

The Workers' Advocate

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Transit workers shut Brooklyn Bridge, lay siege to union hall!

Once again, the New York transit workers are up in arms. In our Sept. 20, 1990 issue, we covered the rank-and-file picket at Transit Authority (TA) headquarters, protesting the firing of provisional trackworkers. The trackworkers acted despite the obstruction and even opposition of the leaders of the TWU (Transit Workers Union), and despite the TA's singling out of four militant trackworkers for reprisals for the ongoing workers' resistance. Below we cover the mass action of transit workers against a sell-out contract deal between the TA and the TWU. We reprint on the action itself from the Feb. 12 issue of New York Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-New York.

Chanting "No Contract, No Peace" and "A Just Contract or Shut It Down!," 1,000 angry transit workers closed down the Manhattan-bound Brooklyn Bridge at the height of rush hour Wednesday night.

After marching from Jay St. to City Hall, over 300 workers took the train up to Transit Workers Union headquarters, where a Conductor/Tower meeting was scheduled. There, a panicky Sonny Hall [TWU leader] called out the NYPD [New York Police Department] to protect himself from "his own" members. As we write, the TWU building is being shielded by 30 squad cars and over 100 police, who are refusing workers entry.

Prior to marching over the bridge, over 500 transit workers picketed and rallied for an hour in front of TA [Transit Authority] headquarters. Shouting "Vote No!," they militantly denounced the medical co-payment and the lump sum payment instead of a raise. Angry words were directed at Sonny Hall and his Executive Board flunkies who sold us out.

Down Jay Street and all along the march, excited transit workers grabbed thousands of anti-contract leaflets and hoisted hand-made picket signs. They proudly plastered their hats and coats with bright red stickers proclaiming, "Defeat the contract sellout! Organize to fight!" Hundreds more stickers were grabbed up to post around the system.

With this one bold stroke, these workers dramatically served notice on the TA, Sonny Hall, and [New York mayor] David Dinkins. And in a few hours, they changed the rules of the game. Sonny Hall can no longer claim full

control over the situation. The TA can no longer expect to simply shove this giveback contract down our throats without a whimper of protest.

And last night, 1,000 workers cut their teeth on what it means to fight. In one evening the question before all transit workers changed from "Can we fight?" to "What next?" and "How best to show our strength today?" These are exciting and memorable developments.

All transit workers can be proud of this fighting 1,000. They showed not only our anger, but also our ability to be organized and disciplined—a potentially strong fighting force. This kind of forceful expression of our outrage is unprecedented in recent times. It revealed outrage in two directions: towards the takeback offensive of the TA and towards the thoroughly sold-out TWU bureaucrats at the top.

It is a tantalizing glimpse of the way forward—to independent action, to mobilizing large numbers of workers, to tapping their spirit to fight the TA. But by no means were these particular workers "extraordinary" or special in

Continued on the next page

Inside

Background to the struggle in NY transit: Vote no! Defeat the sellout contract!	2
More on the material basis for socialism in the modern world (2)	4
Seattle: Why did the police attack the anti-racist march on Capitol Hill?	10
Strikes in brief	12
Senator Riegle finds a cause	13
On Bani-Sadr	14

any way. They simply did what needed to be done.

Today, as word of this action spreads, transit workers will find we have new options inconceivable just 24 hours ago. No longer are we faced with the choice of accepting Sonny Hall's terrible contract or having it shoved down our throat by an arbitrator. New possibilities now open up before us.

It is likely that the next days will see a rash of work-to-rule and slowdowns on the roads. Just last month, train operators on the #1 line forced a change in their pick when a work-to-rule forced 14 cancellations and 114 late trains. Now workers throughout the system—not just in RTO—can take up the spirit of the Brooklyn Bridge 1,000. Now that the iron is hot, it is time to take action before Sonny Hall and the TA can take damage control measures.

Fellow transit workers: seize this moment to get organized against the sellout contract and against the traitor Sonny Hall and all his flunkies!

The Brooklyn Bridge action shows clearly that we can fight this rotten contract. We can fight the TA. We can fight the plots of the TWU bureaucrats. This is no time for business as usual. We urge all workers to discuss today, not only what is wrong with the contract, but what we can do to fight it. To find ways to organize actions in our shops, gangs, and on the road.

Down with the sellout contract and the sellout union

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officials!

Get organized and fight! □

Background to the struggle

The New York Workers' Voice put out two issues earlier in February, rallying resistance to the contract deal after Sonny Hall presented it to the TWU Executive Board on Wednesday, January 29. Below we reprint from the second issue, that of February 8, which called on workers to rally against the contract on February 12. We add a few additional details in brackets, taken from the earlier issue.

Vote No!

Defeat the sellout contract

It is now over a week since the Executive Board ratified Sonny Hall's giveback contract with the TA. In that time a ripple of protest has swept through the transit system. In official union meetings, in gang and lunch-time discussions, in petitions, and in meetings outside work, transit workers are denouncing the lump sum payment instead of a raise, the medical co-payments, and the Executive Board members that voted for these givebacks.

Now an anti-contract rally has been called for Wednesday, February 12, outside TA headquarters down Jay St.

These are all good signs that transit workers are beginning to go into motion against the sellout union leadership. As this contract makes quite clear, to fight the TA it is also necessary to fight the union bureaucrats who are in bed with them.

A giveback contract from start to finish

There is nothing good that can be said about this proposed contract. The most treacherous provision is the \$1,000 lump sum "retroactive cost of living adjustment" instead of a raise, covering a 15-month period from May 1, 1991 through July 31, 1992. This piddling amount is smaller than the \$1300-\$1400 that we would get just in retroactive money from a 4% raise.

But worse, the \$1,000 is a one-time, lump sum payment which is *not* folded into our wage rate, is *not* pensionable, and is *not* paid to workers that retired before January 19, 1992.

The TA-Hall \$1,000 payment is really a lifetime giveback! Even a meager 2% increase rolled into our base rate at the beginning of the contract would be worth about \$10,000 over the next 10 years and more than \$25,000 over the next 20 years! No wonder the TA is happy to wave \$1,000 at us instead and hope we'll bite. (Figures are estimated for a worker making \$16/hr in April 1991 and receiving very modest 3.5% increases annually at the expiration of the proposed contract.)

[On Sept. 1, 1992, halfway through the second year of the contract, which starts retroactively in May 1, 1991, we will finally receive a raise of 4.5%. Then] in the third year of the contract, we receive 2% plus an additional 1% if the TA achieves \$14 million in productivity savings under a "Work Smarter Program." This should really be called a "Work Harder and Less Safe Program." Hall claims he will convince management to cut...management! Who really believes this? The closer we get to the third year, Hall will grow panicky and start throwing small groups of workers to the wolves: "no work" status for restricted employees, fewer flaggers, fewer platform controllers, two to do the work of three, etc. Isn't it bad enough we have management looking for speedup all the time? Now the union hacks will do management's job for them.

[In sum, this 37-month contract produces increases of 0-4.5-2% (with a 1% speed-up kicker), totaling a 6.5-7.5% increase over 3+ years. But the TA is not even that "generous." Remember: last spring Sonny Hall agreed to revise the pension contribution formula to save the TA enough money to pay an estimated 2% wage increase. In other words, on the heels of a 25% fare increase in the last 13 months (with more to come), the TA is really coughing up only 4.5% stretched over 3 years!]

And the health benefits are a major disaster. Hall claims he had to make concessions in other areas to secure "no reduction in (health) benefits." Pardon us, did we miss something? What exactly is a co-payment (for GHI and other unspecified services) if not a benefit reduction?

This is a major step backward for us because the TA finally gets its foot in the door on this issue. If this co-payment is approved, we can expect larger and larger charges in upcoming contracts. In fact, these larger charges may come in just a little more than a year. Since the TA and Hall reached no agreements about third-year payments to the Health Benefit Trust, there is no telling what will happen to our health benefits in 1993. This is like a guillotine over our heads.

There are a host of other concessions and savings to the TA. Not only is the \$4/hr training wage maintained, but new hires will have their pay cut for the first three years. The differential payment that the TA makes on workers compensation will be cut, so we will no longer gross our full wage. And the TA will now "graciously" let suspended

workers come to work at 70% pay. This will actually increase the TA's willingness to put someone in the street. Maybe they can establish a "finder's fee" for the foremen!

Finally, a host of previous givebacks—the random drug testing, the "sick abuse" program, the Tier 3/4 pension—remain unchanged. Taken all together and with the reduction in TA payments into the pension fund, the TA boasts that this contract will only cost them 3.1% over the entire 38 months! All these and more are good enough reasons to reject this contract.

TWU bureaucrats twist and turn and lie

The union bureaucrats know very well that the great majority of workers do not like this contract. After a few feeble attempts, they have already given up the effort to say that this is a "good" contract; they are now looking for other ways to sell it.

One argument they give is that all the givebacks were necessary to protect health benefits. Well, this lie might convince some if health benefits were actually protected—which they are not.

Another line is that this contract is good for the times—the "you're lucky to have a job" argument. At 207th St. Shop, for example, the shop officials who support the contract have spent their time posting up a scurrilous *Newsday* column demanding that transit workers get no raises whatsoever. Apparently, this is supposed to make us feel good about what we got.

Finally, Sonny Hall threatens us with how much worse things could be. He boasts that the union rejected 180 TA demands. If the contract is rejected, he warns, many of these demands will be imposed on us by binding arbitration. But this is hardly our only choice. If Hall forces arbitration on us, it will be the lowest form of betrayal.

Transit workers must get organized

Transit workers do not have to accept this contract or go to arbitration. **We have the option of standing up and fighting for better wages, for stable and improved health benefits at the TA's expense, and for a safe work place.**

Transit workers have suffered a decade of givebacks and are getting fed up with the lame excuses and lies of our union misleaders. Over the past year or two, we have seen small signs that the years of inaction may soon give way to a renewed mass struggle of transit workers. Rank-and-file transit workers met outside of work and organized a mass picket line at Jay St. in 1990. Petitions repeatedly circulate independently of the union hacks. Hundreds of workers denounce the TA *and* the TWU bigshots at union meetings and union rallies. And work-to-rule actions are again cropping up around the system.

The contract vote is another field on which to challenge the TA's and Hall's stranglehold over transit workers. We should **VOTE NO TO DEFEAT THE SELLOUT CON-**

TRACT. Transit workers should circulate and sign petitions against the contract. We should circulate anti-contract literature such as the *Workers' Voice* and display Vote No stickers and buttons. Transit workers should come out in force to meetings and demonstrations to denounce the

contract givebacks and expose the lies of the Hall sellouts. Above all, transit workers must reject the path of relying on the union bureaucracy to protect them. Get organized for rank and file action! □

More on the material basis for socialism in the modern world (2)

In our last issue, we printed a letter to the Supplement from comrade Pete of Detroit commenting on the Seattle May Day speech of last year on the technical and cultural basis for socialism (this speech appeared in the July 20, 1991 issue of the Supplement). In this issue, we print a letter from comrade Fred of Seattle in response to Pete's remarks and the speech.

February 4, 1992

Rough thoughts on Pete's notes on the speech, The technical and cultural basis for workers' socialism in the modern world

1)

Abolition of private property is necessary but not sufficient for the abolition of class distinctions.

After the experience of the Soviet model, socialism can't be defined as abolition of private property. Perhaps "abolition of capital" or "abolition of bourgeois property" instead. In the East, formerly, capital circulated between units essentially lacking distinct ownership. The Soviet model proves that distinct property units are not necessary for the essential features of capitalism. It is true that class distinctions are based on property ownership. In the Soviet model, this might be called state, public, bureaucratic, etc. property ownership, but not private property.

Perhaps there are subordinate aspects of the Soviet-style economy where capital circulates in an essentially private form, e.g. the management of a section directly obtains profits from some of the circulation of the section's commodities. But the predominate form seems to be ownership by the bureaucracy whose most distinct feature is that it is part of the state.

I will attempt to discuss Soviet property a bit more. Under capitalism, all the elements of production are transformed into exchange value (hereafter referred to as "value"). Capital is superior to other classes because of the non-equivalent exchange in the production process—the

value of labor traded for the greater value of its products, i.e. capital gets surplus value. The forms of property determine whether or not the elements of production are transformed into value, and who manages the circulation of value. If value is created, and labor is productive, then whoever manages the circulation of value will appropriate surplus value since it will be a portion of total value.

If the above is accepted, the first question arises, what forms of property can fulfill these conditions? The Soviet model shows that distinct asset-owning property units (private property) are not required for the creation of value, nor for creation of a particular class that manages the circulation of value.

If bourgeois property exists in both the corporate and Soviet models, then the second question is, what is needed to abolish this type of property? First of all, the private form must be abolished, since this inherently means that value is created and surplus value is appropriated by the owners of property. As well, value itself must be abolished. The elements of production must circulate not on the basis of the crude measure of exchange value, but on a higher, scientific measure of their usefulness and costs to society. And finally, the social division of labor with one class limited to production and another the only one capable of administrating the economy, must be abolished. The social division of labor is not identical with capital, but it is a powerful force pushing in that direction.

The role of an elite strata with a "monopoly of scientific, administrative knowledge" in the superiority of capital is not just possession of more knowledge, but that: the means of knowledge, knowledge itself, and the application of it are all transformed into value; capital, as the manager of value circulation and predominate owner of value, appropriates the fruit of knowledge; and scientific knowledge as opposed to manual skill is far and away the greatest source of wealth in modern economy (notwithstanding the fact that knowledge requires subjective activity including industrial production to create and apply it and to realize it as wealth). Knowledge as capital is central to

the power of capital. But knowledge without capital would remain quite powerful. Even if the socialist stage has been reached where everyone is an employee and value has been replaced by socialist planning, the existence of a social division of labor (relative scarcity of the technicians, managers, etc.) would seem to be the basis for distinct strata or class interests and the potential restoration of a class/value system.

Thus, it seems a theoretical strength of the speech that it raises the importance of the socialist revolution rapidly undermining the existence of a separate administrative class which holds a monopoly on scientific, administrative knowledge, constantly diminishing the separation between administrative and productive personnel, etc.

Of course, the bottom line here is that we don't have a deep Marxist economic analysis of capitalism of the Soviet model. The classical Marxist writers' views on political economy are essential to carry out an analysis of modern capitalism in its different forms. However, the solution "abolish private property" is inadequate today.

I'm not sure that socialism means the abolition of class distinctions. I don't think we have any worked out theory on the stages of transition, socialism and communism. This would be needed to have a view on whether classes would still exist under socialism and be eliminated under communism. My current guess, but not a clear conception at all, is that while everyone would be an employee during the socialist stage, there would be "strata" differences that would be more or less class distinctions.

2)

I agree with the thrust of your point about the 2 hour workday. It seems to me that part of the issue of liberating the worker during the transitional and socialist stages is to convert her/him into a "scientific-productive worker." That is someone who participates not as a mere cog in a machine designed by someone else, but who has a high technical training which enables him to participate in the conscious design of economic activity. Therefore, the amount of time spent in economic activities might increase under socialism. For example, the education portion might increase, say some hours or days each week. The worker could have more than one type of work, or more than one aspect to do within the sphere of his industry. In general, it might take more time to draw him into the scientific realm of labor.

I think the other side of the economic liberation of the worker is to expand the time for cultural, social and political activities. Probably a lot of this would not be mandated work, would be considered non-work, and would not be directly connected with direct productive activity. But, as you point out, some of it might be considered as productive activity or be similar to it or integrated with it. One could also imagine an expansion of voluntary work within the workers' primary employment field or in labor-intensive craftsmanship, etc.

So the time each worker spends in productive activity or training for it might remain the same or grow under socialism. But for the pursuit of all these sorts of liberation listed above, the process of growing productivity is the essential basis. That is, the continuous reduction of the time spent in each industry, and the creation of more and more fields of production with the process of rationalization applied to each. Minimizing the total time society spends on mail by using OCRs, for example, and creating processes as efficient as OCRs in more and more fields, is the economic basis of the greater liberation and freedom of the worker. (Actually, most mail will eventually be replaced with fiber optic cable transmission for a much greater saving of labor time.)

That the speech had in mind this process of productivity growth is shown by the fact that it did not say the whole work day would be 2 hours, but that the portion spent on production to meet basic needs might be only 2 hours. I don't think this is the right way to formulate this concept, however. For one thing, basic natural needs were superseded long ago in history, and replaced with historically produced needs. And the development of the productive forces is continuously producing new needs. The current level of necessary needs is not basic natural needs but a particular level of historically produced needs created by the level of capitalist development and contrasted to a higher level of luxury also created by capitalism.

Marx points out that the issue with the new society is to abolish the distinction between necessary and surplus production. I think this means, on the one hand, that all production is necessary because the needs of the entire population include productive-scientific activity itself and the results of it—immediate consumption and the most rapid advance of the productive forces. And on the other hand, this necessary production is efficient enough so that even though all members of society take part, they all are left with enough surplus time for scientific, cultural, social and political pursuits.

3)

I want to further discuss 4 issues here: a) The relation of enthusiasm for socialist use of modern technology to the socialist alternative. b) The place of the socialist alternative in the contemporary ideological struggle. c) The counterposition of socialist planning/high technology to mass participation. d) The general relation of growth of productive forces to revolution.

a)

I think that a spirit of enthusiasm for the socialist use of modern technology is correct and a necessary part of a partisan, socialist stand. (Enthusiasm is a better word than euphoria since the latter implies being unconscious about it.) This is because high-tech is an indispensable basis for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. The

sophistication and efficiency of accounting is critical to the replacement of value with socialist planned economy. The sophistication and efficiency of information transfer is critical to the creation of the scientific-productive worker and to the mastering of modern technique by backward regions. And the information revolution generally underlies the huge increases in productivity that are the material-economic basis for liberation of humankind.

The system of capital is the only one so far that has created rapid revolutionization of economic technique. In this sense, it is "state of the art." Our alternative can only be plausible and truly progressive if it is based on a scientific understanding of the limitations of advance of the productive forces by capital and a theory for institutional and social changes to accomplish a better and faster development. I think this calls for a sober and dedicated attitude toward the tasks of building up the scientific theory of the socialist alternative.

To me, developing a socialist alternative is a central task facing communists today. We need to work towards being able to say, concretely and scientifically, that we advocate ABC to solve social problems XYZ. As this theory of socialism is developed, its tenets will rely on usage of advanced technique and the ability to advance and diffuse technique further and faster than the bourgeoisie can.

One of the fundamental tasks regarding theory of political economy is to apply the Marxist analysis to modern economy and figure out how and why modern capital restricts the development of the productive forces. There are some interesting examples of this raised in the speech. But these are merely descriptions. They do not cover every important aspect, but more importantly, they are not an analysis of the tendencies of modern capital which cause these results. It seems to me that one cannot have a theory of a socialist alternative without a fairly good analysis of the how and why of capital and therefore what we are going to change and what different results this would have.

b)

Today, the Western corporate bourgeoisie holds the mantles of both efficiency and democracy. It deserves neither, since socialism will be a qualitative leap of both. But because of the failure of the Soviet Union, China, etc. to establish socialism, and the collapse of the state capitalist systems, the Western corporate bourgeoisie can posture as *relatively progressive*.

Of course, bourgeois propaganda will always carry weight as long as it rules. But within the revolutionary movement, the revisionist collapse and the bourgeois propaganda highlights the interrelated matters of a Marxist summation of the previous revolutions and what do contemporary communists plan to do differently. In fact, a communist or Marxist theory of socialist economy and of the socialist state that is anywhere near adequate for today does not exist. The content of the theory on these questions of

Marx, Lenin and the other communists of the earlier period, is, in my opinion, rudimentary, and the great value of even this rudimentary theory and its invaluable historical practice has not been realized since it is not yet summed up. The point here is that our theoretical and other work to build up a socialist alternative has an important value for our ideological appeal to activists. Regardless of the ebb or flow of conditions generating revolutionary activists, the development of a plausible socialist alternative is important to the building of a communist trend.

c)

Your charge of a wrong "euphoria about technology under planning" has two examples. One is the speech's counterposing of the seeming ease of the technical aspect of planning with the difficulty of the economic content of the plan and mass democratic participation in the process. You consider this to mean that the speech separates technology and economy from people, and that it says that technology guarantees mass mobilization and democracy. (This second point is the other example you give of the speech's point that computers could assist voting, etc.) I'll deal with the "separation" issue below. As far as technology guaranteeing mass mobilization, the speech says just the opposite. The points about new technology greatly assisting accounting and democratic decision-making seem beyond dispute.

The one sentence "Technically, planning the economy appears almost easy" strikes me as a formulation with problems. One can separate technique from other factors of socialist planning, but the planning itself can never succeed without the other factors, i.e. it really can't be seen as easy. But despite the possible wrong implication of this formulation, the speech seems clearly of the opinion that socialist planning cannot succeed without other factors. What I want to discuss is these other factors.

You seem to consider the only other factor (besides advanced technique) for socialist planning to be mobilization/participation of the masses. The speech considers the others to be, essentially, the economic content of the plan and the mass mobilization/participation. Whether all the factors for socialist planning are included under either of these, I'm not sure. But even if they are, these formulations strike me as way too general. I have a hazy conception of one of the issues here that I want to put forward.

It seems to me that we lack a theory of the institutions and incentives to replace capital. Instead of capital, what are we going to use to interlink and manage the economy, to spur increased efficiency and more richly varied fields of economy? General phrases about democracy, mass mobilization and participation, and social incentives, do not in any way adequately address these problems. The speech makes another important addition with the point on socialist competition. And a little thought on this reveals again the difficulties of elaborating this idea. How is this competition to be set up without capital/value relations and to be more

effective in undermining monopoly, bureaucracy and parasitism?

We lack an analysis of the "mechanics" of the value-run economy and therefore a theory of alternative "mechanics." I don't think a plausible socialist alternative today can leave these issues for later. We must develop some ideas in the direction of an alternative scientific management proposal for modern economy and for its different features in various regions. This is not a question of just advanced technique, or just electoral forms, or just social incentives, or just mass participation, or just a list of transitional reforms, etc. Rather, it seems that there are interconnected realms of a) scientific principles and theory of integral management (or coordination of complex economy), b) economic and political institutions needed to implement them, c) social relations of classes which embody the institutions and give a policy content to economic development. This is a hazy conception; hopefully other comrades can shed light, positive or negative, on it.

d)

Marx and Engels were enthusiastic about steam power and saw this as a basis for socialism. They were wrong about the proximity of socialism. But not about the linkage between the technical and cultural advances brought by capital and the growing possibility of socialist society.

I want to digress in this paragraph to a previous point. Explicit in Marx's views was a stand of working out the new society through revolutionary practice. A true communist in any situation would seek to apply the existing level of scientific socialist theory to the mass forces kicked loose by capitalist development and go as far as possible. And "learning as you go" will always be a big part of things no matter how "modern" the conditions. But the rudimentary, abstract and general nature of Marx's views of socialism is a stamp of the actual great distance between the 1850s and socialist society. The subsequent development of capital has narrowed this gap and provided more of a basis to flesh out aspects of socialist society that couldn't be foreseen very clearly in 1850. This is part of the soil for our theoretical work.

We can't know exactly where we are in the historical progression of things. We shouldn't prophesize socialism as just around the corner due to fiber optic cable. But the speech doesn't do this. On the contrary, it illustrates the technical and cultural advantages for socialism that have been and are being created. This is a materialist and a Marxist perspective. The purpose is to spark thought on what the issues of socialist alternative might be. Is it possible to develop a socialist alternative without careful consideration of the technical and cultural bases for it? I can't imagine how.

Besides the development of the productive forces creating a growing possibility of socialism, there is the fact that their development is tearing capitalist society apart at the seams. Perhaps capitalism will again survive, but the

unheard of technological advance is causing an unheard of imbalance and dislocation. Every previous societal formation in history was destroyed by its own development of the productive forces.

In preparing the speech, the author sought to abstract discussion of the technical and cultural advantages being produced, from the other issues of socialism, and state that this was what was being done. I think this was a good method, since otherwise, no speech could have been written.

4)

The trends in the structure of the working class need to be studied. This will shed more light on these issues. But to a large degree, the proof is in the pudding; the development of revolutionary movements will provide the best assessment of the various strata. At present, my unsubstantiated feelings are different from some of Comrade Pete's.

A general point of the speech that many white collars are workers, proletarians, wage slaves, just as much as blue collar, seems possible to me. There are 60,000 white collars—management, professionals, engineers, technical workers, and general office (secretaries, etc.) are the official categories—at Boeing in the Seattle area, for example. The majority average less pay than the 40,000 blue collar. The lowest paid white collar makes several dollars an hour less than the lowest blue collar. Of 10,000 engineers, a significant minority make less than the average blue collar wage. (A large portion of work is subcontracted both around Seattle and abroad. I'm not sure, but I think it's most likely that, taking these workers into account would raise the portion of blue to white, and it would definitely lower the average wages of the blue significantly.) For the majority of white collar, conditions of work are socialized and the "quality program" means increasingly regimented and measured. There is enough surplus in the labor market of these various workers to drive down wages.

A basic issue to me is that the majority of these white collar create value, like blue collar, rather than owning/managing value like the bourgeoisie, or being highly skilled and highly paid like the petty bourgeois sections of white collar. Whether or not you're more educated and have clean clothes, being a value creator means you're a wage slave and will be jacked around as such. So while various conservatising factors exist, there is a strong tendency of the worker consciousness to eventually assert itself. The unionization and independent rank and file opposition to the bureaucrats among some white collars is indicative of this.

It seems to me that there is a general tendency of capitalism to develop a growing section of white collar as a section of workers. And this is a factor creating a growing working class and raising the average educational level of the working class. Perhaps the underclass and unskilled sections are expanding faster, so the sum result is to lower the average educational level. But this wouldn't

change the fact that a growing relatively educated section is a positive cultural factor for a revolutionary working class movement and that a growing working class is a generally positive factor for revolution.

You say that over time, capitalism creates a more technically informed working class. This question should probably be broken in two—the cultural change from agrarian to industrial society, and the cultural change from the previous industrial revolution to the current advances of the information revolution bringing about a high-tech industrial society. The former is obvious, the latter needs to be studied.

I think the speech was in error to say “unskilled” is becoming rare. I think this point was confused with the idea that purely manual work is rare. You raise an important concept of a large-scale differentiation trend in the division of labor. It seems to me that the modern economy shows at least 3 broad trends in the division of labor, though your concept may be a more accurate framework.

One is to industrialize existing labor, i.e. break it down and mechanize it, and make portions of it really efficient. This may create completely unskilled or, and I think more often, it creates a low, but semi-skilled worker. As you point out, this trend generally brings about a small number of higher skilled jobs at the same time. A second trend is that as capital opens new fields of economy, a portion of the fields or of the jobs within them have relatively low productivity, with higher skilled or at least more all-sided workers (such as many service, retail and maintenance jobs.) The third trend stems from the greater complexity of production and the necessity for more frequent advance of industrial technique. This results in the proletarianization of some white collar (since much greater numbers are needed and in some cases because they must be more closely integrated to daily production) and higher training of some blue collar, usually higher-skilled, less productive. (The bourgeoisie needs to tap their insight for rationalizing the process). How all these trends affect the overall situation I don't know. But one thing to keep in mind is that the industrializing process by definition means a tendency to shrink the portion of jobs it is applied to, since the same amount of product is created with less people.

To reiterate, it seems to me that the division between those who create value and those who manage/appropriate it, is more significant than the division among the different types of workers who create value. No doubt the different conditions of work cause more or less propensity towards socialism among different types of workers. Perhaps it is true that the mass of unskilled workers often have a greater sense of class solidarity and discipline than other sections as you say. Assessment of this issue is very important for our concentration and party-building. But to carry this to the extreme of considering the vast armies of white collars who work together in large numbers and are low-paid, to be a separate class, I am skeptical of.

The white collars seem pervaded with prejudice against blue collars. But as well, there are definite prejudices

against white collar workers among blue collars who make more money, that are divisive to the economic struggle and must be combated. The union hacks in particular play up this craft chauvinism and aristocratic attitude. Moreover, it is hard to conceive of a revolutionary crisis that wouldn't radicalize low-paid white collars.

I am really perplexed to figure out how your counter-position—that either technological advance, or creation of a revolutionary proletariat, must be considered the key factor for socialism—applies to the speech. One small section compares the cultural level of 1917 Russia to present-day U.S. and says the latter is a better basis for socialism. It also points out that the creation of large numbers of white collars as workers causes an expanding working class. Then you draw the conclusion that the speech considers technology, not the working class, to be key?

5)

I don't see validity to these points.

I missed the spot where the speech gave short shrift to the employed downtrodden workers. Then you say that the chronically unemployed get positively put down. How's this? You give two examples. One is the statement that an amount of coercion could be used along with other methods to reform and raise up the underclass. The other is that the speech never said that support would be provided to the sick, etc. who are unable to work.

Instead of coercion, you think just offering jobs to the underclass would be sufficient. I think it is a delusion to think that merely offering jobs to the underclass would convert all of them to workers. Besides, giving them jobs without educating them would make them merely producing workers, not liberated and ruling workers—hardly a socialist perspective. The issue is not to patronize the underclass but to offer a concrete path to liberation. And that can only be through raising their cultural level and offering them something more than unloading OCRs. And a flourishing transitional society doesn't need simply full employment (that could be reactionary from the economic standpoint), but full efficient employment.

As far as coercion goes, the term connotes something extra-economic to me and the speech gives no examples of this. I think the main levers for raising the underclass would be economic ones. But given that a portion of the underclass is the criminal strata, it seems like a prison/labor camp system of some sort would be needed. I cringe at saying this given the horrors of Stalinism, not to mention Texas. I would guess that crime would be dealt with quite differently, the majority of the criminal strata would be reformed without jail, the incarceration would apply to a tremendously smaller number than under capitalism and the maximum term would be very brief, and the system itself would be completely different—focused on education/training and social rehabilitation, not punishment. But I don't think all coercion can be ruled out. I also think that the

underclass would be completely eliminated during the period of transition—it would no longer exist by the time the socialist stage is reached.

As far as support for those unable to work; really. I think Comrade Pete can rest assured that the author, and every other comrade for that matter, considers it obvious that socialism would provide for those persons.

* * *

A couple of general points in conclusion. It may sound like I am overly critical of the speech or the notes on it. But really, I view the speech, notes and this paper as positive contributions to a process of sparking thought and discussion. Most all the ideas I have raised here I did not

think of until after reading the speech or the notes.

I have attempted to stress our lack of theory in some areas and the crying need for it. But while this needs to be recognized, we also need to develop a patient attitude toward the facts that it takes time and labor energy/hours which are scarce, that “we don’t know everything,” and that many differences of opinion are bound to remain for some time in areas where our theory is lacking. A militant attitude of “mission” with regard to the theoretical work, combined with patience towards the realistic pace, is the best way to get maximum achievement. The hard struggles from 1969 to present to build the MLP have put us in a most excellent position to tackle the obstacles confronting communism today.

—Fred, Seattle □

Why did the Seattle police attack the anti-racist march on Capitol Hill?

From the Feb. 16 leaflet of the MLP-Seattle:

On the evening of January 25, a march protesting neo-nazi skinheads was attacked by Seattle police. 75 or more cops attacked with clubs, horses, and choke holds, and in at least one instance, held a 9mm pistol to a protester's forehead. The media immediately blamed the marchers. The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* described the anti-racist marchers as "thugs," "ruffians," a "mob," and "a hard core of hooligans who doled out their own bigotry in the worst Brownshirt tradition" (1-29-92). According to the *P-I*, "Seattle police responded well." Mayor Norm Rice quickly declared that "all force used by the police was justified," and that the march was led by "communist front groups." The media and the mayor have plenty of rhetoric, but a deep disregard for the facts.

The police were unhappy with the march from the beginning for two main reasons. First of all, the overwhelming sentiment of the marchers was to take justice into their own hands in the matter of dealing with the racist skinheads. The half dozen posters calling for the march were quite explicit about this; the number of marchers who carried baseball bats was another indication. Secondly, the protesters were in no mood to kowtow to the police. They did not ask for a permit to march and simply took over the middle of the streets.

These attitudes of the marchers were indicative of a more general outlook that is of greater alarm to the police and the wealthy establishment—a smoldering youth radicalism. The majority of the crowd was 25 or under. Among this age group there is anger at 1990s America: lack of jobs and educational opportunity, bigotry, the atrocities of the Gulf war, the death and suffering of the AIDS epidemic, etc. Normally, this anger takes the form of gloomy pessimism and despair of any hope for change. This protest, however, provided an opportunity for the anger to surface in the form of collective action.

What really happened?

On Christmas eve, 5 neo-nazi youth followed Anthony Johnson, a 40 year-old black man whom they did not know, off a metro bus in the University district. Shouting racist obscenities, the nazis beat him unconscious and stabbed Mr. Johnson. The police response was to only arrest one of the attackers, and to charge him with the minor offense of second degree assault.

The march of January 25 was called to protest this neo-nazi attack. About 400 persons marched through the University District and then to Capitol Hill. Contrary to the story reported in the bourgeois media, the crowd included several anti-racist skinheads. As the march

proceeded down Broadway, 3 nazi skinheads appeared on the sidewalk. They carried shields with "SS" and Aryan Nations symbols. They gave the Hitler salute, flipped off the march, and shouted anti-gay obscenities at the protesters. Immediately, about half the march ran toward the nazis, who turned and "ran for their lives" down the middle of the street.

Police set up a line to block the protest. About 30 protesters got through the line and followed the nazis in hot pursuit. Two blocks away, the nazis ran into an apartment building for refuge. A police van arrived at the same time as the first handful of protesters. The cops jumped out with their clubs swinging. They savagely beat the 5 or 6 protesters at the scene. Some were beat to the ground, some were gripped into choke holds, one was held with a pistol to his head. Once the entire group of 30 arrived, however, they surrounded the police and after a short tussle, succeeded in freeing all the protesters from the police.

The march proceeded down Broadway, and about 150 went to the police station at 12th and Pine. The marchers militantly shouted slogans such as "police protect their own," "no cops, no KKK, no fascist USA," "nazi cops, out of the CD" (Central District).

After these events, the police attempted to suppress the march. 50 cops in full riot gear joined the couple dozen police on horses and in vans. The police repeatedly surrounded and attacked the march as it went down Broadway and nearby streets. 13 of the 14 arrests took place when the riot squad attacked not the march, but a handful of protesters who had left the march and were standing on the sidewalk.

About 50 or so protesters refused to quit and moved down Broadway again. A half dozen kept ahead of the march, mingling among shoppers and parked cars. They grabbed any rocks or bottles they could find and kept a constant rain of debris falling on the police vans following the march. Hundreds of shoppers watched the spectacle of this bold confrontation of the police. Unable to quell the protest, the police finally took out their frustrations on the shoppers. They massed the riot cops and mounted police on a block at a time and cleared three blocks in this manner. Several shoppers were clubbed and one was arrested for the "crime" of accusing the police of brutality. At least one news reporter was threatened with arrest if he "raised his camera to his eye again" (*UW Daily*, 1-27-92).

A double standard

Anthony Johnson was randomly attacked by avowed nazis. The police basically let them go. The *Seattle P-I*

reports that Mr. Johnson may have attacked them. Norm Rice says nothing. A mass protest takes action against the cowardly racists, including by smashing their counter-protest, and police fully mobilize against the anti-racists. The *Seattle P-I* says the anti-racists are Brownshirts! Norm Rice immediately backs up the police.

Events like this are not isolated to Seattle, but have occurred repeatedly in different cities. On January 20, Denver police beat and tear-gassed 1,000 protesters in order to protect a Klan rally on Martin Luther King Day.

Why are the police so intent on protecting the racists? One reason of course, is the role and character of the police themselves. They are generally pumped up on anti-crime, anti-drug hysteria directed against minorities and youth. They spend a big part of their time harassing, roughing up, and arresting blacks and especially black youth.

A portion of the police has fully nazi-type views and is politically active. During the war on Iraq, off-duty Seattle police carried out the counterprotest that attacked the anti-war demonstration at the Federal Building.

But there is a higher level pulling the strings and pushing the buttons of the cops. The posture of "constitutional rights for all, including nazis," is not the motive of government policy, but a liberal-sounding cover to fool the naive. The real issue is that a main pillar of political control is the use of racism to divide the masses. In particular, the bourgeois establishment seeks to keep racist gangs in the wings in order to balance them off against the development of progressive movements of workers, youth, or other oppressed groups. Norm Rice's knee-jerk reaction in defense of the police attack indicates that "multi-cultural" rhetoric is all well and good, but when push comes to shove, like other black mayors, he knows what the real powers expect.

Racist drumbeat

The racist skinheads and other neo-nazis exist in an overall political environment. A racist drumbeat is persistently sounding in the background of American society. It is indicative that David Duke, a "former" Klan and nazi, has a platform identical to George Bush: on quotas, welfare, immigration, etc. Japan-bashing is becoming a major political theme. Similar prejudice is promoted against gays and women by the religious fanatics. The common

feature is that insignificant differences among working people are used to incite divisions and obscure the actual sources of social problems.

As the difficulties of the American bourgeoisie pile up, the racist drumbeat is preparing the way for violent reaction against the working people. The situation in France and Germany is ominous: neo-fascist anti-immigrant movements have recently grown larger there.

A look at the big picture, and especially the government and media protection of the neo-nazis, shows that racism must be fought with militant mass action. The January 25 protest was right on the mark and completely successful. Besides trashing the neo-nazi counterprotest, the march forced the police, media and mayor to expose their true colors. This was an important blow against the nazi youth gangs. For they cannot maintain their motion without preserving the myths of being "tough" and "anti-government."

Democracy and revolution

Fighting for equality—against racism, anti-woman and anti-gay practices and similar poisons—is essential to build a democratic outlook among working people. Class solidarity and consciousness of the workers is inconceivable in conditions where medieval violence goes unpunished. The struggle for equality is essential to prepare the working class (blue collar and the working class sections of white collar) for revolution and building a new society.

The socialist alternative must embody a thoroughly democratic order where the masses participate widely and at many levels in the decision-making process—through study, debate, voting, etc.—and where there is a rapid technical and cultural uplift of the workers to provide a growing capability for participation. Without this democracy, there will be no socialist planning to replace the capitalist economic mechanisms.

The state capitalist police state of the Soviet model could never lead to socialism. Socialism requires the most thorough democracy. Only with the ascendancy of the working class can the waste, irrationality, parasitism and environmental destruction that is synonymous with capitalism must be replaced with a new, more efficient organization of the economy. Only with the elimination of exploitation of labor by capital can the conditions generating racism and bigotry be eliminated. □

Strikes in brief

Freightliner strikers win a round

Workers at the Freightliner truck plant in Mt. Holly, North Carolina voted for UAW representation in April 1990. For the next 20 months, Freightliner stalled, refusing to sign the initial contract. On December 3, 1991, the workers had had enough and walked out on strike. After two-and-a-half weeks, the company caved in to their demands and workers overwhelmingly ratified their first contract.

They won an immediate 8.7% wage increase. Each worker will also receive a check, averaging \$2,400, to make up for the two raises the company denied them over the last two years. The contract stipulates that they are to be brought up to wage parity with their fellow plant workers in Portland, Oregon by 1994. □

A hospital workers strike in Kentucky

Workers have been on strike against Lourdes Hospital in Paducah, Kentucky since December 1. The work force of 800 is made up of licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, technicians, clerical, dietary, housekeeping and maintenance workers.

Lourdes has hired 230 scabs and is trying to break the strike. But the workers are fighting back. More than 1,200 people have come out to three rallies in support of the picketers. Meanwhile workers from other industries in the area are passing out wallet-sized cards stating "If I get sick or hurt, Please do not take me to Lourdes Hospital." The *Paducah Sun* reports the boycott is hurting Lourdes.

Prisoners used as scabs against Industrial Wire strikers

About 140 workers have been on strike since September 21 at Industrial Wire Products (IWP) in Sullivan, Missouri. They are fighting IWP's demand for a reduction in health benefits and a co-pay plan which would cost each worker a minimum of \$200 a year.

The workers are not only confronting IWP but, also, the government. Scabs are being recruited by both the Missouri Employment Security Office and the state prison system. Some prisoners have actually been promised parole if they accept employment at the plant. The state recruiting and police protection for about 80 scabs is showing that the government is just a tool of the rich used to hold down the working class. □

Tennessee miners organize

More than 250 workers from Knoxville, Tennessee rallied in support of striking coal miners on December 12. Miners at Colquest Energy, near Clairfield, Tennessee, voted for union representation a year and a half ago. But the company refused to recognize the union and fired 19 militants. The miners walked off the job and were joined by miners from two other nearby mines on October 1, 1990.

Since then the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has twice found the owners of that the owners of the three mines to have violated fair labor practices. But twice the decision has been appealed to the federal appeals court. While the courts drag out the proceedings, the companies refuse to bargain. □

Don Riegle finds a cause

If you think that the Japan bashing politicians have the interests of the common people at heart, take a close look at Donald Riegle, Democratic senator from Michigan.

Senator Riegle has made himself one of the champion Japan bashers of today. Lately, he's appearing on every TV show he can get on. He has taken to sounding the alarm that the Japanese are supposedly taking over and destroying American industry, sector by sector.

When Yoshio Sakurachi, a Japanese politician, responded to Japan bashing in the U.S. by making ridiculous statements about the supposed laziness of U.S. workers, Riegle thundered: "Mr. Sakurachi's attitude in slandering American workers was the same view the Japanese held the day its warplanes struck Pearl Harbor. Their arrogance was gone by 1945, when they learned of the full measure of America's capabilities."

This is a blowhard yahoo call to "nuke Japan" in retaliation for their economic successes. The irony is that there are plenty of American capitalists who mouth off

about the allegedly overpaid and lazy American workers. We haven't seen Mr. Riegle take the cudgels against them. As a wealthy fatcat himself, Riegle most likely agrees with them. But when a Japanese capitalist says the same thing, it becomes cause for declaring World War III.

But how dare Senator Riegle pose as the champion of the American worker? In recent years, Riegle has become most known for the fact that he was one of the notorious "Keating 5" — the politicians who helped out S&L sharks like Charles Keating in exchange for big campaign contributions. As a result of Mr. Riegle's favors to the S&L thieves, American workers, as taxpayers, will be paying out some \$500 billion in the coming years to bail out the S&Ls.

But Senator Riegle's pose shouldn't be too surprising. He is up for re-election next year. His S&L record will no doubt be a problem for him with the voters. Riegle thinks he has found the perfect foil — nationalist flag-waving against the Japanese. □

On Bani-Sadr

Bani-Sadr, who was briefly back in the news when he claimed to know something about the "October surprise" deal between the Reaganites and Khomeini's forces, was part of the liberal faction of the Islamic government after the ouster of the notorious Shah of Iran in 1979. Forced out in July 1981, he turned to portraying himself as the bulwark against the reactionary mullahs of the Islamic Republic. But history shows that the liberal faction, despite its differences with the mullahs, shared a common hatred with them for the revolutionary movement. The liberals cooperated in strangling the revolutionary movement, and staining their hands with the people's blood, prior to themselves being crushed by the mullahs.

Below we print a comment on Bani-Sadr's new book from the Jan. issue (#25) of Iran In Resistance.

Book Critique

With the hostage issue momentarily taking a spot on the political scene, a book written by Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr in early 1991, *My Turn To Speak*, was translated into English and published in the U.S. The book contains one main element. Time and time again Bani-Sadr tries to portray himself as a democratic individual who, during his presidency in Iran, wished nothing but justice and comfort for his people and tries to distance himself from the mullahs.

For those who have not followed contemporary Iranian history, Bani-Sadr's story could provide a convincing argument for nominating him for some humanitarian award. With this book Bani-Sadr has shown how capable he would be to write a book entitled, *How Napoleon won the Battle of Waterloo*, for *My Turn To Speak* is full of historical inaccuracies and misinformation.

Because of these inaccuracies we at *Iran in Resistance* wanted to provide a factual account of Bani-Sadr's record during his terms as president of Iran and compare the facts to what he claims in his book.

A major emphasis of Bani-Sadr's book is his determination to restore the army to its strength prior to the 1979 uprising. In several parts of the book he proclaims himself champion in defense of the army,

"... The demoralization of the army in this period came not from the enemy, but from our own ranks." (p. 87)

"My first concern for the army—demoralized and under attack on all sides from the mullahs—was to replace fear with hope, to instill a sense of sacrifice in place of the tendency to become immobilized..." (p. 111)

What Bani-Sadr doesn't state in his book is that the reason for this determination to restore the army was mainly to have a tool for crushing opposition forces such as those in Kurdistan and Turkaman. In March 1980,

following the army's major attack on the Turkaman people, Bani-Sadr addressed the military saying

"As you see, the situation is better now compared to two months ago. A major center of resistance has been abolished."

In a now famous speech in March 1981 Bani-Sadr told the army that

"until the complete demolition of 'law disobedients' the soldiers can not take their boots off".

By the 'law disobedients' Bani-Sadr referred to the freedom fighters of Kurdistan. On April 1981 in a speech aimed at Kurdish freedom fighters Bani-Sadr stated that

"you who have taken up arms against us must know that we will have no mercy on you and are determined to abolish you completely."

Bani-Sadr, knowing that his major attacks on the freedom fighters of Kurdistan, Turkaman, and Azerbaijan could not go unnoticed, in his book first labels these movements as "a means in the hand of foreign powers to destabilize Iran" and therefore justified his attacks on them.

"The threat of a restoration, of a return of the old regime, frightened everyone. Sadegh Ghotzbadeh had purchased a document in Paris for \$200,000 that described a royalist plan to regain power with Iraq's help" (p. 13).

"But this was not all. To completely neutralize the army, the plan called for uprisings and a war in Kurdistan. Very recently, Gassemlou's party, the PDKI, published a document claiming that a rival organization, the pro-communist Komoleh, started the war in Kurdistan. The truth is that this war was linked to the Iraqi assault." (p. 14)

"We eventually solved these internal problems: Kurdistan, Khuzestan, and West Azerbaijan, where a group was regularly sabotaging the railroad." (P. 15)

Another area in which Bani-Sadr utilized the army in crushing Iranian opposition forces was in the student movements at the universities. While commander-in-chief of the army Bani-Sadr was directly responsible for a major army attack on the universities in 1981 (despite what he claims in his book) which resulted in the closing down of universities and the expulsion of thousands of progressive students and professors. Many students were killed in these attacks. Some of the evidence that clearly proves Bani-Sadr's role in the 1981 university massacres can be seen from his own speeches. In April 1981, two days after the army's brutal attack on the universities, Bani-Sadr appeared at Tehran University and gave a victory speech to the troops. He proclaimed the universities to be "fortresses of Satan" and said that the "fortress of Satan, wherever it appears, will be destroyed without any mercy." What Bani-

Sadr refers to as a "fortress of Satan" is called a fortress of freedom by those Iranians fighting for justice and freedom. Many years of student struggle during the regimes of the Shah and the Islamic Republic have given justification for the title—fortress of freedom.

In his book Bani-Sadr tries to attach the blame for the attack on the universities to other elements within the regime and tries to distance himself from these elements, forgetting apparently that at the time he was president of the country and commander-in-chief of the military.

"...A few months after I was elected, they [mullahs] had already considered closing the university, although nothing at the time justified such an action. I of course opposed this idea by saying that no one in the country or anywhere else would understand it, especially since the university had struggled against the Pahlavi regime for years. According to Khomeini, the schools were being used as bases for counter-revolutionary activities..." (p. 129)

"...They shifted the responsibility to Khomeini, citing the armed terrorist activities allegedly being planned in the universities. To resolve this problem, I suggested ordering the closing of all branches of the political parties in the university, which should itself continue as an institution devoted exclusively to education." (p. 129).

Bani-Sadr distorts historical facts to such an extent that he claims to praise the university students and condemn the mullahs.

"According to the clerics, the university opposed Islam and the struggle against the generalized aggression of the Great Satan..." (p. 130)

"The door of the laboratories, the lecture halls, and the classrooms remained closed. The mullahs deliberately smashed the crucible in which the vital, creative forces—the forces ensuring the renewal and the future of society—were forged. The philosophy of 'how to live' was replaced by the ayatollahs' philosophy of death." (p. 130)

Bani-Sadr portrays himself as a defender of women's rights. In another of his infamous speeches, when faced with the demands of Iranian women protesting the wearing of heavy veils, he replied

"Women's hair contains certain radiation that affect men. Therefore, women should cover themselves with a veil."

The real intention of the Islamic Republic had always been to eliminate women from the political arena and force them to stay at home, and wearing of the "chador" has always been one of the instruments to achieve the regime's objectives. But once again, Bani-Sadr recalls his actions quite differently, saying

"The mullahs weighed the importance of the various social groups, especially women, who

became yet another subject of controversy within the regime. The mullahs began by recommending that women wear a veil, knowing full well that any objection on my part would place me in direct conflict with Khomeini. I believe that women are free to wear it or not, as they see fit. I based my response on the expanding role of women in society, asserting that the emancipation of the people was impossible without the emancipation of women..." (p. 128)

Throughout *My Turn To Speak* Bani-Sadr constantly attempts to portray himself as a democratic individual, respectful of human rights, and even claims that any opposition to the regime now is a direct result of his work during his presidency.

"For all these reasons, I was constantly talking, constantly explaining myself. I wanted the people to understand the danger of dictatorship, and if there are increasingly powerful anti-totalitarian currents in Iran today, it is partly because of these explanations." (p. 58)

"I made the people active participants in politics. In meetings, rallies, and editorials, I constantly repeated, 'What I say, what I write, you, the people, must verify. I call on you to accept responsibility for verification..." (p. 59)

"... I, on the other hand, acknowledged 'absolute priority of the law' because I knew that law-abiding citizens cannot remain neutral in the event of a coup d'etat. In Third World countries, the architects of a coup always begin by trampling on the laws to impose their own rule." (p. 153)

Bani-Sadr goes on to put himself on the side of workers and peasants:

"The peasants' influence was minor, but I had many supporters among them. I had instituted a policy of agricultural development and higher incomes, which pleased them. Moreover, in the villages, religion was viewed more as the cement holding society together than a restrictive individual practice." (p. 132)

Now, however, it is Truth's Turn to Speak. At the outset of the uprising Bani-Sadr reiterated two slogans time and again at workers' rallies, "Work more, consume less" and "No to Soviets". By "work more, consume less" he was attacking those who had hoped for a better future. His message was clear—don't complain and do as you are told. By "No to Soviets" he was referring to several local organizations that were created and organized by peasants and workers immediately after the 1979 uprising. Through these soviets the workers and peasants were asking for a more equitable distribution of land and justice. Bani-Sadr, together with others in the government, saw these organizations as a source of real danger and he was more obvious in his statements when he referred to them by saying "No to the Soviets".

At the same time (March 1980) while faced with large-scale dissatisfaction of the general public because of rising costs of essential goods Bani-Sadr offered this mild advice to the businessmen getting rich off the misfortune of the people,

"We are going to wait an additional two weeks and hope that we receive a favorable answer for you and together begin a new year with business as envisioned by Islam."

□