerful America—by touching on such themes and skirting their implications ("A little vagueness goes a long way in this business," he once told Jim Lorenz), Brown clearly hopes to be sleeping on the White House floor in the not-too-distant future. He cannot skirt his record as governor, however. There, the meaning of discipline and austerity becomes clear.

These are not acts of post-Jarvian wisdom. Brown's pre-13 and post-13 policies differ in degree but not in kind. At all times, the guiding principle behind his administration has been nothing less than the dismantling of the welfare state. Consider this necessarily sketchy compendium:

- Brown is currently engaged in a



By Fred W. McDarrah

“Brown clearly hopes to be sleeping on the White House floor in the the not-too-distant future.”

duel with the Legislature over this year's cost of living adjustment for the 1.4 million aged, blind, and disabled Californians and the 725,000 recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Last year, Brown withheld any increase at all; this year, the Legislature wants to enable recipients to catch up with inflation by granting them a 15.7 percent increase. Brown, who has the constitutional power to strike or scale down any appropriation in the budget, is holding the line at 6 percent, which

would allot a mother and child on welfare a sensible monthly income of \$304 in place of the Legislature's princely \$332.

● In the halcyon pre-Jarvis days, Brown converted a troubled mental health program into a disaster. During his first two years in office, Brown vetoed all attempts to increase staffing at state mental hospitals. The hospitals were deemed substandard and ineligible for federal subsidies; the patient-doctor ratio in some hospitals reached 200-to-1; 139

patients died. Stung by criticism, Brown then called for volunteers to help staff the institutions and declared 1978 "The Year of Mental Health," which by any standard it was not.

● Brown "builds for the future." When he took office, California ranked third among the states in per pupil spending; today, it ranks 22nd. In his next year's budget (in these post-Jarvis days, school districts no longer fund themselves), Brown is offering the districts

Continued on page 10

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Thanks to Michael Rivas for an excellent, albeit brief, sketch of his impressions of Cuba in the February issue of *DEMOCRATIC LEFT*. I do wish that in evaluating the achievements and problems of Cuba since the Revolution he had touched a bit on the question of workplace democracy in Cuba.

I recall on my trip to Cuba in 1977 an exchange with the manager of the Havana waterfront which began with my asking whether the dock workers had a say in wages, hours, working conditions, and production quotas. "The fishing ministry draws up a plan," replied the manager, "and passes it down to the workers for their approval." "Can they change the plan, say, the production quotas?" I inquired. "Of course," said he, "they can increase the quotas if they wish." The long-moribund Cuban trade union federation has been revived in recent years to serve as a transmission belt for directives from on high and to impose labor discipline and hike productivity, not particularly to represent the workers' interests. As the assistant director of a cigar factory told me: "Sometimes the party has to make decisions the workers don't like for their own good and the workers are told and they understand." Of course they "understand"—they have

precious little opportunity to do anything else. Whatever the material achievements and human dignity the Revolution has brought to Cuba, socialist democracy is, alas, sorely lacking.

Patrick Lacefield
New York, N.Y.

■ ■ ■

To the Editor:

Having made a two-week visit to Cuba during the month of October during which we traveled the length and breadth of the Island, I have a few comments on Mr. Rivas' article. . . .

Pertaining to Mr. Rivas' complaint of "lack of intellectual, academic and press freedoms," I can assert that wherever we went, we had complete freedom to talk and visit with Cubans who, in turn, conversed with us with abandon. It is true that the only newspaper we saw was the daily organ of the Communist Party, *Granma*, and I am sure that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a political faction opposing socialism in Cuba to freely publish such an organ!

It is difficult to understand Mr. Rivas' statement on insufficient regard for human rights. In Cuba there is a judicial system to which Cuban citizens

take their complaints and at the lower level lay persons participate in the decision-making process. We did not see, hear, or experience any type of criminal behavior even though we walked through largest and smallest cities at all hours of the night unescorted!

While Mr. Rivas made only passing reference to the United State embargo against Cuba, we found this embargo to be a continuing affront to Cubans, as is the continued existence of the Guantanamo Naval enclave! . . . The United States now has a unique opportunity to establish diplomatic and business relations with Cuba. President Carter is held in high esteem by Cubans generally because he is credited with stopping CIA-sponsored terrorist raids on Cuba. (This was quite surprising as we had assumed that such activity had been stopped during the Ford administration!)

Compared to other Latin and South American countries, Cuba seems to be a more democratic, humane and civilized society.

James P. Johnston
Wichita, Kan.

Letters to the editor must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Please limit letters to less than 350 words.

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Church Leans Left In Latin America

By Rosemary Radford Ruether

THE LATIN AMERICAN BISHOPS' conference that just concluded in Puebla, Mexico on February 12 climaxed several years of behind-the-scenes politicking. The stance that would be taken by the bishops on poverty, repression and social justice was a matter of intense concern to many groups. Priests, nuns, lay evangelists working in the poor barrios of the sprawling urban slums, theologians of liberation, had an important stake in the conference. Military leaders and businessmen, North American multinationals and the CIA also had reason to be concerned. For the former group the outcome could well be a matter of life or death. More than a thousand young priests, nuns and pastoral workers have already been tortured or lost their lives because of their commitment to the poor. For the latter, the one autonomous organization in Latin American society capable of resisting military fascist states might move further into the stance of resistance or be brought back to its traditional support of the ruling classes.

Development vs. Liberation

The conflict over the position of the Church is a reflection of the economic and political crises of Latin American society. The nations of Central and South America and the Caribbean have been struggling, especially since the end of World War II, with intensifying contradictions: a neocolonial form of industrialization that widens the gap between rich and poor; growing unemployment in festering urban slums, aggravated by spiraling population and inflation and staggering national debt. In the 1950s the answer to these problems was "development" through international aid. But in



Bishop Genaro Alamilla Arteago of Papantla, Mexico, talks with neighbors in a parish home before mass at the local church. Poster on the wall welcomes Pope John Paul II to Mexico.

Photo by Dawn Gibeau, reprinted with permission from the *National Catholic Reporter*, P.O. Box 281 Kansas City, Mo. 64141.

the 1960s more and more Latin American economists began to dissent from the aid and development model. It became increasingly clear that areas such as Latin America did not suffer from "underdevelopment," but from misdevelopment, caused by structures of dependency built by four centuries of colonialism. More aid coming from the same imperial centers only increased this dependency, since the type of development brought by these agents was primarily concerned with using cheap labor and resources of these areas to meet the consumer and profit needs of foreign companies. In Latin America the talk began to be of "liberation" rather than "development." This meant development from the bottom up rather than the top down, by autonomous, socialist forms of government whose priority was the needs of the poor.

In the '60s attention was also turned

to the new revolutionary regime in Cuba. Here was the harbinger of the sort of change that needed to take place all over Latin America. Some joined guerilla movements to bring the revolution to their countries. The United States countered with the Alliance for Progress, which, in practice, came to focus more on counter-insurgency hardware and training than economic development. The enormous funds pumped into military repression bore fruit in a series of rightwing military coups, mostly led by leaders trained and supported by the American military. These colonial fascist regimes dismantled the fragile structure of popular governments in country after country. Opposition parties, labor unions, student organizations, peasant unions, free universities and press were repressed by the leaders of the new national security states.

Church Took Activist Role

In this crisis of civil government the Church came to occupy an unexpected place. It became the surrogate for civilian democratic society. Here was the only place left where some semblance of free communication and organizing for protest could be maintained. Increasingly, bishops took upon themselves the tasks of organizing committees of solidarity to feed the unemployed poor and protest the flagrant violations of human rights, not just for Catholics, but for the whole society. Bishops who were cautious before became radicalized when their priests were tortured or killed. In one bishops' gathering in Riobamba, Ecuador in 1976 the entire gathering was arrested and detained by the police for three days. The Church which opts for the poor quickly discovers that it can become the Church of the Martyrs.

In 1968, when the last bishops' conference (CELAM II) met in Medellin, Colombia, the élan of social change seemed more hopeful. Progressive bishops, influenced by the theology of liberation, endorsed a document that committed the Church to side with the poor and support liberation from economic dependency. Since that time the trends of dependency, impoverishment, inflation and military repression have greatly worsened. The question for Puebla was whether the Church would be able to maintain its commitment in the light of the mounting price it was paying.

Conservatives Planned Victory

Under the leadership of Monsignor Lopez Trujillo, elected secretary to the bishops' conference in 1972, the forces of conservatism gathered themselves for a coup against liberation theology and its popular expression in *comunidades de base* (base communities). Tens of thousands of these small Christian "cell groups" had sprung up in the last ten years, particularly in Brazil, where it is estimated that there are some 80,000. They are led by lay persons and combine Christian reflection on the Scriptures with social action for the poor. For Lopez Trujillo such groups threatened the hierarchical power of the Church and needed to be curbed and controlled.

For several years Lopez Trujillo planned his victory carefully, gathering financial support through such persons

as his close advisor, the anti-Marxist Belgian priest, Roger Vekemans, whose research center in Bogota, CEDIAI, receives money from anti-communist forces in the United States and West Germany. Liberation theologians were excluded from the work on the preparatory document, which was released for study in December of 1977. The delegates to the third bishops' conference (originally scheduled to meet in October of 1978, but postponed because of the death of John Paul I) were manipulated to eliminate as many radicals as possible. Leftist bishops such as Miguel Obando y Bravo of Nicaragua and Mendez Arceo of Cuernavaca, Mexico, were absent from their national delegations, while a last-minute list of some 70 delegates, many of them from the Vatican and highly conservative, was added.

Despite these efforts, the popular response to the coming conference began

“They seem to want to make a revolution without any conflict. This is the central delusion of the document.”

to generate a different reality. The document was released early enough to allow meetings at every level, from bishops to peasants, Indians, pastoral workers and liberation theologians. Popular groups studied the document and sent back critical analyses to the Secretariat of CELAM in Bogota. These criticisms were also circulated popularly, creating an important work of grassroots reflection. A revised document was released in September of 1978, again without participation of liberation theologians. Again there was much popular criticism.

When the conference finally gathered in Puebla in January, Lopez Trujillo had its processes highly managed behind the high stone walls of one of the most conservative seminaries in the most conservative diocese in Mexico. But, outside the walls, some of the most creative minds of Latin and North America had gathered. Theologians, journalists, sociologists, economists, and feminists assembled their own popular conference,

all of the Left. Not intending to pit themselves against the conference, these groups set out to provide a popular forum to discuss the issues that were being muddled or repressed in the official conference. They provided numerous press conferences and seminars for the 2,000 assembled journalists, all starved for meaningful information.

This popular conference also endeavored to create unofficial ties of communication with the progressive bishops within the walls. Each day CENCOS, a Left information center, provided a forum for liberation theologians, critical economists, radical bishops and even guerrilla fighter-priest, Ernesto Cardenal, to speak. CIDHAL, a center concerned with women, based in Cuernavaca, Mexico, offered an array of panels of feminist theology, sociological analysis and even a press conference of women engaged in fighting political repression, including two women Sandinistas from Nicaragua.

A topic of intense debate was the effect of the Pope's visit. The Pope came to Mexico poorly informed, with speeches written by Lopez Trujillo's staff. His first talks sounded an ambivalent note and were reported as anti-liberation by the American press, counseling priests to pray and stay out of politics. But this was a misrepresentation of the Pope's intentions. As his visit continued, the Pope was visibly moved by the experience of poverty and threw away his speech to the Indians of Oaxaca, writing a new text that spoke powerfully of the "social mortgage" of property and declaring his desire to be the voice "of those who have been silenced." In his press conference after returning to Rome and in subsequent audiences, the Pope has firmly committed himself to the liberation perspective, against violation of human liberty on any level. In general the Pope's speeches were quoted on the side of social justice in the document that emerged from the two-week bishops' meeting.

Although the final document leaves much to be desired, it is apparent that the general mood of support for the liberation perspective, for the rights of the poor, for base communities and for a denunciation of military states had its effect. Those with the liberation perspective were able to communicate effectively with progressive bishops, who, in turn, were for the most part able to sway the general perspective of the commissions.

Continued on page 7

SOCIALIST NOTES

JACK CLARK, STAFF ORGANIZER for the DSOC founding convention, national secretary since that convention and managing editor of the NEWSLETTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT for its first five years, formally announced at the recent fourth national convention his plans to resign from the DSOC staff. He is presently serving as acting national director and plans to help train his successor. After that, he will continue his activity with DSOC and will serve on the National Executive Committee, to which he was elected at Houston. Recently, DEMOCRATIC LEFT met with Clark to get a picture of DSOC then and now.

D.L.: Jack, you came to New York almost seven years ago to begin the work that led to forming DSOC. Has the effort been more successful than you imagined it could be back in 1972?

J.C.: The whole question of DSOC's success relative to its expectations is complicated. When I first got here in October 1972, it was not clear that a new organization could emerge. The political mood in the country wasn't so great. Nixon had just won a landslide. There was no question that the New Left had spent itself. Within the liberal community, the new conservatives were on the move, the liberals somewhat demoralized. Mike and others argued persuasively that our efforts had to center on reaching out to the McGovern activists, the remaining New Left politicals. We agreed on a conference and the launching of a new publication. At that point some of the pessimism and caution began to fade.

D.L.: Why? As you point out, this wasn't exactly a good time for the Left.

J.C.: In part, there was a sense of just moving. We attracted people who had been around the SP but who were tired of faction fighting, and wanted to try something new—as well as others who had not been around organized socialist politics for years or decades. For example, many people on the *Dissent* editorial board joined DSOC, and Irving Howe's enthusiasm was critical to our early enthusiasm—particularly to mine. Our biggest boost came when Victor Reuther and Ralph Helstein signed up. Ralph and

Victor had been crucial in building the CIO. They gave us a sense among ourselves and to the larger political world that we represented a very important labor tradition.

In larger politics, this was the time of Watergate, and we could see Nixon's 1972 mandate fading. Possibilities were opening. Of course, we had a ridiculous budget. I was living and working out of Debbie Meier's den, so we could look around and congratulate ourselves that we were doing so much with so little.

D.L.: What about the founding convention itself?

J.C.: Tremendous excitement. It was successful beyond all expectations. At the end of October 1973, we had 600-700 members. We thought we could just keep growing fast.



Photo by Gretchen Donart

“We're at a point to grow dramatically.”

D.L.: Has it been steady growth since then?

J.C.: I wisecracked in my report to the convention that we began with a bold program called mere survival. In one sense that survival is our greatest accomplishment. We've held on and we've grown when many other political groupings have fallen apart. But there are other accomplishments, too. At the head of the list is the Democracy '76 and DEMOCRATIC AGENDA work Marjorie Phye has led. That's won us credentials, credibility and cadre. I was particularly involved in some of the lobbying and

grassroots pressure for labor law reform and Humphrey-Hawkins in the spring of 1978, and within the DEMOCRATIC AGENDA work and I see that as a highlight for me and for the organization. We won a reputation as an organization with troops in the field. Of course, Memphis strengthened that reputation.

Being admitted into the Socialist International met one of our original goals, demonstrating that we were serious. The establishment of the Hispanic Commission also marks a milestone. Michael Rivas took the lead in forming the Commission in October 1977. That became a signal that solid activists from an important minority community were taking us seriously. The youth section has had to overcome enormous obstacles, but now I think DSOC is in a position to help re-establish radical politics on the campuses.

There is, perhaps, one overriding accomplishment in the last six years: we have established, or re-established, a sense of personal decency on the Left. People who came from the old SP or from other new or old left backgrounds know all too well how vicious internal discussion can be. In addition to making organizational life more pleasant, that non-sectarian internal style is crucial politically because it enables us to reach ordinary people.

D.L.: What's next for DSOC?

J.C.: In the beginning we put our hopes in rapid and astronomical growth. But we were not big enough to grow that fast. Now we've done several years of hard, basic organizing. We may be at the point where we can concentrate some resources to grow dramatically. That growth, of course, must be combined with continuing and extending the political and organizational work we're doing; building locals, building campus chapters, reading, studying, engaging in labor support activity and working with friends and allies in the feminist and minority communities. In the fall, we'll be holding a major programmatic conference, where we hope to spark a broad left liberal movement within the Democratic Party. I hope that we can enter the 1980s as a substantially larger organization that has contributed significantly to moving the political debate in the whole society to the left. ■

"Racket-Busting" in Energy: Coalition Mobilizes Grassroots

By Bob Lawson

TO MOST AMERICANS, THE "energy crisis" has remained a mystery. The only thing that is clear is that our bills keep going up. If there is a shortage, the price goes up; if there is a glut, the price goes up. Whether we conserve or waste, our bills get bigger. In the two years since the price of home heating oil has been decontrolled, it has risen 12 cents a gallon. Consumers paid \$13.4 billion more for gas and electricity in 1977 than in 1976. On top of that, energy prices rose at a rate of 15 percent during 1978. In all, the cost of energy has quadrupled since 1973. While consumers have felt the crunch of higher energy prices, the oil and utility companies have prospered. Arco's profits increased 321 percent between 1972 and 1977. Mobil didn't do quite as well. Its profits increased only 70 percent.

To meet the challenge of the energy monopolies, the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, a national alliance of labor, citizen action, minority, senior citizen, religious and public interest organizations, was formed in 1978. It announced a four-point program to lay the basis for a popular and sound national energy policy. The program calls for affordable energy prices, energy policies that create jobs, break-up of the energy monopolies and the development of safe forms of energy production.

William Winpisinger, head of the International Association of Machinists, is the Coalition president, and William Hutton, Executive Director of the National Council of Senior Citizens, the secretary/treasurer. Heather Booth of the Midwest Academy serves as executive director. While national in structure, the Coalition's strategy is to develop a grassroots movement in communities and legislative districts across the country.

The cycle of high energy prices and high profits continues to spiral upward with assistance from the Carter Administration. Recently passed energy legislation has already increased natural gas prices by 13 percent, which promises to add an additional one thousand dollars a year to the energy costs of each family while putting \$40 billion into the coffers of the oil industry by 1985. The energy companies are using their excessive profits to expand their control over other sectors of the economy. Mobil now owns Montgomery Ward. Exxon is marketing a new data transmission system and Arco recently acquired the *London Observer*. The consumer can expect no relief from the Administration's anti-inflation campaign. Indeed, energy prices have been specifically exempted from Carter's anti-inflation program.

Although the Coalition was formed too late to influence the course of the fight over national energy legislation in the winter and spring of 1978, it did attempt to mobilize a last minute campaign

against the deregulation of natural gas. While losing a key House vote by 206 to 207, it initiated activity in 21 states and Washington, D.C.

Campaign Against Shut-Offs

On November 14th, William Hutton and Coalition Executive Board member Bernard Veney, of the National Clients Council (a national low-income organization) announced the Coalition's winter campaign against utility shut-offs of gas and electric service. In response to the Coalition's demands, the U.S. Department of Energy sent a communication to all state public service commissions urging "an expedited effort to adopt rules precluding termination of service . . . solely on the basis of inability to pay."

As a result of Coalition action, winter shut-offs were stopped in Minnesota, Maryland, Connecticut and Wisconsin. Mass meetings with utility executives in Illinois; weekly picketing of utilities in New Jersey; demonstrations and public



Rochester Patriot/cpf

DSOC is a member of the National Board of the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition. DSOC locals wishing to participate in coalition activities should contact the appropriate regional office.

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hearings in Missouri, Michigan, North Carolina and Iowa and introduction of anti-shut-off legislation in several other states mark the continuing vitality of the campaign.

Consumer organizations have been fighting shut-offs for years, but the involvement of the Coalition has added an important new ally—large numbers of trade unionists.

In Charleston, West Virginia, the state Federation of Labor and locals of the Steel Workers, Oil/Chemical, Mine Workers and Machinists joined with the Coalition on Legislation for the Elderly in demanding hearings on shut-off policy. The Public Service Commission agreed.

In Louisville, Kentucky, an anti-shut-off march on the Louisville Gas and Electric Company was sponsored by senior organizations, the Federation of Church Social Agencies, The Justice and Peace Center, the Clients Council, the Kentucky AFL-CIO and several local unions. As a result of that march, both the Louisville City Council and the County Commission have passed resolutions supporting the ban on shut-offs.

The Coalition has also added a vehicle through which local groups can coordinate their efforts nationally. Shut-offs have traditionally been an issue for low-income organizations. This winter's campaign is an example of the basic principle of coalition building at work; groups exchanging support for each other's issues.

Soon the Coalition will launch efforts to hold energy price increases under the 7 percent inflation guideline. It is stand-

ing by to defeat any move to deregulate the price of gasoline, should that be attempted. There will also be innovative campaigns designed to create thousands of jobs through weatherizing, solarizing, and retrofitting public buildings. Coalition members understand that taking on some of the largest and most powerful multinational corporations is not a short-term task. It will be a long struggle requiring mobilization of hundreds of thousands of Americans around a coordinated strategy in the local and national political arena. Deeper alliances and more forceful tactics will be necessary to meet the challenge. In its short life, the Coalition has already won some important victories and has brought diverse constituencies together to work on a common agenda. ■

Bob Lawson is Associate Director of The Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition.



Mich. Free Press/cpf

PUEBLA, from page 4

There is even a strongly worded statement on the exploitation of women and the need to support women's rights.

The document reiterated in every section the message of the gospels' "preferential option for the poor." Christ came as a poor man, to side with the exploited, to critique the rich and to announce the building of a new society that was to begin on earth, even though it might have dimensions that go beyond history. To this extent the liberation perspective has become normative even for an assembly that was primarily centrist in character! The threatened coup by the anti-liberation forces was averted. Lopez Trujillo left the conference much discredited, especially when his manipulation of the conference was revealed by the leakage of several letters to ranking conservatives.

But the message is still a mixed one. Although the document decries poverty, it analyzes the causes superficially. The bishops continuously seek to solve the radical issues of poverty and repression through some option that avoids "both capitalism and Marxism." They seem to want to make a revolution without any conflict. This is the central delusion of the document. But it is a delusion that can only be exposed once the fine denunciations and commitments of the document are taken out of the segregated world of the seminary and applied to the real world of Latin America. ■

Rosemary Radford Ruether teaches at Garrett Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. She attended the Puebla conference.

SALT II: Cautious Step Or Bold Blunder?

At the Houston convention, DSOC passed resolutions that supported SALT II as a "modest" step toward reversing the arms race and committed the organization to making the fight against the new militarism a major priority. DEMOCRATIC LEFT asked three members to give their views on the issues. Harry Boyte and Pat Lacefield comment here. Alex Spinrad's remarks will appear next month.

By Harry C. Boyte

THE DEBATE OVER THE STRATEGIC Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) will play a major role in shaping the politics of the 1980s. How the debate proceeds and the nature of the political conflict may prove even more decisive than the simple question of whether SALT II receives Senate ratification.

In such a context, both our heritage as democratic socialists and the credibility we have gained through coalition work over the last several years should compel us to take a leading role in the struggle. Our demand should be that SALT II be ratified, not as a "solution" to the arms race, but as a modest first step toward facing up to the choice enunciated by the United Nations' Special Session on Disarmament: "We must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation."

New Militarism

Grave signs of a resurgent militarism among the corporate establishment have emerged recently. Ever since the latter days of the Ford Administration, when the President buckled before right-wing pressure and aborted the SALT II negotiations, Republican leaders have sounded ominous alarms about the bal-

ance of forces in the world. John Connolly called for American support for white South Africa as a "bulwark against communism." More recently, Howard Baker warned that "Who Lost Iran?" could well be a major issue in 1980.

At a meeting of 95 elected GOP officials on February 3 of this year, the party leadership went on record accusing Carter's Administration of ignoring "the aggressiveness of the Soviet Union" and proclaiming its intent to make debate over the SALT treaty the occasion for taking issue with "the total military and foreign policy relationship" between the U.S. and Russia.

In the face of such threats, it first seemed that Jimmy Carter would be an articulate and courageous advocate for quite a different approach to international relations.

Russian Dominance Declining

Some officials in the Administration and certain Carter policies have attempted to build foundations for international peace. Thus, for example, State Department spokesmen and women have pointed to the exaggeration and biases that run through the militarist rhetoric.

The Soviet Union, crippled by a near stagnant economy and forced to import everything from wheat to computers, has a direct material interest in curtailing the arms race. It has suffered setback after setback. Its most vociferous opponent is its former ally, China. Soviet advisers have been kicked out of more African nations than they have been admitted to in the last several years. Even Warsaw Pact members such as Romania and Poland assert a growing independence, while the Eurocommunist parties call for a socialist and neutral Europe as a counterforce to both power blocs.

In such an environment, these officials argue, it amounts to paranoia—or

cynical design—to claim that Russia is becoming dominant in the world.

But in foreign policy, as on every other issue, Carter has also reacted to right wing critics by taking up their positions as his own. Instead of mobilizing the potential support for movement toward peace and disarmament (more than 80 percent of Americans support a new arms agreement), he sounds more and more bellicose. Carter approved research funds for the MX missile system, replaced Paul Warnke, who resigned as head of the Disarmament and Control Agency, with a three-star general, engineered expansion in military outlays while lacerating the domestic budget, and sent out feelers about reinstatement of the draft and a major new civil defense program. In addition, Carter has moved with great reluctance to build support for SALT II.

SALT II is a modest step indeed. As presently projected, it would allow development of major new weapons systems like the MX missile and the submarine launched Trident II and it would mean an increase in deliverable U.S. warheads from their current number of 9,500 (enough to destroy every major Russian city 40 times) to near 14,000.

But SALT II also sets an agenda for the next crucial step: SALT III negotiations for reduction in armaments. Its defeat would be a disaster. Even if it is won through the apparent Carter strategy of emphasizing technical aspects of the accord and simultaneously promising new weapons systems, its promise could be truncated.

We could enter a new era of brinkmanship that could destroy the possibility of progress toward social justice at home and abroad.

The recent conflicts in the Middle East and between China and Vietnam underline the urgency of building a new movement for world peace.

Socialists Must Take Initiative

Democratic socialists have again and again helped lead the struggle for peace and international cooperation.

If the treaty is ratified through a mobilization of Americans around a vision of substantive progress toward disarmament and an end to the nuclear balance of terror, it would represent a major defeat for the corporate right. It would build vital momentum for SALT II. And it could open the way for democratic Left advances on many other fronts.

The building blocks for such a mobilization exist among all those progres-

sive groups that stand to lose directly and terribly from an escalation of the arms race. Unions like the Machinists and the United Auto Workers, leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus, women's organizations, big city mayors, and even traditionally conservative religious groups like the Southern Baptists have gone on record with strong stands against the Carter budget and in favor of disarmament. The task ahead must be to make such formal stands the foundation for living movement. It is work that both our history and our vision for humanity's future make compelling. ■

Harry Boyte is a writer and political activist from Minnesota.

Structural Default: Not a Building Block

IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS, GIVEN the resolution of minor details, the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT II) will be presented to the United States Senate for ratification with the support of both the Carter Administration and the Soviet government. As the treaty will most probably be the major foreign policy issue of 1979, the question naturally arises: What position should democratic socialists adopt on SALT? Should we, in the face of right wing attacks charging "sellout" and sounding the trumpet for the use of SALT as an ideological weapon against the Russians, close ranks with the Administration and support SALT II? Or should we measure SALT II and the SALT process in general against our desire for substantial progress toward disarmament?

To state that SALT II is a "modest" step toward curbing the arms race is a gross exaggeration. The United States presently boasts an arsenal of 9,500 deliverable nuclear warheads between our intercontinental missiles, submarines and strategic bombers. Under SALT II, the U.S. would increase its arsenal to some 14,000 warheads, not including the Trident submarine or the MX mobile missile. The Soviets would expand their deliverable warheads strength from

4,000 at present to approximately 8,000. Though President Carter has made much of the fact that the Soviets would have to destroy about 200 missile launchers, such launchers are outmoded and thus of little consequence. What is of consequence, and what we on the democratic Left should take notice of, is that SALT II does not deserve the label "arms control," much less "disarmament." Under SALT I both powers nearly doubled their nuclear arsenals and President Carter and Secretary of State Vance have used the fact that SALT II is entirely compatible with projected U.S. military programs as a selling point to woo conservative and Republican support.

Frankly, SALT II's chances of passage are slim and none. The Republicans, who came to Carter's rescue on the Panama Canal and the Turkish arms embargo, have expressed their distress at American "military weakness," and vowed to oppose any treaty that accepts strategic parity with the Soviet Union. The latest vote count in the Senate already shows 30 no votes out of 34 needed to defeat the pact, with a couple of dozen senators undecided. The Administration has, on the one hand, sought to win conservatives' votes for SALT by telling them to look at the whole picture—go-aheads on neutron bomb components and binary

nerve gas production, the appointment of hard-liner General George Seignious as head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, support for MX mobile missile production, and a \$12 billion hike in military spending. At the same time, the Administration winks to the Left—urging liberals to overlook Carter's moves to placate the right and focus only on adoption of SALT, while browbeating liberals with apocalyptic warnings of dire happenings should SALT be defeated. Some senators—including Mark Hatfield (Rep.—Ore.), William Proxmire (Dem.—Wis.), and George McGovern (Dem.—S.D.) have let it be known that they intend to oppose SALT as representing an "institutionalization" of the arms race.

If SALT is defeated, a return to the negotiating table is more likely than any resumption of the cold war. Perhaps such a defeat would afford us time to examine the SALT process and its inherent flaws. These include its tendency to increase rather than reduce arsenals, compatibility with the respective military programs of both powers, lack of controls on qualitative weapons improvements, development of weapons systems as "bargaining chips," and the disproportionate influence of the military in the negotiating process. One is reminded of the naval disarmament talks of the 1920s that left the most dangerous of naval forces—submarines and pocket battleships—unrestricted, prompting comparisons to the cruise missiles and MXs of today.

SALT represents not a building block for future arms reductions but rather a justification for a qualitative race "controlled" by the two powers. While such substantive measures toward disarmament as a comprehensive test ban treaty are stymied by the Carter Administration, the futility of bilateralism as reflected in SALT lives on. While we on the democratic Left should not be utopian in rejecting anything less than total disarmament, we should take care to insure that "arms control" agreements move toward a lessening of the danger of nuclear war rather than justifying an escalation in that race. Far from removing that nuclear sword of Damocles that John F. Kennedy saw hanging above our heads, SALT II would replace that sword with a still heavier one. One need not be a pacifist to contemplate the consequences with trepidation. ■

Patrick Lacefield is a member of the New York DSOC local.

a 3.3% increase. In the city of San Jose, to take an unexceptional example, this means that junior and senior high schools will be cut back from seven and six periods, respectively, to five. This year's budget has already forced a statewide reduction of 50 percent in high school adult education programs, though Brown was already moving in this direction in 1977 when he terminated the continuing education program of the University of California.

● When 13 passed, Brown abrogated the collective bargaining agreements of California's one and a half million public employees by imposing a wage freeze. At no point has he used any of the state's huge surplus for job programs, despite a state unemployment rate chronically 1 percent higher than the national average. When he took office, California ranked 15th among the states in unemployment insurance benefits. Even before Jarvis passed, Brown had battered the ranking down to 30th.

Brown Butters Up Business

Conveniently for Brown, his campaign for selective impoverishment has coincided with realization on the part of the business community that upward redistribution of wealth is the wave of the future. Lest someone drive a wedge between them, Brown dines every Sunday with various business leaders at the table of Arco Chairman Robert Anderson. He has become Chairman of something called the Interstate Oil Compact Commission, in which capacity he has recommended the deregulation of oil prices. Indeed, the Brown stock speech is fairly larded with calls for increasing the proportion of the GNP that goes to corporations, on the theory that this will increase investment and productivity and employment. It is reasonable to assume that Brown, who outspent Carter two-to-one in each of his victorious 1976 primaries, does not expect his faith in the system to go unrewarded by the corporate Political Action Committees (PACs) as the 1980 elections roll around.

The broader question raised by Brown's politics, as well as by Carter's, is that of the base of its support beyond the business community. To be sure, both Brown and Carter have tailored their positions to win the votes of the college educated professional and white collar workers whom Pat Caddell, in his cele-

brated memo to Jimmy, designated as the backbone of the emerging new majority. But more than Carter or any other politician, Brown has consciously mobilized this constituency by playing on its fears of inflation. Even more ominously, he has cut the political base of the welfare state at every opportunity. "I'm not so sure we need a voter registration drive," Brown told a dumbfounded political operative who had suggested mobilizing the minorities during the 1974 campaign. Last year, Brown's major registration

“Brown, who outspent Carter two-to-one in each of his victorious 1976 primaries, does not expect his faith in the system to go unrewarded by the corporate Political Action Committees.”

drive came in the conservative suburbs; he became the first Democrat in the modern history of the state to carry Orange County. Conversely, voter turnout has been steadily dropping in the ghettos and barrios of California; and while Brown was enjoying his landslide, his two black running mates were going down to defeat. Indeed, Brown has won big in what might otherwise have been Republican years in California (1970, 1978). In 1974, the year of the Democratic sweep, he barely squeaked through. It is a phenomenon to which party leaders in California are only now beginning to address themselves; some have wondered aloud if Brown hasn't "poisoned the well" for any liberals rash enough to run statewide in the foreseeable future.

Assault on Welfare State

As yet, however, Brown is still more the beneficiary of history than its shaper. Driven though he may be to reinstall discipline among the decadent poor, his efforts would long since have come to naught were the American economy not locked into its first major structural crisis since the Great Depression. The trade-off evolved during the New Deal—the establishment of a rather miserly welfare state that would support purchasing power to ward off depressions, the strengthening of a corporate sector with an increasing ability to control its own markets—was

already creating intolerable inflationary pressures by the time Brown took office. The crisis has obliterated the center of American politics and given rise to the first popular base since the New Deal for an assault upon the welfare state. (It may also yet create the first popular base since the New Deal for an assault on the corporate sector, but that's another story.) It is a systemic crisis that has enabled Brown to sound the call for discipline that may win the Presidency.

In the impending Carter-Brown battle for the allegiance of a frightened middle class, Carter must be conceded the advantage of incumbency; but in a campaign against government, incumbency is not an unqualified advantage. By virtue of both his position and his disposition, Brown can surely summon more zeal than the President in attacking the welfare state. As in 1976, Brown is the outsider to Carter's establishment; he is Carter's Carter.

The remaining mystery of Brown's allure is his ability to hold self-described leftists in his camp. With the advent of the campaign for the constitutional convention, the California AFL-CIO has finally begun to move away from Brown, though many of its member unions still feel the need to support Brown the incumbent. The liberal California Democratic Council has at long last taken a more critical stance. The one progressive group that has consciously refrained from criticizing even the constitutional convention is Tom Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED). To be sure, Brown has been generous with his appointments to CED members and has given a boost to its campaign for solar energy, but he has shown comparable generosity to other progressive organizations that have managed to refrain from following him down his current path. Brown gives little appearance of caring, however, that some liberal organizations have abandoned him. He obviously thinks, for example, that he is more in touch with the union rank-and-file on the issue of inflation than their leaders are. With the help of an exultant corporate community and a bewildered middle class, hedonists and Haydenists behind him, he slouches towards the White House. ■

Harold Meyerson is a Los Angeles based writer and a member of the DSOC National Board.

Wall Facts

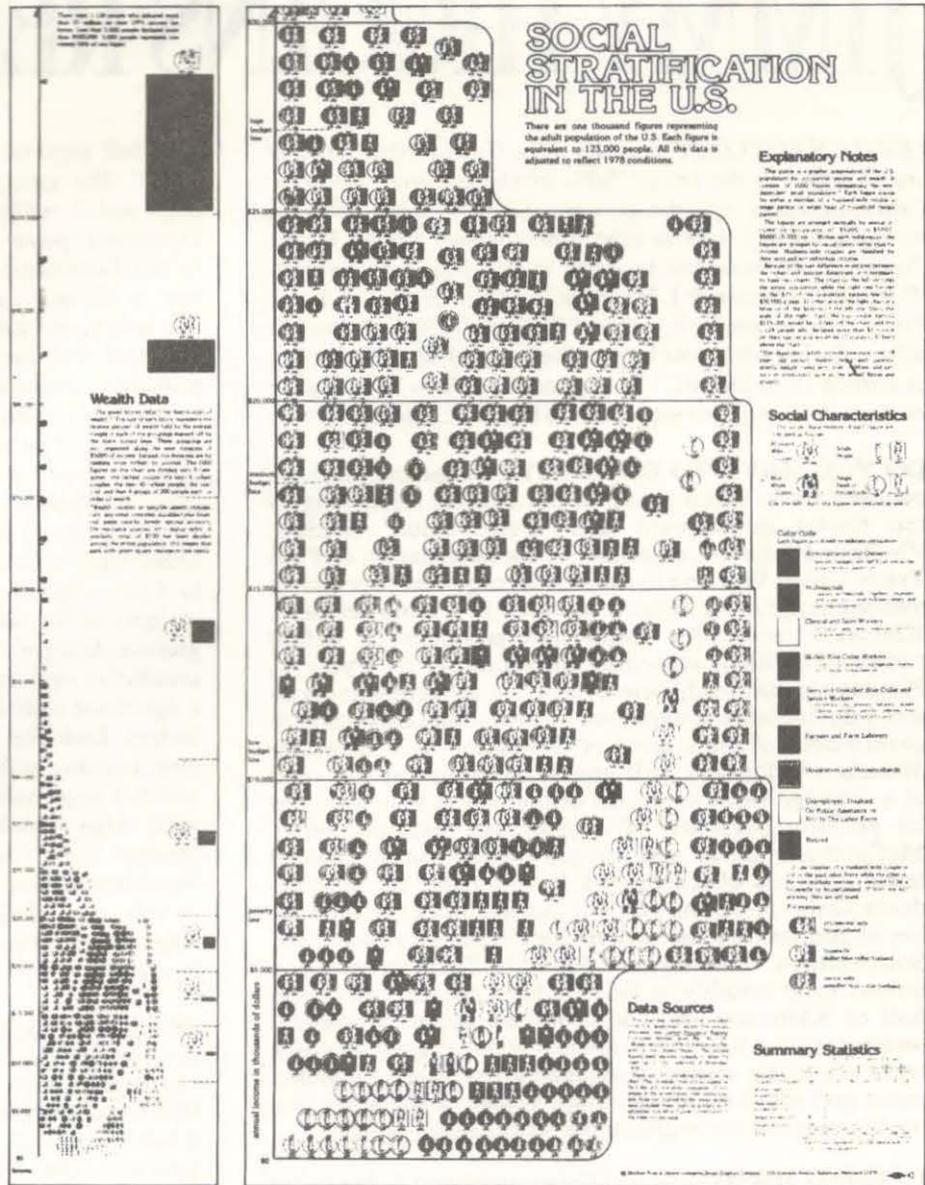
By Bogdan Denitch

SOME YOUNG ECONOMISTS, ACTIVE in the Union of Radical Political Economists, have designed an attractive chart of social stratification in the U.S. It should be a part of every socialist's wall decoration, and is an excellent tool for lectures and educational work.

The 45" x 35" chart recalculates Census and tax data so that the information reflects 1978 conditions. It is particularly useful because it shows the income distribution by the units that actually receive the income, i.e., two-income families, families with a single breadwinner, and individuals. In this era of inflation, it is a useful antidote to the various myths about American income distribution. For example, one sees immediately that 87% of all earning units earn less than \$30,000 a year. The breakdown is given in socio-professional classifications: administrators and owners; professionals; clerical and sales; skilled blue collar; non-skilled blue collar; farmers and farm laborers; housewives and househusbands; unemployed; disabled, etc. and retired. The dimensions of sex and race are combined with the professional and income categories. Several not too widely understood facts stand out starkly on the chart. It shows, of course, that the overwhelming majority of those under the poverty line are white (not black), female, and living in single households, with the largest single group being retired white widows. It also puts the entire discussion about the black middle class in a proper perspective, showing that twice as many black families earning over \$25,000 a year are two-income, blue collar families as compared to the blacks who are either professionals or owners or administrators. Finally, it shows that a substantial part of the blue collar working class is found in the medium budget line, particularly when there are two breadwinners, which is more often the case than not.

Sociologist Bogdan Denitch is a member of the DSOC Board.

The chart can be ordered through DSOC for \$6 (postage included). This is a special, one-time offer and is good only through May 21. Make checks payable to DSOC.



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JIMMY HIGGINS REPORTS

LETTUCE BOYCOTT, AGAIN—The United Farm Workers are on strike in the lettuce fields of the Imperial Valley of California again, and the growers and local authorities still resist the UFW's right to exist. One unarmed striker, Rufino Contreras, 27, was shot to death in mid-February. *Business Week* quotes Frederick J. Heringer, president of the California Farm Bureau, predicting that "if Cesar [Chavez] doesn't deliver the big settlement he promised, the UFW is all through as a union in California." In response, the Farm Workers are once again asking their supporters to boycott California lettuce.

DO YOU HAVE TO BE CRAZY to organize an independent trade union group in the USSR? According to top Soviet government and "trade union" officials, Vladimir Klebanov, organizer of the Association of Free Trade Union Workers in the USSR, required psychiatric treatment for head injuries received in a mine accident. Klebanov received a lump sum payment of 10,000 rubles (\$15,000), according to testimony by Pyotr T. Pimenov, a national secretary of the government-sponsored Soviet labor movement. Pimenov and other Soviet government officials pictured Klebanov as a mentally disturbed individual, still unable to adjust, at the head of a "foreign-inspired group of malcontents being used for political purposes." The grotesque combination of McCarthyite smear and alleged mental and emotional instability has characterized Soviet handling of dissidents. Only the strong voice of outrage from the international community has spared such figures as Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, Turchin and Plyusch. Some progressive unions, most notably in Britain, have spoken out on behalf of Klebanov and the group he leads. If workers seeking to organize independently in an alleged workers' state are to be spared humiliating psychiatric confinement and mind-numbing drugs, voices of socialists and trade unionists throughout the world must protest.

JUNKING JIMMY—An anti-Carter movement is beginning to stir. On March 1, Vice President Mondale arrived in Los Angeles for a major Democratic fund-raiser. He was greeted

by a full page ad taken out by "Democrats for Change in 1980." The group includes liberal stalwarts from anti-war days, and it reaches well into the middle of the California Democrats' power centers. But it's not trying to reach out to the Democratic power in Sacramento, Jerry Brown. He, too, is off and running (see Harold Meyerson's article in this issue), and although some liberal and labor leaders have indicated that they'd support Brown against Carter in the primaries, almost no one on the Democratic Left would like to see the California Governor in the White House. As early as last fall, Machinists President William Winpisinger declared a break between his union and the Carter Administration. The break is so deep that IAM Vice President George Poulin recently posed the issue of a labor-based third party. Other trade unionists aren't ready to go that far, but hostility to Carter's politics is clear from George Meany and the majority of the AFL-CIO Executive Council. While the Progressive Alliance, led by the UAW's Doug Fraser, has clearly avoided an explicitly anti-Carter role, it is gathering together a significant coalition to challenge the priorities of the Carter budget. Look for more anti-Carter (and anti-Brown) sentiment building as the year goes on. For example, after summer and fall negotiations, Carter Administration economists will apply wage guidelines to contract settlements. If the Administration doesn't slap down any big union contracts, the Republicans (and probably Brown) will charge that Carter is soft on inflation. If he does overrule any bargained wage increase, the labor movement will swing against Carter in a unified way.

DOES DEFENSE SPENDING result in more jobs? A new report issued by the International Association of Machinists says no. In fact, the report demonstrates that from 1975 to 1978, while spending for military contracts rose from \$1 billion to \$5 billion, 12,000 IAM jobs were lost. For a copy of the full report, write to the International Association of Machinists, Department of Public Relations, 1300 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20036.

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