

A Socialist ACTION

1934 Strikes -
Labor's turning
point

... 7-10

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Fifty Cents

Bankruptcy— Court ruling hits unions

The U.S. Supreme Court has opened the door for a major escalation in the employers' union-busting drive with its Feb. 22 ruling in favor of the Bildisco Manufacturing Co.

The Bildisco ruling allows a company to nullify a union contract under provisions of the bankruptcy laws before even a ruling is made by the court. To simply file a claim is now enough for the company to throw out the contract. And as the *Wall Street Journal* noted in its editorial of Feb. 2, 1984, "the employer only has to show that the labor contract 'burdens' the reorganization process," for the nullification to become permanent.

EDITORIAL

What the *Journal* calls "reorganization," is just a code word for union-busting, as the workers at Continental Air Lines know all too well. For them it meant a loss of 12,000 jobs and one-third of the workforce rehired at about 50 percent of their previous wages.

The deadly implications of this ruse for tearing up union contracts cannot be overstated. The employers will now be able to legally impose concessions, wage cuts and other takebacks without the prior approval of the unions. Company demands can be imposed even if they are rejected by the unions.

This is only the latest move by the employers and their government to arm themselves for the showdown class battles on the horizon. The rulers understand full well the depth of the crisis of the capitalist system and have little confidence in their ability to forestall a qualitative worsening of the economy. Their only way out is to drive down the wages and living standards of all working people.

The ruling class has been systematically enacting laws and court decisions designed to sharpen the legal edge of its intensifying assault on the unions. The employers carefully select the more vulnerable union targets for attack. Each blow struck secures for them both immediate benefits, as wages are lowered, and a longer-term advantage, as the self-confidence of the workers is eroded.

The ruling class offensive is being carried out with calculating skill. A little over four years ago, for example, Democratic President Jimmy Carter sought to deliver a major setback to the United Mine Workers. After the miners had been on strike for many months, Carter invoked the Taft-Hartley Act and threatened to bayonet the miners back to work. He was compelled to retreat when the miners defied the injunction and displayed the ability to stand up to government-military strikebreaking.

Less than two years later Republican Ronald Reagan, cheered on by the Democrats, struck down the air traffic controllers. The defeat for the labor movement was all the greater in the absence of any real support for the embattled controllers from the AFL-CIO officialdom.

(continued on page 2)



U.S. OUT OF EL SALVADOR!

AS WE GO TO PRESS: The U.S. government has sharply increased its military advisers and combat troops along the Salvadoran-Honduran border under the pretext of *defending* the elections in El Salvador scheduled to take place at the end of March.

State Department officials said that the United States would be doubling the number of U.S. combat troops in Honduras to 1700; providing "more powerful weapons" to the Salvadoran army through its trainers; and conducting a series of military maneuvers aimed at "intimidating" the guerrillas from imposing "terror" at the time of the elections. Also, for the first time, the State Department has announced that U.S. pilots are flying reconnaissance flights over the guerrilla-controlled areas of El Salvador.

The FDR-FMLN has refused to participate and thereby give a cloak of legitimacy to these fraudulent and undemocratic elections.

Today, more than ever, it is necessary for a massive protest movement to develop against the war plans of the U.S. rulers. U.S. out of Central America and the Caribbean!

(More on El Salvador pp. 3, 11-13)

Philippines— Roots of rebellion

By ROBERT CAPISTRANO

On Jan. 31, 1984, some six months after the assassination of Benigno Aquino, half a million people once again demonstrated in Manila for an end to the U.S.-supported dictatorship of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos. This massive show of resistance to the regime came days after a largely successful boycott of a government-staged referendum on a procedure for choosing Marcos' successor. In the wake of the Aquino murder and the continued repression of the regime, the boycott expressed the broadly felt sentiment that anything short of a thorough purge of the regime would be simply "too little, too late." But the stubborn resistance of the old order has made clear that such a project cannot be accomplished peacefully.

Widespread discontent, anger, and unrest have been building up for at least a decade, since the declaration of martial law in September 1972. The worsening economic conditions in the wake of the generalized capitalist recession of the late 1970s and early 1980s have quickened the pace of the buildup. But it took the assassination of Aquino—the most popular bourgeois oppositionist to Marcos—to bring millions into the streets. This mass rejection of the present regime has forced sectors of the Philippine and U.S. ruling classes to begin moving toward an "orderly transition" from the rule of Ferdinand Marcos.

For the U.S., the maintenance of a neocolonial government in the Philippines is vital. Far more important to Washington than its substantial economic interests there—between \$1.5 and \$3 billion, over half of all U.S. investment in eastern Asia—are its strategic interests. From the Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base, U.S. imperialism prowls the Indian and western Pacific

oceans as the policeman of counterrevolution. The U.S. recently agreed to pay \$900 million in rent for the continued use of the bases. As the springboard for projecting its military power into the Persian Gulf and the Indochinese peninsula, the U.S. cannot afford to allow even a mildly nationalist regime in Manila to question the existence of the bases.

Until the murder of Aquino, Marcos seemed—like Somoza or the shah before him—to be the United States' best option for safeguarding these interests. But the surge of unrest, coupled with the worsening economic situation, has shaken this belief. And by the same token, the scope of the U.S. interests in the Philippines poses sharply the threat of open military intervention should the dictatorship be toppled by the mass upsurge.

The economic roots of the crisis

The repressive and corrupt nature of the Marcos dictatorship is well known, not least of all to the Filipino people. Yet martial law itself was insufficient to generate the existing level of opposition to the regime. Its roots lie deeper.

The expansion of capitalism into the Philippine countryside uprooted millions of peasants, eight million of whom have crowded into the shantytowns surrounding Manila. The urban work force expanded from roughly 15% of the population in 1968 to about 37% today. The economy was able to absorb many of these former peasants through the expansion of export-oriented light industry financed by U.S. and Japanese capital. Even now, U.S. firms control 30% of foreign exports.

The worldwide recession and the resulting protectionism over the past half-decade have curbed the world market for Philippine exports and restricted the importation of raw and semifinished

goods required by Philippine industry. Layoffs and factory shutdowns have followed. The decline in exports has made it nearly impossible for the Philippines to repay its loans to imperialist banks. Short-term borrowing has been the result, expanding the foreign debt to some \$24 billion, 52% of which consists of loans maturing within one year or less.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have, as a condition for extending credit, required the imposition of austerity and a massive devaluation (34% over 1983) of the peso. Unemployment, which in 1982 already stood at over 26% in metropolitan Manila, has been exacerbated. Despite these short-term "quick fixes," the Philippines stands on the brink of bankruptcy, forcing world bankers to choose between possibly throwing good money after bad or suffering severe losses should the government default in its payments.

The anti-Marcos opposition

The imposition of martial law and the relative economic stability (for the rich) of the middle 1970s cut the ground out from under the traditional ruling-class parties. The only organized opposition during this period came from the National Democratic Front (NDF), led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The strategy of the NDF and their New People's Army was the classic Maoist one of encircling the cities through the development of peasant war, a strategy presently being carried out in 47 of the 72 provinces of the country. For its part, the MNLF did not aim its armed struggle so much at toppling the central government as at achieving self-determination for the 3.5 million Muslim

(Continued on page 13)

April 15-26



Rosario Ibarra tour set

By GEORGE CRANSTON

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, the first woman ever to run for president of Mexico, has announced plans to visit the United States from April 15-26. According to an ad-hoc committee established in San Francisco to coordinate the tour, she will be appearing at public events in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Chicago, New York, and Houston.

Rosario ran as the candidate of a coalition which used the ballot status of the Revolutionary Workers Party (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—PRT). The PRT had won its ballot status due to an "electoral reform"—and to its pledge to carry out a full-fledged campaign, including rallies and mobilizations with or without ballot status.

Organizers of the tour explain that Rosario is speaking in behalf of the National Front Against Repression (FNCR). The FNCR attempts to ensure that the plight of Mexico's 500 disappeared not be forgotten. Therefore, it is attempting to focus international public opinion on repression in Mexico. The tour sponsors hope to attract widespread support for this cause from all supporters of democratic and human rights. (See Socialist Action Vol. 2, No. 2 for a fuller description of the FNCR.)

After the last elections, and particularly after the national day of protest last October, there has been an increase in acts of repression by the Mexican government. The repression has fallen into three categories: 1) electoral fraud and accompanying violence against supporters of opposition parties; 2) army and police violence against peasants occupying land; and 3) a rise in arrests of opponents of the regime, particularly of PRT supporters.

Rosario and the 1982 elections

The Mexican government, which has the image of being relatively democratic and tolerant, has in the past resorted to massive acts of political repression, including the brutal massacre carried out by the Mexican army of between 500 and 2,000 students at a massive demonstra-

tion in 1968. The ruling party, Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), felt it necessary to offer a partial liberalization in 1982 that would permit opposition parties to present candidates in the presidential elections and thus serve as a safety valve for the growing social discontent.

This discontent was fueled by the disastrous policies of the Mexican government which had tied the country's development to its oil industry. The drop in oil prices plunged Mexico into a deep economic crisis. The PRT decided to take advantage of the change in the election laws to run a campaign that would help to mobilize workers, slumdwellers, students, peasants, and others to fight for their demands.

Rosario Ibarra, who is not herself a member of the PRT, was chosen as the candidate for the 1982 elections because of the potential her candidacy would have to promote a united campaign against the PRI government.

The PRT campaign, though it mobilized over 250,000 people at hundreds of rallies in 29 of Mexico's 32 states—and though it resulted in a vote of nearly half a million according to the government's official count—failed to elect a single deputy due to electoral fraud and undemocratic laws which restrict minor parties from proportional representation.

Post-election

Since the elections, Rosario has continued her campaign in defense of human rights. The FNCR has sponsored a series of conferences and meetings to discuss the problem of repression with the groups particularly affected by it. The Front has focused on defending peasants who have occupied land in order to meet their most basic needs. As well, they have defended women's rights and encouraged participation in conferences of working class and peasant women.

For more information on her upcoming April tour, contact the Rosario Ibarra de Piedra Tour Committee at 490 Eureka St., San Francisco, Calif. 94114; or call (415) 821-0511.

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...Editorial Court ruling hits unions

(Continued from page 1)

What is the official labor response to the latest capitalist "bankruptcy" ploy? "It's outrageous," said Machinist president William Winpisinger. "Devastating!" cried out other labor leaders. But beyond their stated outrage lies little of substance.

Some threaten to withdraw pension funds from banks which encourage companies to use bankruptcy laws to revoke labor contracts. Others place their hopes in the Rodino Bill currently before the House of Representatives. Yet all agree that voting Democrat remains the only alternative to the employer assault.

A Feb. 27 *New York Times* editorial noted another option put forward by the labor bureaucracy: "Organized labor, sensing that its best shot in an election year lies in a quick vote in Congress... has proposed an unworthy deal. It would support conservatives who want to remove bankruptcy protections from consumers if they will let the House rush its vote on the labor amendment."

The *New York Times* cynically chides the labor bureaucracy for its "unworthy deal." But cynicism aside, the *Times* reveals the suicidal premise behind the

labor misleaders' strategy. Even if legislation overturning the Supreme Court decision were to pass, the damage to labor would be immense. The price exacted is the betrayal of the interests of the debt-ridden poor who constitute a natural and reliable ally of labor. This approach is symptomatic of the disastrous consequence of labor dependence on capitalist "friends" in the Democratic Party.

Yesterday the labor officialdom trampled on the rights of Blacks and women and sacrificed our sons on the altar of imperialist military adventures. Today the indebted poor are to be handed over to the finance companies. Tomorrow new sacrifices will be demanded.

Working people have been dealt a serious legal blow, but court-ordered wage cuts resulting from bankruptcy rulings have yet to be implemented on a far-reaching scale. Labor remains powerful despite the gradual erosion of the conquests of past labor struggles. The working class can win the coming decisive battles, but only if they succeed in breaking from the losing strategy of dependence on alliances with the class enemy.

Militant trade unionists must organize within the union movement to fight for a policy of uniting the whole working class and its real friends against the bosses and all their political representatives in the Democratic and Republican parties. A massive struggle has to be organized in the workplaces, on the picket lines, and in the streets if labor is to mount a serious and effective response to the present employer assault. Such a mass action political orientation must be carried forth into the political arena as well. Working people need to build their own independent party based on the unions.

Help build Socialist Action

Socialist Action is not just the name of a newspaper. Socialist Action is also the name of our organization. We are a group of activists in the trade union, antiwar, women's, and Black liberation struggles, and in other movements for social change.

National Committee members from Socialist Action branches across the country met during the weekend of Feb. 18 at the first National Committee plenum since our founding in October 1983.

Taking note of the tremendous progress made in establishing a newspaper and functioning branches, National Committee members voted to launch a four-month \$16,000 fund drive in order to expand our program of publishing pamphlet documents, and a regular 16-page newspaper.

Our first major publishing project, an 80-page pamphlet, "In Defense of Revolutionary Continuity," by Dianne Feeley and Paul LeBlanc is at the press and will be out by the end of the month.

We would also like to be able to move to publishing a regular 16-page paper, something which we can only accomplish periodically at this point.

National Committee members also approved a drive for 500 new subscribers to our newspaper. New readers will be able to obtain three months of *Socialist Action* for only \$1. For \$6, new subscribers will receive 12 issues and one free copy of *International Viewpoint*, a magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International.

To do all of this, we need help from all our friends and supporters. Please send your contributions and subscriptions to Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., suite 308, San Francisco, CA. 94110. (Please make out separate checks.)

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Portrait of Ana

By CAROL McALLISTER

Ana Yolanda is a revolutionary. I say that after listening to Ana speak in classes, at a rally, and just over lunch during the weekend in November she spent in Pittsburgh. She always spoke quietly and simply but with deep conviction and firm confidence in the struggle of the Salvadoran people. She talked about women, the trade union struggle, the situation of the poor and working class in El Salvador, the politics of the FDR-FMLN, and her own work in the Committee of Salvadoran Trade Unionists in Exile. Whatever her subject, Ana moved freely from recounting personal experiences, often with great emotion, to presenting a general political analysis. It was clear her political understanding is rooted in her own experiences and the experiences of her *companeros* in El Salvador. She cares deeply and thoroughly for the people of El Salvador. That too was clear, as was her commitment to continue her political work day by day, year after year, to actually help make the revolution she envisioned and of which she spoke.

On Saturday morning Ana spoke to my class for working women in Carlow's Weekend College. Before the class she told me she had never spoken about women in El Salvador, the subject I had asked her to focus on, and she felt she could not give a good lecture. But she then proceeded to talk and answer questions for an hour and a half. The class went over time, people listened attentively, some with tears in their eyes, and many stayed after class to talk with her more. Her presentation showed careful thought and demonstrated clearly her mettle as a revolutionary activist.

Ana talked first about her experiences working for Texas Instruments, beginning as a young woman of 16. She told

how she and her co-workers, predominately women, were given pregnancy tests before they were hired, were immediately fired if they became pregnant, and were all let go at the age of 25—typical practices of foreign corporations operating in Third World countries. She recounted how women in her factory had organized a union and had participated in a general strike in 1981. She described how the factory was taken over by the National Guard, how all the women wearing tennis shoes were arrested, accused of being guerillas, and raped and tortured in prison. She also discussed the general situation of women in El Salvador—the lack of work, extreme poverty, malnutrition, lack of medical care, illiteracy, high infant and maternal mortality and the very common situation of women being left alone to care for families and children.

Ana discussed her own difficulties in finding care for her two young children while she worked at the factory and in feeding and clothing them on her meager wages. She spoke of having to leave her

children when she went into exile in the United States and how she hasn't seen them for over two years. There was tremendous pain and sadness in her voice and eyes as she spoke of these things. And yet there was also a sense of hope and even more of determination that she and the other people of El Salvador would win their struggle and she would be reunited with her children in a new El Salvador.

Ana presented a promising picture of the participation of women in both the political organizations and the liberation armies of the FDR-FMLN. She also indicated the commitment of the revolutionary groups in El Salvador to address the question of full emancipation and equality for women. She emphasized that the struggle of Salvadoran women for women's rights is and must be a part of the larger struggle for the freedom of the Salvadoran people as a whole and for the creation of a society in which working people control their own lives. She also recognized the special forms of oppression that women suffer and that must be

fought against and eliminated as a part of the general revolutionary process. She gave a sense of the difficulty of this task and also of the tremendous brutality women who are taking part in political work at any level in El Salvador today are facing. But again there was that sense of hope and optimism.

Throughout all her presentations and discussions, Ana reminded us of the responsibility of the U.S. government in continuing and increasing the exploitation and suffering of the Salvadoran people, and of our own responsibility to change our government's actions. She asked us and, even more, trusted us to understand what she was saying—on both a personal and a political level—and to act on what we understood.

Ana's spirit of internationalism came through and took root among those to whom she spoke. She is truly a revolutionary. ■

Carol McAllister is a member of the Pittsburgh Central America Mobilization Coalition. This article appeared in the January-February 1984 issue of "Central American Focus." (For subscriptions to this newsletter write to the Thomas Meriton Center, 1111 E. Carson St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15203.)



"To deal with decapitalization... Confiscation!" proclaims billboard in Nicaragua

Militant/Arnold Weissberg

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Nicaragua diary

By SUZANNE MARTEN

The work brigades of which I was a part were made up of volunteers who replaced workers in the fields during the peak harvest months of December, January, and February. Because so many of the Nicaraguan people have been called upon to defend their country from counterrevolutionary attacks, there are not enough people to harvest the coffee, cotton, sugar cane, tobacco, and vegetable crops. Ours was the first North American brigade and consisted of about 45 people ranging in age from 19 to 72.

What the Sandinistas have attained thus far in their revolution is remarkable. But what stands in their way now is the threat of outside intervention. Their methods of distribution and increasing cooperative production have brought much to an oppressed people, but they inherited an impoverished and war-torn country, and they continue to be faced with the need to defend themselves. This takes precious material and human resources that they would much rather be using for improving the lives of the people.

The threat of war, or perhaps I should say the reality of war, became more tangible as we reached the farm where we would be spending three weeks harvesting coffee. We were about 10 miles east and 25 miles south of the Honduran border. There were four outposts surrounding the farm and guards circulating 24 hours a day. The guards, most of whom were just kids, all had guns slung across their backs. And to add to the open sight of arms, there was the constant sound of fighting in the distance at night.

Despite the visibility of guns and

weapons I didn't feel unsafe. Though many of the militia were young, they were not tense, or threatening, or alienated from the people. They have a responsibility to defend the revolution and they carry it out well.

The interaction among people at the camp was very positive. There were about 500 people working there at the time. Some were kids as young as 6. But all ages worked together, rising at 5 a.m., eating, picking for about seven hours, returning to the camp, doing laundry, etc.

The conditions at the coffee farm were rough. There were no bathrooms, just outhouses. There were no electric lights in our rooms. There was no hot water. The beds were wood boards, no mattresses or pads. Everything was dirty. And, of course, the three daily meals consisted of rice, beans, and tortillas. And yet the campesinos live in these conditions year round. This is their life.

During our stay in Nicaragua, we visited a health center in the small town of Pueblo Nuevo. People there spoke of conditions before the revolution: All the land was owned by one man; the people who worked the land camped out because he provided no housing. There was only one private doctor to service the whole area and, of course, the people who needed help couldn't afford it. Now they have several health workers in the area. Teams of medics make rounds in the countryside. Health care is free if the patient can't afford it.

The people at the health center said that almost all the young people are behind the revolution because they have seen the improvements and feel hope. But many do complain because they are

not satisfied with the speed of improvement and with the 30 percent inflation rate, which they attribute to the Sandinistas. (In reality the inflation is worldwide and made worse by U.S. intervention.)

The husband and wife doctor team had a young son who was playing with a wooden horse. They explained that there just aren't any toys in Nicaragua. At least \$500,000 would be needed to buy them and the government doesn't really want to import American toys. What they have done to try and work around this is to start a program of Nicaraguans making their own toys to be sold inexpensively. The wooden horse was an example.

I talked to Francisca, an 11-year-old girl who was staying at the camp minding her sister's baby. Francisca asked me what it was like in the United States. She couldn't believe that people were not fighting in the United States. "You mean there is no war in your country?" she asked in amazement.

God, what a revelation this was! She was only 11, but war had been so much a reality of her life that she couldn't imagine what it would be like if there was no war. She just assumed that everyone lived the same horror she did.

It has been quite depressing returning to the United States, and seeing such a wealthy country using so many resources to prevent Nicaragua from building a new society. But at the same time it has strengthened my commitment to build the kind of antiwar movement in this country which can stop the U.S. war against Nicaragua, and allow the Nicaraguan people to determine their own fate. ■

Plight of the homeless

By HAYDEN PERRY

"Oakland's homeless have little hope. Most seek shelter in vacant buildings, abandoned cars."

These were the headlines over a story on the homeless in the Oakland *Tribune* of Feb. 21. The essentials of this story have been repeated in dozens of articles in newspapers across the country. America's homeless have been discovered. There are 2 million of them by the government's own estimate, 500 of them only a mile from the White House.

These are not the traditional "winos" and "bowery bums" the establishment can ignore. These are laid-off workers who have taken the initiative to move elsewhere to find work and have failed to find it. They are workers and their families who may have jobs but cannot come up with the \$1,000 advance rent and deposit money often demanded for even a sleazy apartment. They are the mentally impaired people who need institutional care but have been cast adrift because of budget cuts in mental health programs. Unable to work, they must subsist on California's general welfare grants of food stamps and \$258 a month. Since the cheapest room may rent for \$250 a month, simple arithmetic dictates that workers must live in the street if they are to eat. These are the new homeless who are overwhelming city and county facilities.

These facilities are mainly Salvation Army or Goodwill dormitories originally designed to shelter a few penniless travelers for a night or two. They are not intended to shelter hundreds of people for weeks or months. Even as temporary shelters they are totally inadequate. At least a hundred homeless are turned away in Oakland every night.

The overflow people must crawl into cardboard boxes, find a dry spot under freeways, and endure the winter night as best they can. Here the homeless enter a hopeless cycle. To get a home, they must get a job; to get a job, they need a permanent address and a telephone. How

presentable does a jobseeker look after sleeping in his or her clothes all night!

The homeless of Oakland and San Francisco are not passively accepting their intolerable situation. They are organizing and fighting back. In San Francisco they have formed the Homeless Caucus to fight for decent shelter as the inalienable right of every human being. Recently they set up a tent city in front of the San Francisco City Hall to dramatize their demands.

Starting with the most basic and immediate needs, they demand provision of public toilets, showers, delousing facilities, and laundries. Among other

demands they called for a meeting with Governor George Deukmejian to secure state resources for the homeless, increased grant levels of general assistance, beefed-up community health programs for those pushed out of the state hospitals, and involvement of the homeless at every level of decision making.

The response of the local authorities to the homeless is to treat them as a temporary problem to be met by stopgap measures. San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein provided several broken-down city buses last winter to get some of the homeless out of the rain. She also appropriated funds to rent hotel rooms for

other of the homeless. Since the cost to the city of the cheapest room is \$10 a night, the city's emergency fund was soon exhausted. The mayor was also embarrassed to find that several of the hotels assigned to the homeless were in violation of the city's health and safety code.

In Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson set up a task force to deal with the problems of the homeless. Adding another layer to the bureaucracy has not helped. After two months the task force is still "assembling staff" preparatory to investigating the problem.

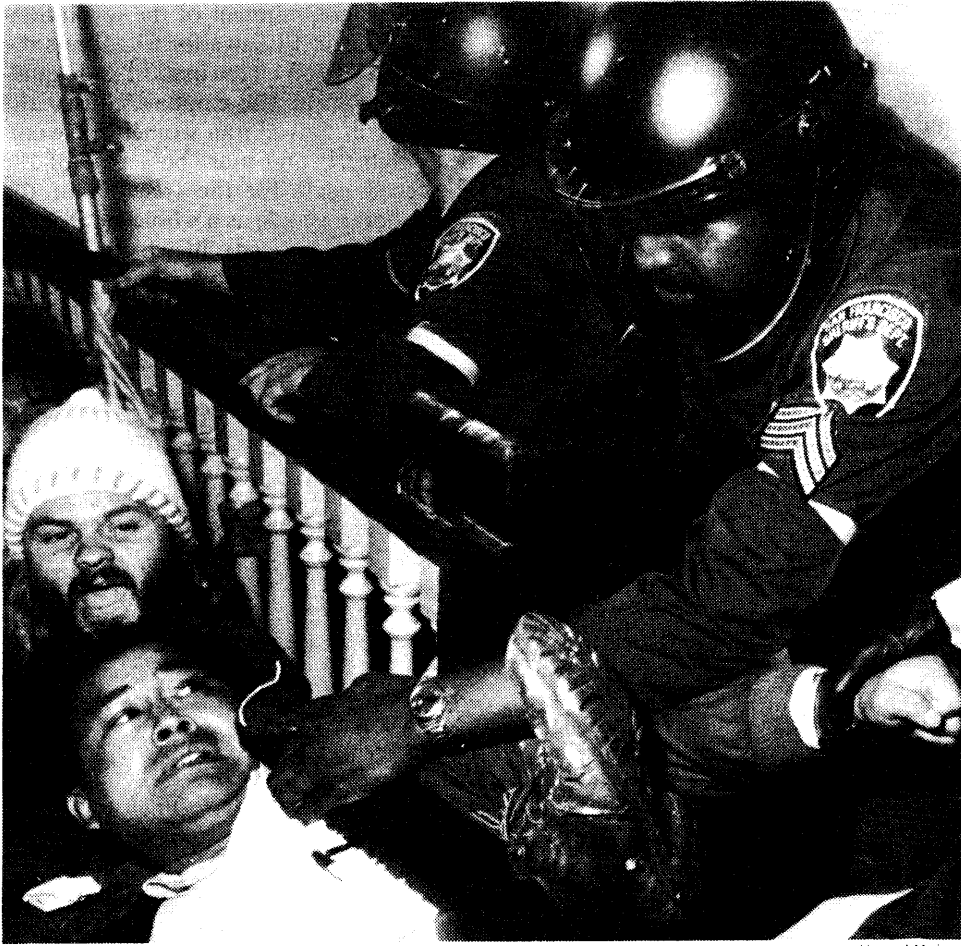
Cops evict squatters

Some of the homeless in Oakland have grown tired of official stalling and have taken direct action. Uhuru House, a unit of the African Peoples Socialist Party, has installed families in vacant houses, citing the people's right of eminent domain. The cops have not appreciated the legal subtleties of this threat to property rights and have expelled the squatters with force.

Other attempts of the homeless to set up tent cities have been met by eviction and demolition. Memories of the Hoovervilles of the thirties and the radicalism that accompanied them make the authorities very nervous. They look with favor on a proposal to house Oakland's homeless at Camp Parks, a disused army base far outside the city limits. This base was proposed as a prison for antinuclear protesters arrested at the Livermore Laboratory. Because the base had been found to be radioactive as a result of nuclear projects carried out there, a judge had banned its use as a prison. Now city and county authorities think it may be OK for housing the homeless!

The problem of the homeless is that they are fighting alone. They need the support of all the unemployed and welfare recipients, organized in unemployed leagues and councils.

Above all they need the support of organized labor. In their own interest the AFL-CIO must take the unemployed under its wing. When the power of organized labor is brought to bear, the crisis of the homeless will become the crisis of the ruling class. ■



Police evict residents in San Francisco's Filipino community. Scene from *The Fall of the I Hotel*, a new documentary film by Curtis Choy.

Polish workers resist

By OLIVER MACDONALD

Officially, Solidarity is dead. It no longer exists either in law or in fact. Repeatedly official spokespersons of the government claim that they have not the slightest worry about continued Solidarity underground activity.

They claim success for the amnesty offered to those in hiding. According to official figures released on Jan. 4, 1,120 people came out of hiding, including 411 who gave themselves up between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31, when the amnesty expired.

Press spokesperson Urban claimed that those remaining underground numbered less than 100 and were now "generals without an army."

At the beginning of this year, the leaders of 13 new, officially inspired trade unions met to establish a unified national council. On Jan. 6, the Communist Party announced that its strength and activity had been restored. It claims 2.2 million members who are now said to be more active, especially among the workers.

The authorities declare themselves well satisfied with relations between Church and state. The Polish Primate, Cardinal Glemp, had a five hour meeting with General Jaruzelski on Jan. 5.

The Warsaw daily *Zycie Warszawy* insisted that the meeting gave the lie to all suggestions that tensions existed between the two bodies and there are now plans to establish full diplomatic relations between Poland and the Vatican for the first time since the war.

The official picture of normalization

is not entirely a bluff. Opposition sources acknowledge that the government has been able to restore its effective authority.

The Solidarity underground leaders are nevertheless much more confident about their position than at earlier moments in the two years since the crackdown on Solidarity began.

Indeed, one of the underground's main leaders, Zbigniew Bujak, made the following claim in an interview for the underground journal *Tygodnik Mazowsze* published on Nov. 24: "At present, we exert a greater influence on our country's political life—as well as on other matters—than we did toward the end of our open and legal existence."

"In the three months before Dec. 13, 1981 (when martial law was imposed) the authorities were only pretending to negotiate with Solidarity. In fact, they were already by-passing the union making all their decisions apart from it, and preparing for the introduction of martial law."

"Now the situation has been reversed. The authorities pretend that the union doesn't exist, while in reality having to take it into account before taking any important step."

"By lifting martial law and by acknowledging the situation as 'normalized' while the underground exists, the authorities have signalled their reconciliation to the fact of our existence."

Bujak's assessment is based on the continuing numbers and organization of the resistance. In addition to the hundred or so people in hiding—who include the main leaders of the movement—there are some thousands of permanently active

union members (some say tens of thousands of them).

Beyond these, a much wider layer of people continue to pay dues to Solidarity or take its newspapers regularly. Bujak claims that these number a million or more. Others put the figure in hundreds of thousands. These supporters are especially concentrated in the main industrial centres and large enterprises.

Just as important has been the change of perspective amongst the activists. They no longer expect a showdown with the state right now. They tend to compare their strength with what happened before Solidarity, and feel much stronger in that time scale. They have to concentrate less on general propaganda against the regime and deal more with bread and butter issues.

This has strengthened the movement's unity by concentrating on less divisive

issues than general questions of ideology and program. The sinews of leadership from the TKK—the national committee—downwards have been strengthened.

The government is trying to convince the workers that they can use new official institutions for their own practical purposes. It is allowing the new unions to voice criticisms, uses wide consultation on price increases and lets the new political front organization, PRON, make demands for changes in policy.

The authorities are hoping that such flexibility, along with its cooperation with the Church hierarchy will eventually make workers apathetic toward the underground.

The Solidarity underground is raising demands for the release of seven jailed Solidarity leaders and four KOR leaders (KOR stands for the Workers' Defense Committee that championed the cause of independent trade unions in the late 1970s). It is calling for a price freeze, cost of living allowances and united trade union action in defense of living standards.

The government's handling of these issues gives some support to Bujak's assessment of the situation. It has not brought the Solidarity Seven and KOR Four to trial and seems keen on avoiding doing so. It has moved with great caution over prices and seems to be still debating how to handle the election arrangements.

In short, uprooting the traditions of independent trade unionism is proving to be a long and difficult battle. ■



Stamp designed by Polish political prisoners

(Abridged from *Socialist Action*, Feb. 3, 1984, published in London. Macdonald is the editor of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*.)

Mexican socialists mark new gains

The following interview with Margarito Montes Parra, a member of the Political Committee of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party), the Mexican section of the Fourth International, was obtained in Paris on January 31 by Les Evans. It has not been corrected by companero Montes.

Socialist Action: After the great success of the PRT in the July 1982 elections, could you tell our readers something about the ongoing work of your party?

Montes: Before the elections our party had branches in 26 cities and towns. Today there are branches in 95 cities and towns, with a large implantation in peasant sectors and in the *colonias* [working class districts]. We believe that we are about 1,500 actual members, but there is a much larger number of sympathizers and *afiliados*.

These *afiliados* were mainly people who organized to support the PRT in the elections. Approximately 4,500 of them affiliated with the PRT. They consider themselves members of the PRT, but we do not count them as members at this point....

In addition, our trade union work has been strengthened among the electrical workers in Toluca near Mexico City, and among the railway workers. We carried out some work in auto in the Renault plant, where the president of the strike committee was in the PRT, but 2,500 workers were fired, including PRT members, in February 1983. At a recent strike



to electoral work. Now they have changed their position. In Durango in June they called on the colonia they influence to vote for the PRT in local elections. In December the PRT put OIR candidates on our electoral slate in Guerrero. We plan a 1986 electoral alliance with the OIR. We describe this relationship as a privileged united front.

S.A.: Could you come back to the PRT's peasant work and the national coordinating group it participates in?

Montes: The PRT's peasant organization is called the CCRI (Coordinadora Campesino Revolucionario Independiente). This is like the BPR—only for peasants. At this time the CCRI has affiliated groups in 220 *ejidos* (peasant towns). Through the CCRI we participate in the Coordinadora Plan de Ayala (the name of a plan put forward by Zapata), a national peasant coordinadora. There are 20 peasant organizations in this front. The PRT is the strongest but by no means dominant.

There are three major national coordinadoras: urban neighborhoods, peasants, and teachers. In addition to these sectoral coordinadoras, there is the Asamblea Nacional de Obreros y Campesinos Popular—National Workers and Peasants Assembly—in which 179 groups participate.

All the left parties—including the PSUM (Communist Party)—participate in the Front Against Repression, which last October organized a national day of protest in which 1.5 million people took part in public demonstrations and work stoppages in 52 cities.

During the period of this protest a number of land occupations were carried out, some of which were led by the PRT. On Oct. 18, in Veracruz, campesinos took over two pieces of land and continued to occupy them for 20 days, until the police came and repressed them. A number of people were arrested in this action, including six from the PRT. Several were injured.

Ten days after the police intervention, the CCRI led 250 peasants 800 kilometers by train to Mexico City for a demonstration. As a result, an agreement was signed with the Minister of the Interior promising to free all those arrested in Veracruz. The prisoners were then released without any concessions being made by the PRT or the CCRI.

S.A.: What was the relation of the PRT to the massive October day of protest? And what other areas of work does it engage in?

Montes: The October protest was headed by a committee of 12 from various organizations. I was one of two PRT members on the committee. I represented the CCRI.

Outside of the work I have described, the PRT is also in the process of forming a national women's organization in alliance with other organizations. This was initiated by women members of the BPR and is being taken up by a national group of women from the existing coordinadoras.

S.A.: There has been considerable government repression directed against the PRT. Could you tell our readers about that and about your response?

Montes: Our most important task is to defend the legal registration of our

party, which was won by the mandates of hundreds of thousands of Mexican citizens who voted for us in the last elections. We are convinced that the government is trying to take it away. There are constant attacks on the PRT in the press.

The government falsely accuses us of being terrorists. Under the election law we are entitled to one 15-minute television program each month. The last six have been sabotaged by the studio—the sound mysteriously disappeared when it was broadcast.

The government is distributing a free book attacking Rosario Ibarra. This scurrilous book is entitled "Rosario por Popeye," making a joke about the comic strip character who in the United States is called "Olive Oyl." Popeye's girlfriend is called Rosario in Mexico. This book claims that Rosario is a member of the PRT, which is not true. It claims that the PRT lied about her membership, which is not true. It claims she drinks, that she stole money, that she is a lesbian. Some 10,000 copies were distributed at government expense.

The PRI government has rejected all the electoral victories of the PRT and of the far left in the last two years. You need 1.5 percent of the votes to win a local deputy. In Baja California, the PSUM put an initiative on the ballot to raise the minimum to 5 percent. The PRT in Baja got 3.5 percent of the vote. Here the PSUM and the PRI are in a common bloc. The PRI agreed to give 1000 of its votes to the PSUM to guarantee that it would get a deputy.

The government has refused to permit the PRT to take office in the towns where it has won the local elections. In most cases it has *annulled* the elections! We won 2 municipal elections in the north; 13 in Guerrero; 1 in Guajapa. In Guerrero the army took away the ballot boxes. We appeal to the readers of *Socialist Action* to participate in an international campaign in our defense, as these moves raise the threat of still more serious repression yet to come.

INTERVIEW

in Kelvinator a member of the PRT was elected chairman of the strike committee but he also was fired.

S.A.: There has been an impressive rise of various kinds of mass-action organization in Mexico in the recent period. Could you describe these formations and how the PRT relates to them?

Montes: There are a number of nationwide *coordinadoras* (coordinating committees) in which many organizations participate. One of these concerns the urban neighborhoods. In this work the PRT has built its own mass front, the BPR (Bloque Popular Revolucionario). In Tijuana the BPR is the largest of these neighborhood committees. On the national level the BPR participates in a coordinadora called the Urban Popular Movement (MPU—Movimiento Popular Urbano). The leading group in the MPU is the OIR (Organizacion de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Organization of the Revolutionary Left).

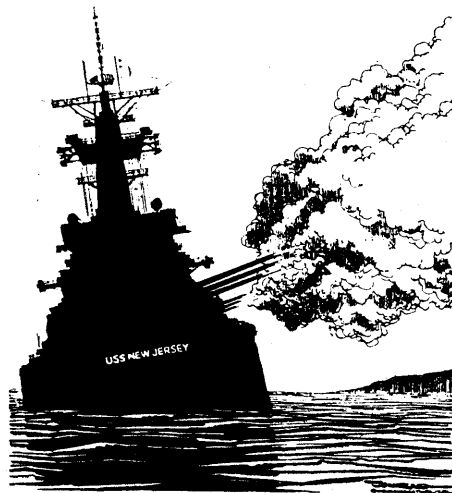
S.A.: Before you outline more about the national coordinadoras could you stop and say something about how you relate to the various groups that compose them.?

Montes: Two years ago we decided that cooperation in mass work would be facilitated if we had closer ties with groups on the left who agreed with some of our perspectives. We drew up a list and defined a number of groups as belonging to the revolutionary left. We established ongoing relations with the group that is now called the OIR. They have Maoist origins, but have a real implantation in the working-class neighborhoods and slums, in the teachers' union, and in the peasant sector.

We drafted a joint declaration to be used *internally* in both organizations. We hold a monthly meeting of a commission of the leaderships of the OIR and the PRT for political discussions on the workers', peasants', and students' movements. In the past, the OIR was opposed



Solidarity with the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples!



The recent events in Lebanon have demonstrated, if any further proof were necessary, that the great majority of the Lebanese population are opposed to the Phalangist regime of Amin Gemayel that the multi-imperialist so-called Multi-National Force was sent in to prop up.

Under the hammer blows of the armed masses, Gemayel's state, which was laboriously rebuilt after October 1982 with the support of imperialist troops and under their supervision, has crumbled, leaving the true state of affairs starkly exposed: The troops of the "legal" army are as Phalangist as the militias fighting alongside them.

In view of the scope of the defeat suffered by their protege and the pressure of

their own public opinion, some of the powers involved in the multi-imperialist force are pulling out their troops. Great Britain and Italy have done this. The Reagan administration has also found itself compelled to announce the withdrawal of its troops from Lebanese soil. But it is continuing to intervene by means of its naval artillery, savagely pounding the anti-Gemayel positions in the Lebanese mountains.

As for the French government, it is trying to extricate itself from the affair without losing face, asking that the multi-imperialist force be relieved by a UN one, in which French troops might participate and which would try to succeed where the Multi-National Force failed, that is, in consolidating the bourgeois order in Lebanon. Such a UN force could also favor the partitionist schemes of the Phalangist far right.

The victorious offensive of the Lebanese opposition calls for anti-imperialist forces throughout the world to redouble their efforts to mobilize opposition to imperialist policy in Lebanon under the following slogans:

All imperialist forces out of Lebanon, including its offshore waters!
Zionist troops out of Lebanon!
No UN intervention!
Solidarity with the Lebanese and Palestinian masses in struggle!

United Secretariat Bureau
of the Fourth International
Feb. 16, 1984

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

On Nov. 6, 1983, United Steelworkers of America (USWA) President Lloyd McBride died. The remaining International officers issued a statement that "Lloyd McBride personified all that was good and decent in trade unionism...His legacy was one of uncompromising trade unionism, of sacrifice to insure that past gains shall not be lost for future generations of working people and a deep and abiding respect for the principles of the Steelworkers."

Unfortunately, these fine words ring quite hollow to steelworkers — those still working, those entering the ninth month of a strike against Phelps Dodge Corporation, and the tens of thousands laid off since McBride took office in 1977. Many steelworkers have reached the conclusion

the USWA pledging the union would not strike over national issues in exchange for certain gains. In 1974, Ed Sadlowski, running on a platform of increased union democracy, became director of District 31 (Chicago-Gary), the largest district in the USWA.

Steelworkers Fight Back

In September 1976, with Abel facing mandatory retirement, Sadlowski challenged the administration-backed candidate, Lloyd McBride, for International president.

Sadlowski called for increased union democracy with membership ratification of contracts and officers working for the benefit of the membership. He stated that workers lose when unions play management's productivity game. He called for increased attention to union organiz-

Weisen was unable to secure the necessary 111 local union nominations to appear on the ballot. The official results credited him with 75 nominations. He is challenging these figures, pointing to irregularities in several locals. However, it's quite unlikely this challenge will succeed.

Although Weisen received publicity from news conferences in several steel centers, his campaign was largely unknown to rank-and-file steelworkers. This reflects the disintegration of a nationally coordinated opposition in the USWA since 1977.

It also reflects a split among former Fight Back supporters. District 6 Director Dave Patterson, former District 31 Director Jim Balanoff, and former Local 1938 President Joe Samargia have all endorsed candidate Frank McKee, the current International treasurer.

helped initiate the first USWA sponsored food bank, has spoken out in support of the rights of women and minorities, and has participated in actions against U.S. intervention in Central America.

Weisen's literature addressed itself to three main issues: no more concessions, save our jobs, and save our union. He called for a moratorium on further concessions, stating, "The company blackmail pitting local against local in order to get further concessions must stop immediately. The drive to lower our wages and standard of living must be reversed." In discussing productivity he said, "We lose when union leaders play management's game. When a union official's chief concern is profits, members suffer speedups, combining jobs, and layoffs. We need union leaders who will fight for steelworkers' rights first."

On the question of imports, however, Weisen fell for the company trap he correctly opposed on concessions and productivity. Instead of recognizing the imports scare as another attempt by the bosses to divide workers, tricking them into supporting the interests of "their" companies, Weisen pledged to mobilize steelworkers to physically keep imported slabs out of the United States. He failed to see this as another attempt to increase profits at workers' expense.

This was a step backward from Sadlowski's 1977 program which didn't mention imports. When asked about his position at that time, Sadlowski said, "There should be much greater cooperation and unity of trade unions nationally and internationally. This is simply an attempt to divide U.S. and foreign workers on the question of imports."

A response is needed

Much of the 1982 USWA International convention was devoted to talks by various Democratic Party office holders. Currently, the USWA is going all out to garner support for Walter Mondale's campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination. McKee heads the USWA political action committee. Weisen's literature failed to address this misuse of union time, energy, and money.

Despite the weaknesses in Weisen's campaign, he was clearly the best of the three candidates. His ability to win the nominations of numerous large basic steel locals with almost no campaign organization shows the extent of steelworker dissatisfaction with current union policies.

Weisen's campaign had the potential to serve as a focus for the anger steelworkers feel over the companies' attacks of the past few years.

Some steelworkers at the Hammond meeting motivated Weisen's candidacy as the first step in reconstructing an organized opposition in the USWA. They suggested that an organization should be formed which would prepare for the upcoming International convention and local and International elections. They pointed to the need for an on-going response to the company attacks and to the need to continue pressure on the International union.

Most of those who supported Weisen will vote for McKee as the better of the two administration candidates. There is a pressing need for the type of on-going organization which could force McKee to honor his campaign promises of membership ratification and no concessions. Weisen's campaign made little progress in constructing such a group.

Despite the opportunities provided by this special election to discuss the need for an end to the business trade unionism personified by Lloyd McBride, it appears that the opposition to company attacks will still be fought as isolated skirmishes by individual local unions rather than as part of a nationally coordinated campaign to force the union to represent the interests of steelworkers rather than the profit ledgers of the bosses.

Steel elections reveal need for fightback plan



that a different type of trade unionism than that of McBride is needed.

Many view the March 29 special election to replace McBride as providing a chance to express their discontent over job losses, worsened working conditions, and deteriorating living standards. The USWA is one of the few large industrial unions which elects its top officers through membership referendum. All steelworkers who haven't been laid off over two years will have a chance to vote.

Although the USWA was bureaucratically formed from the top down by the Mineworkers union with Phillip Murray appointed as president, there has been a tradition of movements for union democracy. This is despite the tremendous power of the International which appoints all staff representatives—including the personal secretaries of district directors. These appointed staff representatives wield a disproportionate share of influence at International conventions as well as being able to decide whether a local union's grievances will be processed through arbitration.

In 1965, the last election in which the International leadership was divided over which candidate to support, I. W. Abel upset David McDonald. Abel's campaign promised a change from the business unionism of McDonald. He pledged to return the union to the rank-and-file. But once elected, he continued business as usual.

During the next ten years, a number of local unions elected officers pledged to increase democracy. Unsuccessful convention challenges were mounted around dues reform, support to civil rights, and opposition to the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA), a settlement reached between the steel companies and

ing, the rights of women and minorities, and workplace health and safety.

Although Sadlowski's slate lost, it carried the majority of votes in basic steel and won majorities in several districts. Thousands of steelworkers actively participated in the campaign. Many of them viewed Sadlowski's campaign committee, Steelworkers Fight Back, as the beginning of a movement to allow the membership to take control of the union. They expected that win or lose an ongoing organization would be formed. At campaign appearances, Sadlowski spoke of the need for such an organization with a newsletter. After the election defeat, however, the Fight Back organization was not continued.

The International leadership responded to the challenge of the Sadlowski campaign by passing more restrictive election rules.

Since 1977, the dissident forces in the USWA have been largely unorganized. Attempts to mount convention challenges around membership ratification have been largely ineffective. Although a number of local presidents opposed the concessions bargaining in basic steel, there was no nationally coordinated opposition.

On Nov. 19, 1983, steelworkers from around the country, many of whom had been active in the Sadlowski campaign and similar local efforts, met in Hammond, Ind., to discuss the special election. This meeting nominated Ron Weisen, President of USWA Local 1397 (U.S. Steel, Homestead Works) since 1976. Weisen, an outspoken opponent of concessions, declared his intention to run on a platform to "save our union," opposition to concessions, and support for union democracy, including membership ratification of contracts.

McKee vs. Williams

Although some of McKee's support appears to be motivated by hopes of personal favors if he wins, other steelworkers felt that although Weisen was the best candidate, he couldn't win. They feel that McKee is so much superior to his opponent Lynn Williams, the International secretary, that support for McKee is justified to prevent Williams' victory.

McKee's literature declares his support for such traditional oppositionist issues as membership ratification—although he failed to speak out on the issue until he became a candidate for International president.

Like the rest of the International Executive Board, McKee supported the basic steel concessions. He also endorsed other concession settlements despite his current claim to be opposed to all concessions.

As part of the McBride team, McKee's name appeared on vicious red-baiting attacks against Sadlowski. He made no attempt to differentiate himself from this literature.

Now, while claiming to be the more progressive of the two candidates on the International Executive Board, McKee spends much of his time attacking Williams' Canadian citizenship. A McKee leaflet listing the "qualifications" of the two candidates features an American flag next to McKee's name and a Canadian flag next to that of Williams'. The information on Williams includes "Not eligible to vote in U.S." and "No experience with American political system."

Weisen, on the other hand, has been an outspoken opponent of concessions, voting and speaking against them at every opportunity. He has also been a proponent of union democracy. He

Socialist Action

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The 1934 strikes— Labor's Turning point

By MARK HARRIS

This year marks the 50th anniversary of three strikes—the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, the Minneapolis Teamsters strike, and the San Francisco general strike—that opened the way for the great labor upsurge of the 1930s. These three strikes of 1934 stand as a historic example of the power of workers organized in militant mass struggle for defense of their interests. Together they marked a turning point for labor—signalling the onset of a mass social movement of industrial workers that gave birth to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The stock market crash of 1929 had plunged the nation into an unparalleled economic crisis. Industrial production fell by 48.7 percent in four years. Unemployment reached a high of nearly 18 million in 1933. Millions wandered the roads in search of jobs and shelter. Communities of makeshift shacks, "Hoover-villes," symbolized the vast misery of the Depression.

The labor movement was in dire straits. Thrown off balance by the initial shock of the Depression, the workers only slowly began to regain equilibrium and organize for their rights. But under the leadership of the American Federation of Labor, representing at its peak only 5 percent of the workers, strike after strike went down in defeat. By 1933 A. F. of L. membership had plummeted to little more than 2 million workers. The major industries—steel, auto, rubber, transportation—remained unorganized.

In 1934 things began to change as a new layer of militant workers, labor radicals, and revolutionary socialists asserted leadership in a series of hard fought class battles of historic proportions.

In Toledo, the workers at the Electric Auto-Lite Company, as Art Preis observed in *Labor's Giant Step*, "blazed forth to illuminate the whole horizon of

the American class struggle." The Auto-Lite workers went out on strike on Feb. 23, 1934, and engaged in a militant mass struggle that confronted and defeated the armed troops and judicial power of the capitalist government.

The same month in Minneapolis, General Drivers Local 574 organized a successful strike among coal yard workers. After this initial victory, the union set out to recruit to its ranks every truck driver and warehouse worker in Minneapolis.

Led by Trotskyists like Carl Skoglund, Farrell Dobbs, Harry DeBoer, and the Dunne brothers, Local 574 led a strike that halted all truck transportation after the employers refused to bargain. The ingenious strike tactics of the union sparked a mass organizing drive that overthrew the rule of the open shop and established an industrywide union of truck drivers and warehouse workers in the transportation industry.

This month we are inaugurating Forum, a new feature section which will present discussion and debate on a wide range of topics of interest to the labor and socialist movements.

While events were unfolding in Minneapolis, an "unauthorized" strike by 10,000 to 15,000 longshoremen on the West Coast pitted the waterfront workers against vigilantes, scabs, police, media hysteria, and opposition from the bureaucrats running the union. In July the police attacked the strike center on the San Francisco waterfront, killing two and wounding 109 in the infamous "Battle of Rincon Hill." The National Guard was called in. The workers of San Francisco answered with a general strike that shut down the city. The A.F. of L. leaders called off the strike but the longshoremen emerged strong and were soon able to win the union hiring hall along the West Coast.

Socialist Action held a forum in San Francisco on Feb. 18, 1984, to commemorate the anniversary of these three strikes. Ted Selander, a leader of the 1934 Toledo strike, addressed the audience of over 120 people. Max Goldman, a leader

of the Federal Workers Section in Minneapolis and one of 18 members of the Socialist Workers Party sent to prison during World War II for violation of the Smith Act, was introduced to the meeting and presented brief remarks.

Asher Harer, a retired longshoreman from San Francisco, introduced the film *Labor's Turning Point*, a documentary on the Minneapolis strikes shown at the forum, and has prepared a contribution for *Socialist Action* on the San Francisco general strike. Karen Shieve, a union activist, addressed the theme of the lessons of the 1934 strikes for today's labor movement. The article by Karen Shieve and Don Harmon included here is based on remarks delivered by Shieve at the forum. The forum was moderated by Dianne Feeley, a leader of *Socialist Action* and an activist in the Mon Valley Unemployed League in Pittsburgh.

Harry DeBoer, a leader of the Teamsters strike and also one of the Minneapolis 18 with Goldman, was unable to attend the forum but was interviewed by *Socialist Action* and offered his comments for this special Forum section.

This section also includes major portions of a talk given by Carl Skoglund in May 1952. They are published here for the first time ever. Skoglund was a central figure in the Minneapolis strikes and later president of Local 544. This year marks the 100th anniversary of his birth. His life spanned several decades of revolutionary activity—from the early days as a socialist antiwar agitator in his native Sweden, to his role as a founding member of the Communist Party and later of the Trotskyist movement in the United States.

The strikes in Minneapolis, Toledo, and San Francisco, as Art Preis concluded in *Labor's Giant Step*, "showed how the workers could fight and win. They gave heart and hope to labor everywhere for the climactic struggle that was to build the C.I.O." The experience of these strikes, we might add, are rich in lessons that will give "heart" and "hope" to today's union militants as they confront the tasks of the class struggle. Labor's next giant step will draw on this experience of militant mass struggle and, we are convinced, go even further as the working class, in the big class battles sure to come, strides toward the creation of a mass workers' party.

The heritage of the 1934 strikes is one that *Socialist Action* claims as its own. ■



Toledo workers blaze way

By TED SELANDER

In 1932 I met Art Preis by accident in a rooming house. We met at the time of the Bonus March when MacArthur and Eisenhower and George Patton were burning and tear-gassing the veterans of the First World War out of Washington, D.C. We read about Toledo there, how badly it was hit by the Depression, and Art and I figured it was a good place to go to organize the unemployed.

So we did. We went to Toledo. And Toledo, I tell you, looked like a disaster. One-third of the workers were unemployed. Half of the stores were closed and vacant. The people were walking around with a solemn, bewildered look. The Willys-Overland plant, the largest plant in town, declared bankruptcy, as you know auto plants are doing today. And they threw 28,000 workers out on the street. There wasn't a union contract in town, except with the building trades, and they were down to a skeleton. We

went up to the Central Labor Union to a few meetings. They didn't have enough people for a quorum.

The only relief that people could get was what we called "nosebag relief." You went down to the warehouse, stood in line for hours, and you got a bag of potatoes, beans, and prunes, whether you liked them or not. And you had to work one day for that bag. It was degrading.

Mass action

So we rolled up our sleeves and started to organize the unemployed. Well, we were green, inexperienced. We had done a little reading, studying, but we knew that what we had to do was build a combat pressure organization that relied on mass action militancy. That was our premise. And before long we would organize the unemployed not only in Toledo but throughout Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

About three or four months after we got there, we organized the workers and farmers' conference. About a hundred delegates. And they all got up and told what the Depression was doing to them and their families. And we got a volunteer stenotypist, took it all down, bound it up, and made a complete record of it.

After that we began speaking in the neighborhoods, in the school buildings. Of course every time we went to a meeting we were flanked with police or deputies with guns. And when we had a committee go up to see the mayor or the relief head, we had to go through a gauntlet of guns and police. It was like Minneapolis.

And in the spring of the year we educated the unemployed to the unity of the unemployed and employed workers. We engaged in scores of industrial strikes. So participating in an industrial strike picket line was not new to us.

In the spring of 1934 the Auto-Lite and a couple of their subsidiaries went on strike. One of the subsidiaries had heard about us and seen us in action, and they came to our headquarters and asked for help. . . . Well, Auto-Lite got an injunction, as usual, from a favorable

judge. The union leaders of this local at the Auto-Lite plant were inexperienced. So they called off the picketing and were going to fight the injunction in the courts—which many inexperienced leaders do. Well, we knew that would be another lost strike if they pursued that course.

That's when we decided—with the help of Louie Budenz, who was a labor fighter in those days (before he became a Stalinist and an informer)—to keep on picketing. He advised us on how to handle the anti-injunction fight. So we sent a letter to the judge, told him we were going to violate the injunction, and four of us, two unionists and Sam Pollock and I, went on the picket line. Got arrested, taken to court, got convicted with suspended sentence, and went right back to the picket line—but we picked up about 50 pickets on the way back.

So we kept picketing every day and the lines grew longer until May 23, when we were having mass meetings in front of the plant. Then the big blow-out took place. We had 10,000 in front of the plant. The deputies were shooting tear

(Continued on page 9)

1952 speech— The story of Minneapolis

By CARL SKOGLUND

Today I want to talk about the famous Minneapolis strikes of 1934.

The drivers and all the workers employed in the truck transportation industry at that time enjoyed miserable conditions which existed throughout the history of Minneapolis prior to 1934. When the economic crash came the misery was intensified.

In the produce market area it was common practice for drivers and helpers to start work at 2 or 3 a.m. and continue work until 6 p.m. They were low paid and sometimes had to work seven days without any extra pay. If complaints were made they were fired.

The workers in trucking, and most other industries, were not unionized before 1934 and had to accept whatever conditions employers imposed. Many strikes were called between 1922 and 1934, and all suffered defeat. Minneapolis was known all over the country as the worst scab town.

In the early 1920s the bosses started the open-shop drive. They formed the Citizen's Alliance whose only aim was to keep Minneapolis non union. The bosses were successful in carrying out this program up to 1934. In fact, they were confident that no one could ever lead a drive to unionize the city.

V. R. Dunne, Miles Dunne, Grant Dunne, Harry DeBoer, George Frosig (who was vice-president of Local 574), and myself worked in the same coal yard. We held meetings in the early part of 1933 to discuss and plan a program for organizing the coal industry. If that test case was successful we would proceed with the rest of the trucking industry.

We all recognized that the trucking industry was the most powerful and also the most difficult in dealing with strike-breakers because scabs have to operate on the street. We had great strength in

numbers and understood the task of organizing. We therefore picked the coal industry as the starting point. This industry was strategic because of Minnesota's sub-zero winters.

Preparing for battle

We were convinced the employer would never recognize the union without a bloody battle. Consequently we made all possible preparations and were extra careful to proceed legally—appearing before the Central Labor Union, the executive board of the drivers union, and the Teamsters Joint Council. The response from these bodies was to throw a wet blanket over our proposal.

Some made statements like, "The drivers know where we are, why don't they come and join us." This attitude was discouraging but we still went on with our plans, confident of victory if we prepared properly.

Workers committees from various companies drew up a contract of

torious. No one could get a pound of coal without a doctor's prescription. The success of this strike caused a sensation among the drivers and workers.

A mass meeting was organized in a big theater for the purpose of inaugurating a real campaign to unionize other trucking industries. The meeting was well advertised and a capacity crowd filled the place. Organizational preparations were carried out for about two months. The famous committee of one hundred was made up of representatives from all sections who became involved in the strike. This committee had full authority to decide on all questions. Contracts of demands were presented to the employers. There was one answer received—a flat no.

We appealed to the Teamsters International Union for a strike sanction and strike benefits. We received the command to continue negotiations. Knowing that the International would never endorse a strike, we still—for the sake of the ranks—sent another appeal explain-

police and the deputizing of every reactionary man—equipping them with weapons to beat and arrest the pickets. During the first days dozens of strikers had been arrested and beaten up in the most brutal manner. Sixteen women had been beaten unconscious after being lured into an alley where an attempt was being made to deliver newspapers.

We organized rehearsals, padded our caps with cardboard and proceeded to hit one another on the top of the head. If it hurt the first time some more padding was applied until the blows became painless.

The daily newspapers carried screaming articles warning the public not to appear in the market area on such and such a day as violence was prevalent and some innocent bystander might get hurt.

Battle of Deputy Run

Two days after the women were beaten up an attempt was made to open the market with scabs. The morning when this happened all radio stations had their speaking equipment on the roof of buildings to broadcast the intended movement of trucks. Instead they had to broadcast the Battle of Deputy Run.

The story of Deputy Run is known all over the country, in fact all over the world. It meant that 1500 deputies and 500 uniformed police, under the pressure of the strikers' superior force, had to run for their lives. One deputy, a prominent open-shop employer, fell dead on the battlefield. Another died a few days later. Many others went to hospitals.

Governor Floyd B. Olsen then intervened, demanding a 48-hour truce, and during this time no trucks were to move. Both sides accepted this truce proposal. During these 48 hours we were in continual negotiations; union representatives in one room and employers in another, and the governor as a go-between.

After many hours of negotiations, a contract with recognition of the union and a small increase in wages was presented. The big question at issue at that time was our right to represent truck drivers, helpers, and inside workers working for each employer. This issue was scuttled, and finally a paragraph, very ambiguous in wording, was accepted with the guarantee of the governor that it meant the right of the union to deal for all the mentioned classifications. On this basis the strike ended after 11 days.

The whole working class in the city was jubilant over the great victory. But in the first meeting called to negotiate a definite contract, the employers refused to recognize our union as the bargaining agent for the inside workers. The strike was again set in motion.

Now the employers really set to work. They placed full-page ads in all the city dailies. A vicious red-baiting campaign was carried out by the newspapers, picturing the leaders as "Trotskyist-Communists" intending to make a revolution in Minneapolis instead of building the union. It became necessary to meet all these slanders by issuing a daily paper to present the position of the union.

The strike hit with solid ranks. All transportation stopped and the city again looked like a Sunday. This time the employers proceeded to arm the police with rifles and sawed-off shotguns loaded with slugs. Many dummy deliveries were made under very heavy police protection, such as medical supplies to a hospital or groceries to an old peoples' home. The aim was to get the pickets involved in trying to stop them and use this as an excuse for shooting the pickets. But deliveries could be made to these institutions without interference.

The strike went on for weeks without much action. One morning a report came in that an attempted delivery was planned in the wholesale grocery area and that the police, with shotguns, were there to protect the drivers. Pickets were dispatched and when they attempted to stop the delivery the police opened fire and shot down 52 pickets, killing two.

(Continued on page 9)

On the picket line

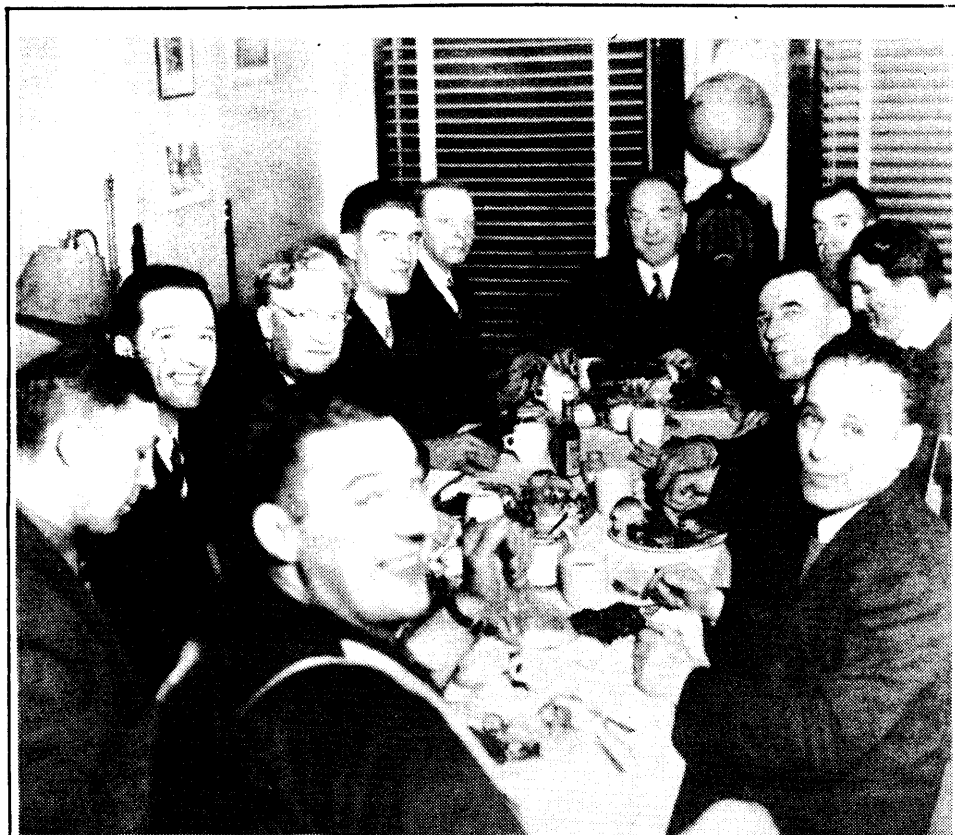
By HARRY DEBOER

We started organizing the coal drivers in late 1933 and early 1934. The bosses refused to recognize us and we were forced out on strike. After I was appointed a picket captain, Skogie [Carl Skoglund] sat down with me and we discussed what had to be done.

Our role was to see that no trucks hauled coal. Where we didn't have enough forces to stop the trucks we formed cruising pickets. Wherever we caught a truck we would dump the coal and send the driver back or, in some cases, we would tip the truck over.

Now look at what the workers faced. They faced thousands of special deputies. They fought them head on. They fought the police when they killed two of our strikers. The governor brought out the National Guard and they even fought them. I recall we had enough injunctions to paper a wall.

As for the lessons of the strike, well, to begin with you have to understand that when you call a strike you've got to prepare for it. Also, our union was a democratic union. We had our own paper to inform the public of what was going on. It is a big thing to have the public on your side. Without that we could not have won the strike. And, of course, we had a leadership that understood the capitalist system.



Leaders of the Minneapolis strike and the Socialist Workers Party celebrating their release from prison in 1944. Clockwise: Clarence Hamel (turning toward camera), Harry DeBoer, Farrell Dobbs, James P. Cannon, Emil Hansen, Oscar Coover, Sr., Carl Skoglund, Carlos Hudson, Jake Cooper, V.R. Dunne, Max Goldman.

demands. And when we presented this contract to the employers they, as we had expected, refused to meet with us. We then called an open meeting of all workers to present the results of our efforts. When the leaders of the A. F. of L. found out about this meeting and the possibility of a strike—a rumor had been spreading throughout the industry—they ganged up on us in mass, preventing us from taking any action. About 500 to 600 coal drivers present at this meeting tore up their union books and littered the union headquarters with the pieces.

The only action taken was a motion to hold a special meeting Sunday at 2 p.m., predicated on the fact that no business agent then would come out on Sunday and interfere with us. This proved to be strategically correct. Between Friday and Sunday all our forces were in motion to bring out all the coal workers to this meeting. The meeting was packed and a motion passed to strike on Monday morning at 5 a.m. and to set up a strike committee.

After a three-day strike we were vic-

ing the employer's attitude in refusing to meet with the union committee. The answer again was: proceed to negotiate.

This procedure caused a delay of action for at least a month. But it was well worth the time in order to prepare the workers for the coming strike. It became plain that a big battle was unavoidable. The issue would be recognition of the union. The outcome of this battle could not be predicted.

All the preparations for the strike began to be made. Regular charts were made up of the main highways and streets for picketing. Instructions for the picketing captains were drawn up. Registration of all available vehicles for service on the picket line, installation of a loud-speaking system in the strike headquarters—everything was done according to plan.

Early one morning in May 1934 the strike started. The workers responded practically 100 percent. The employers were caught by surprise at the response of the workers. The methods used by them were nothing new—the use of

By ASHER HARER

I became a member of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union soon after the United States entered World War II (after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941).

The war effort required the hiring of hundreds of new waterfront workers. Thousands applied. I applied to the ILWU. Since the union favored men with a union background, I was accepted.

The war hysteria was in full swing. Radios blared jingoistic ditties: "Remember Pearl Harbor! As we march against the foe! Remember Pearl Harbor, as we did the Alamo!" Plastered on warehouse and pier walls were racist anti-Japanese posters, and *always* there was Uncle Sam, in uniform, with a forefinger to his lips, warning, "Loose lips sink ships."

The ILWU's top leadership, headed by Harry Bridges, was ready to sacrifice union wages and conditions in order to win the war (Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941). But the ranks and local leadership didn't agree. The 1934 longshoremen's and seamen's strikes and the general strike that had made San Francisco a "union town" was fresh in history—only eight years away—and fresh in the minds of its participants.

"No streetcars, no taxis, no nothing! It was *real* quiet. I put on my Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes and walked down the streetcar tracks, from Dolores to the National Guard's barbed wire on the Embarcadero."

The 1934 strike was an ever-present thing, a guide to action, and a frequent topic of conversation. As we stood by, waiting for a ship to tie up, or during the lunch hour, a veteran would start it off: "Remember the time we derailed those scab boxcars?" And then they'd go on about the battles with the police, the funeral march up Market Street after two strikers were killed, the stillness of the streets of San Francisco on the first day of the general strike.

They told how the strikers had "run the city" for three days, closed the nightclubs and the bars, allowed only 19 restaurants to stay open, and how they blockaded the highways.

It was like the reminiscences of old soldiers—but different. These strike veterans knew they had written a glorious page in American labor history. They were a proud bunch.

I listened and learned a lot about how to run a successful strike. After work, I wrote things down. And on days off I hit the library to learn more.

The History

American labor history between 1920 and 1934 was a story of broken strikes; strikers murdered by company thugs assisted, when necessary, by the police, the National Guard, and the U.S. Army.

On Black Thursday, Oct. 24, 1929, American capitalism came apart at the seams. The Great Depression arrived. Within a few years, it was estimated that

there were over 20 million unemployed. Marches of the unemployed, the hungry, the homeless were given the same brutal treatment as strikers.

In 1919 a West Coast longshoremen's strike had been broken, and subsequently, until 1934, open shop reigned. The unions went underground. But with the slight economic upturn of 1932-33, the longshoremen in International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) began an organizing drive. It was directed, not by the corrupt official ILA leadership, but by rank and file committees led by the Communist Party and Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World). By early 1934, 95 percent of the longshoremen on the West Coast were in the ILA (on the West Coast, the ILA later became the ILWU).

Pre-strike wages and working conditions were atrocious. "Steady men," (subservient longshore gang members

record against arbitration.

The employers refused to negotiate with the rank-and-file-controlled union. So the union voted to strike. On May 9 the entire West Coast went on strike.

In San Francisco the union established mass mobile picket lines—1,000 in each column—and closed the waterfront down tight. A few scabs were recruited and housed behind electrified barbed wire on tied-up ships (the seamen's unions had also gone on strike). They unloaded some cargo but could not get it off the piers because the teamsters supported the strike. Several attempts were made to move cargo through the mass picket lines, to "open the port." Bloody clashes took place but no cargo moved. The unions held fast.

On July 5 the waterfront employers resolved to move cargo from Pier 32, opposite Rincon Hill. Eight-hundred

San Francisco's GENERAL STRIKE!



who worked regularly) comprised about 25 percent of the workforce and averaged \$40 per week. But the remaining three-quarters averaged only \$10 a week or less. "Not enough to live on and not enough to die on." Fifty percent were on relief.

The Embarcadero was known as the "slave mart." Longshoremen were hired in the waterfront poolrooms, saloons and cheap restaurants where they gathered between ships. Often it would be the proprietor who decided who would work. Favoritism and discrimination—against "trouble makers"—were common. Pay-off, in various forms, was the rule.

As a first step toward gaining union recognition, a coast-wide rank and file convention was called in February 1934. The delegates represented 14,000 men. The demands were \$1 an hour, a six-hour day, a 30-hour week (to equalize work opportunity), and all hiring through the union hall. This last demand was the key issue. And the convention went on

machine guns and took it over. Bill Brown, Ray Dunne, Miles Dunne were thrown into a stockade. Attempts were made during that day to call in second-ranked leaders and settle the strike. They refused to meet until the headquarters and the leaders were released.

Finally, after eight weeks of hardship and suffering a settlement was agreed on which provided for all the important issues that the union had been battling for.

In brief, these are some of the highlights of events during the strikes of 1934.

Socialist Action plans to publish the full transcript of Carl Skoglund's talk in the near future, along with other materials on the 1934 strikes.

police were on hand, fully armed. Several thousand pickets faced them. A row of ambulances stood by. When two boxcars were shunted out of the pier, the battle began—nightsticks, teargas and guns against two-by-fours and bricks. The battle raged all morning, with many injured on both sides. The strikers were forced to retreat. Then, at 1 p.m., the police raided the ILA headquarters at

...Toledo

(Continued from page 7)

gas and the workers were giving them everything they could get their hands on. Through the windows they kept shouting, "If they want an open shop, we'll give them one." They broke every window in the plant.

Now there were 1500 [scabs] inside the plant. So we were there all night. A couple of strikers went behind the plant, found telephone poles, and with 20 or 30 men on each pole they rammed the steel doors. And when they got the doors open, they got into a hand-to-hand slugfest with the deputies and the scabs just inside the doors.

Well, these 1500, with no light, in total darkness—we had knocked out every light on the street, so there was total darkness—they were scared to death. And they were all there all night until the National Guard came flowing into town, a thousand of them, and escorted them out.

Then the battle started with the National Guard. For six days we gave them everything we could get our hands on. After six days of battling the National Guard, the strike ended.

Now, Toledo Auto-Lite employees were making 35 cents an hour. They were being paid less than the NRA code. When the strike ended, they got a 5 percent increase over the code, which

Steuart and Mission streets and shot down two men. That afternoon Governor Merriam brought in the National Guard, 2,000 strong. The Guard set up machine guns and enclosed the Embarcadero in barbed wire.

On July 9 a massive funeral march of 40,000, bearing the bodies of Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise, moved up Market Street. On the insistence of the ILA, not a cop was in sight. Strikers directed traffic. The next day federal mediators entered the picture. The union held fast to its original demands and began pushing for a general strike. San Francisco union workers were ready. If the ILA was broken, what would happen to them?

The conservative Labor Council leadership opposed a general strike but was forced to give way when the overwhelming majority of the unions voted to strike.

The general strike went into effect on July 16. Picket lines blocked all traffic in and out of San Francisco. Without a union permit no cargo moved. Hospital supplies, school supplies and milk trucks were excepted. Gasoline was rationed. For three days the unions controlled the city.

Newspaper headlines screamed, "Red Revolution." The San Francisco *Chronicle* printed a story that a communist army was marching on San Francisco from the North-west. Vigilantes, backed by police, raided the Communist Party's *Western Worker* and even homes of strike supporters; 450 persons were arrested.

The general strike was ended after only three days by the conservative union leadership of the Labor Council although no strike issues had been settled. Nonetheless, the employers and the government of Roosevelt knew they were beaten. The union and the employers both now agreed to federal arbitration of all longshoremen's and seamen's grievances, with the understanding that all the maritime unions would be recognized and the ILA would get the hiring hall. The strike was over.

In the award the ILA gained almost all its demands: 95 cents an hour, six-hour day, 30-hour week. However, the union hiring hall was to be *jointly* operated.

Postscript: Now began the *real* battle—to establish union control over hiring and firing throughout the maritime industry. Within the next few years militant job actions by longshoremen and seamen had under new leadership gained job control. And the maritime unions were firmly established.

...Minneapolis

(Continued from page 8)

This day has become known as Bloody Friday. At the funeral of Henry Ness, one of the pickets killed on Bloody Friday, an estimated 50,000 people marched four abreast and tied up all city traffic for hours.

Two government mediators were attempting to settle the dispute on any terms. They finally gave us a proposal providing for recognition of the "inside workers." The union accepted but the employers turned down this agreement. The governor then declared martial law.

Early one morning the military surrounded the strike headquarters with

brought them up to about 42 cents an hour. But the winning of that strike set off a tidal wave of union organizing in Toledo. Nineteen plants were organized before the end of the year.

One year later we organized the strike of the Chevrolet workers. We set up a progressive workers' group. That was a real strike! Art Preis was very active in that strike—he wrote the first strike bulletin. And that picket line was so tight that when Knudsen [President of General Motors] came down from Detroit, he had to get a pass from the strike committee to get into the plant.

That was the first GM contract, the first successful GM strike. These strikes started the ball rolling. They laid the groundwork for what eventually became the biggest and most powerful trade-union movement in the world—the AFL-CIO.

In closing, I just want to address a few remarks to the youth here, the young people, and I'm going to use the last few lines of Art Preis' last public speech.

He said, "The class struggle goes on. We will see another upsurge. We can't fix the day or the hour just as we could not see the rise of the CIO. But this generation's socialist youth will get its chance. You must study, work, prepare, and organize. Your chance will come and you will finish the job that our generation started"



Lessons of 'Douglas' strike

By DAVE ROBERTSON

The frustration of American labor has grown with the setback to the workers at McDonnell-Douglas in Long Beach, Calif. The workers in rubber, Wilson foods, and Greyhound—to mention a few examples—had been forced to give up hard-earned gains. But the McDonnell-Douglas workers, under the leadership of President Bob Berghoff, decided they could not and would not tolerate "takebacks" by the profit-laden corporation, which had just reported a 28 percent increase in profits for 1983.

The company's single adamant offer with no negotiations was a direct challenge to union organization and strength. It incorporated a two-tier system, which lowered the wages of starting workers, most of them in lower labor grades. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was eliminated. Health insurance contributions by the company were frozen at 1982 levels. Workers could be moved from one job classification to another at the company's discretion. At the same time, the company was ignoring arbitration settlements favoring union workers. And these settlements are still waiting court action.

A militant union with a determined leadership struck McDonnell-Douglas in Long Beach. Unions from all over the United States and Canada called to help or ask for information. U.A.W. locals across the country called to support Local 148. Unions throughout the Long Beach and Los Angeles area expressed their support when contacted by a Union Solidarity Committee. With such support, why did the union suffer a setback?

International against strike

The most important reason was the lack of support from the U.A.W. International, represented by President Bieber and Vice-President Majerus. Despite the fact that the workers had voted overwhelmingly to reject the initial offer of the company, the International forced a

second vote and at a critical juncture forced a third vote. Although the union rejected the offer by 72 percent, the workers knew the International had turned against them.

The International armchair generals have no stomach for a fight. They act as brokers between the union and the company. Instead of depending on the militancy of the U.A.W. membership, they are busy trying to become "labor statesmen," a sure prescription for defeat. This disease—lack of solidarity with the workers—has infected labor leaders from coast to coast.



Marc Rich/Socialist Action

At the very time the company started to run ads threatening to replace striking workers, the International withdrew its share of the double strike benefits. Furthermore, they announced the forced third vote to the press without even consulting the local leadership. The combined pressure from the company and the abandonment by the International weakened the solidarity of the union, and many members crossed the picket lines to return to work.

On Friday, Feb. 10, under the combined pressure from Majerus, the International, and the company, Local 148 voted to go back to work, ending a militant struggle by an honest though inexperienced leadership and a courageous membership.

Historic strike lessons

Lessons can be learned from the setback at the McDonnell-Douglas plant. The need to mobilize the local membership is one. The need to mobilize the outside labor movement to support the strike is another, and especially the need to prepare for this support before the actual strike. In 1934, in the General Driver's Strike in Minneapolis, months of preparation made every union aware of the issues in the upcoming labor dispute. The Central Labor Union was lined up to support the truckers. The union press wrote articles about the problems of the truckers. The mobilization of Minneapolis labor before the strike prepared the way for victory.

In the Local 148 struggle, this process of mobilization of outside support started only during the strike. Then the leadership saw the necessity of union support and started a solidarity commit-

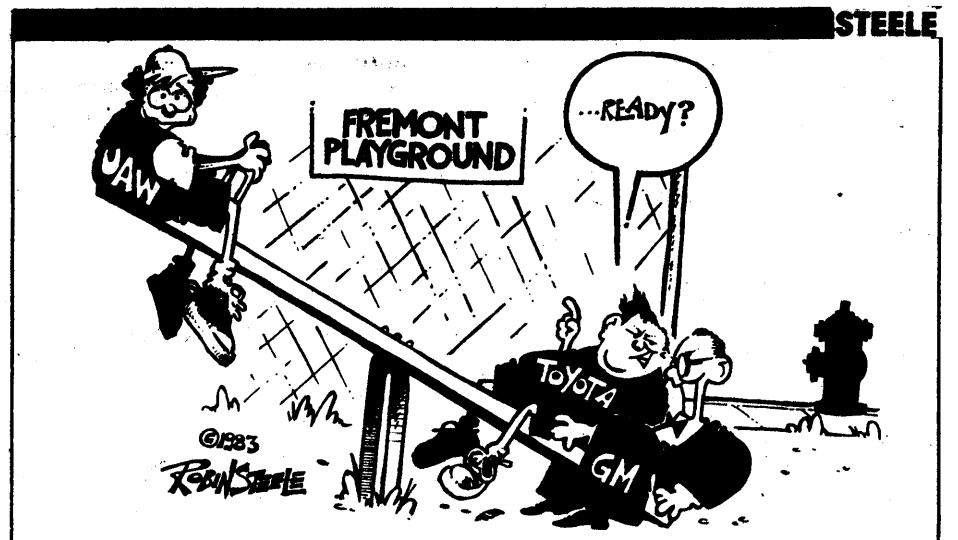
tee that brought many other locals to support the strike. As Berghoff stated, "This was this leadership's first strike, and we will prepare the union for next time."

Another lesson from the Minneapolis strike is that scabs must be confronted. You cannot permit the courts with their injunctions or the police to keep the union from using its most effective power—to withhold its labor. Rallies and mass picket lines showed that the workers of Local 148 were ready for a confrontation.

Striking unions today can make use of another strategy of the Minneapolis truckers. The trucker's union put out a bulletin everyday. If the bosses had a letter in the workers' hands one day, the union had their answer in the workers' hands the following day. Sometimes a threat from the company was answered within hours. The workers' morale was kept at a high pitch everyday by their strike bulletin.

When elections come up in March, Local 148's leadership will be under full attack from the anti-union right wing within the union as well as the company. The leadership must develop a fighting program to rebuild its ranks and prepare for new struggles with this giant conglomerate.

To avoid a replay of this setback, the ranks must be involved in the decision-making processes of the union at a qualitatively higher level. The tremendous power of a determined membership could serve as a rallying point for other workers eager to turn the tide on concessions. Only this and the mobilized strength of a unified trade union movement can defeat a giant like McDonnell-Douglas.



1934—1984

By DON HARMON and KAREN SHIEVE

The great labor struggles of the 1930s remind us that the lessons of those victories can and should be applied to the employer's challenges of the 1980s—union-busting, run-away shops, and contract takeaways.

Today companies declare that times are hard and workers must accept lower wages and worse working conditions or face permanent layoffs and plant closings. But most trade union officials, emphasizing labor's "partnership" with the company, only add fuel to the employers fire by agreeing to concessions in return for weak promises that no layoffs or plant closings will be carried out. "What is good for the company is good

for the worker," they reason, as company profits go up and the hard-fought gains of past struggles are taken away.

The workers involved in the great strikes of fifty years ago knew that their interests were in direct conflict with the interests of the company. There could be no partnership. The leaders of strikes like those in Toledo, Minneapolis, and San Francisco in 1934 knew that by mobilizing the workers they could challenge the boss from a position of strength. The way those strikes were carried out inspired confidence and promoted the idea that the workers had the power to win their demands.

Today labor officials prefer a demobilized and passive membership. They fear and mistrust the rank and file. The average union member, as a result, is left out of the decision-making process and is given no responsibility in the functioning of the union. The union member, in turn, feels separated from the official union leadership and looks upon the union as just another bill collector.

The gulf between the rank and file only serves the employers, who exploit every opportunity to weaken the union. But when union members are encouraged to participate and given real responsibilities the ranks grow more self-confident, and support for the union is strengthened.

Because the union officials distrust the members, the importance of direct action by the members to achieve their demands and answer the employers' offensive is downplayed. Instead, emphasis is placed in the legal arena.

When serious contract violations occur the present day grievance procedure leads inexorably to arbitration by a "neutral" third party. Arbitration usually takes months or years and is a costly drain on the union treasury. Arbitration can be an effective tactic, but only if it is one part of an overall strategy that emphasizes direct action by the members.

The most damaging aspect of relying on arbitration is that it encourages the workers to think that someone else can fight their battles for them. The direct action of the 1930s meant work slowdowns, sit-down strikes, marches, mass demonstrations, and rallies. In other words, the full creative energy of the workers was brought to bear against the boss.

Direct action in the 1930s also meant defiance of any law or injunction that restricted the workers' ability to fight the company. All of us have seen how injunctions have been used to destroy mass picket lines by limiting them to two or three pickets. The leaders of the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, by contrast, consciously defied a court injunction limiting picketing and built picket lines involving thousands of workers. That's the way to win a strike.

We must return to the theme of labor solidarity. "A victory for one is a victory for all" should be our rallying cry. The

only effective way to resist the companies' offensive is to employ the full force of the working class and our friends in other arenas of struggle—Blacks, Latinos, women, and the unemployed. Turning the labor movement into a fighting social movement that takes up the cause of all our natural allies will aid all of us in our fight against our common opponent—the capitalist class.

One important lesson learned by many persistent fighters in the 1930s is that it is not enough to be a militant trade unionist. Typical trade unionism is founded upon the premise that workers need corporations and their owners. Corporations, after all, "provide jobs." That kind of thinking, whether conscious or not, promotes the status-quo. It gives the green light to an economic system that pits union workers against non-union workers, employed against unemployed, Black against white, men against women, and American worker against foreign worker.

As socialists we reject the divide-and-rule tactics of the corporations. Only the corporations profit by dividing the working class into so-called "special interests." Our goal is to break down those artificial barriers and work toward reconstructing a new society where decisions are based on human welfare and not profit.

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El Salvador documents

In the first week of December 1983, a split occurred in the People's Liberation Forces/Revolutionary People's Bloc (FPL/BPR), the largest component of the Salvadoran revolutionary front, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN).

On Dec. 9, 1983, the FPL/BPR majority issued a statement denouncing its founder and historic leader, Salvador Cayetano Carpio. It also condemned the minority of the organization which had formed a new group called the Revolutionary Workers Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio (MOR).

On Dec. 16, 1983, the central leadership of the FMLN issued a declaration endorsing the main conclusions of the FPL statement and confirming the MOR's separation from the Salvadoran revolutionary front.

Below we publish a series of documents which we hope will clarify the facts and some of the political disputes (at least as far as they have been made public) involved in the split.

We are publishing the comment of the Mexican section of the Fourth International, the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), on the communiques of the FPL and FMLN. The Mexican PRT has been at the forefront of the anti-intervention movement in that country, occupying leadership positions in the Mexican Committee Against Intervention in El Salvador and in the newly-formed National Front Against Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.

Socialist Action solidarizes with the concerns expressed by the PRT commentary over how revolutionary groups resolve differences over strategy and tac-

tics. The defeat just suffered in Grenada is a tragic reminder of the disastrous consequences of resorting to violence within the workers' movement.

We are including excerpts from the FMLN and FPL statements of December 1983. The complete versions of these documents can be found in Issues No. 46 and 47 of *International Viewpoint*. (For further information concerning the political platform of the FMLN/FDR see the "Proposal for the Formation and Platform of a Provisional Government of Broad Participation" issued by the General Command of the FMLN and the Executive Committee of the FDR on Jan. 31, 1984. This statement can be obtained through CISPE, P.O. Box 50139, Washington, D.C. 20004.)

Finally, we are publishing excerpts from two statements made by Cayetano Carpio shortly before his death on April 12, 1983. The longer excerpts are from a speech he gave on April 1, 1983, commemorating the 13th anniversary of the founding of the FPL. This speech appeared in full in the December issue of *Quatrième Internationale*, the theoretical magazine of the Fourth International.

The second statement was made by Carpio in October 1982. It is taken from an interview with Latin-American revolutionists published in the August-September issue of *La Batalla*, the theoretical journal of the Mexican PRT. It has been translated from the Spanish by *Socialist Action*. The entire interview appeared in a pamphlet printed in Mexico by *Ediciones Enero*, No. 32, 1983.

Socialist Action has selected the excerpts and documents which we feel shed some light on the longstanding political debate within the Salvadoran revolutionary movement. We do not know if these are the specific political issues involved in the split, but, as our readers will see, the selected material does point to important differences which have existed within the FMLN.

We believe that the various issues raised in these selections go beyond El Salvador and are of concern to all revolutionists and supporters of the struggle of the Salvadoran people led by the FMLN.

Like the PRT, we believe that the debate within the FPL and FMLN is over the general political orientation of the revolutionary process in El Salvador. From the documents that have been

made public, it appears that the debate involves the historic question of class alliances; the character and aims of negotiations; and the question of the anti-imperialist united front and the building of the revolutionary party.

We do not necessarily agree with the points made by either wing of the dispute. Unfortunately, we have not yet seen clear expressions of the different sides in the current controversy among the Salvadoran revolutionists. We do, however, feel that this debate is of great importance to all defenders of the Salvadoran revolution.

The debate over class alliances has long divided revolutionists in Latin America and the rest of the underdeveloped world. The main arguments have always centered on whether or not the "anti-oligarchic" bourgeoisie has a strategically progressive role to play, as opposed to a tactical one. In other words, can the revolutionary struggle be advanced by subordinating the independent struggle for power of the workers and peasants to a program centered on bourgeois-democratic reforms based on the maintenance of capitalism?

The Trotskyist movement has long answered this question in the negative, while at the same time recognizing that limited tactical alliances with bourgeois forces—including of a military nature—are necessary provided, however, that they do not derail the workers' movement from its independent course.

In the United States, the debate over class alliances takes the form of whether or not the workers' movement can be advanced by supporting the Democratic party or any wing of this capitalist formation.

Socialist Action, of course, will continue to solidarize with the struggle of the FMLN against the brutal Salvadoran dictatorship. We pledge our commitment to help build a broad united antiwar movement that can stay the hands of the U.S. warmakers. Sentiment against the U.S. war against the Nicaraguan revolution and all U.S. intervention in this region is very great among the U.S. population.

At the same time, however, we feel that material such as that published below can contribute invaluablely to the political understanding of American working people, particularly antiwar activists. We intend to publish more of this information in future issues as it becomes available. —THE EDITORS ■

FPL statement (Excerpts)

Following investigation and assessment of the sorrowful and repudiated assassination of Compañera Melida Anaya Montes (Commander Ana Maria) and the suicide of Salvador Cayetano Carpio (Marcial), the FPL Revolutionary Council has concluded the following:

That Salvador Cayetano Carpio, who was our chief leader and commander-in-chief of the People's Armed Forces for Liberation, embarked in recent years on a process of ideological and political decomposition. This led to grave distortions that eventually resulted in Compañera Ana Maria's assassination, which Carpio was the main organizer and responsible for. Among these deviations were the following:

1. Marcial developed an exaggerated estimation of himself....

2. As a consequence of this exaggerated self-esteem, Marcial became the victim of serious political backwardness and became incapable of thinking and acting at the level required by the historic demands posed by the development of our revolution.

Marcial clung tightly to dogmatic and sectarian schemes and plans. This, together with his obstinacy about prevailing at whatever cost, became an obstacle to the progress of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Marti and exercised a negative influence on the process of unification of the revolutionary forces as a whole, thus harming the effort to liberate our people....

5. In January and February 1983, the FPL-Farabundo Marti Political Committee, and later the Central Command, met to prepare for the Seventh Revolutionary Council, our party's highest body.

When the Central Command met, all of its members, with the exception of Marcial and Marcelo (Rogelio Bazaglia) approved agreements and measures that would enable application of our general strategic line to the new conditions that had arisen, thus assuring the advance of the people's war for liberation.

Salvador Cayetano Carpio, as a member and chief leader of these bodies, had the most ample opportunity to argue in favor of his point of view, but he did not do so frankly and honestly before the collective leadership. He never displayed the proletarian courage of presenting these views before the leadership bodies—the Political Committee and the Central Command....

As a result of the confusion, resentment, opportunism and the fanatic personality cult around Marcial, a few ex-compañeros were taken by surprise and have gone to the extreme of separating themselves from our party.

They are seeking to split and divide the internal unity of the FPL, using methods that are deviate and harmful to the revolution and to our people and that benefit only the enemy.

This group holds the backward, sectarian, and antiunity positions put forward by Marcial. They deny the FMLN's



role as the vanguard of the revolution and proclaim themselves the sole representatives of the working class. They deny the role that all democratic and progressive forces, together with our working class, can play in our process. They are deeply impregnated with an antiparty way of thinking and acting....

In the face of all the slanders spread by this group about supposed deviations of the FPL-Farabundo Marti and of the entire FMLN, there is an undeniable fact that the entire world can see: the powerful advance of the revolution; the striking political and military victories won by the people's forces; the critical political and military situation in which the dictatorship finds itself; and the unquestionable advances in the process of unification and consolidation of the FMLN.

We call on this group (Revolutionary Workers Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio) to exercise good sense and

reflection, to understand that their attitude is harmful to the interests of the proletariat and of the entire world, that it benefits only the enemy. In face of the treacherous plans of imperialism, the oligarchy, and its puppet dictatorship, the attitude of every revolutionary must be to strengthen internal unity among revolutionaries and to consolidate the FMLN.

To conclude, the Central Committee of the People's Liberation Forces-Farabundo Marti states before the people of El Salvador and the world:

- That we are making clear to all compañeros who have been confused or deceived that the ranks of our organization are open to all who wish to return and rejoin, to close ranks and unify around our efforts to defeat the enemies of the people....

- The FPL-Farabundo Marti is irrevocably committed to the working class and the people....

- That the plenary meeting of the Seventh Revolutionary Council ratified the strategic politico-military line of our organization and enriched it on the basis of the new revolutionary experiences and requirements of the revolution....

- Finally, we call on all the working class, on all working people, and on the democratic and progressive sectors not to allow themselves to be confused by the campaign of slanders and lies propagated by the enemy and by all those who, directly or indirectly, are playing the enemy's game.

Signed by ten members of the Political Committee of the FPL on Dec. 9, 1983

Statement of Mexican PRT

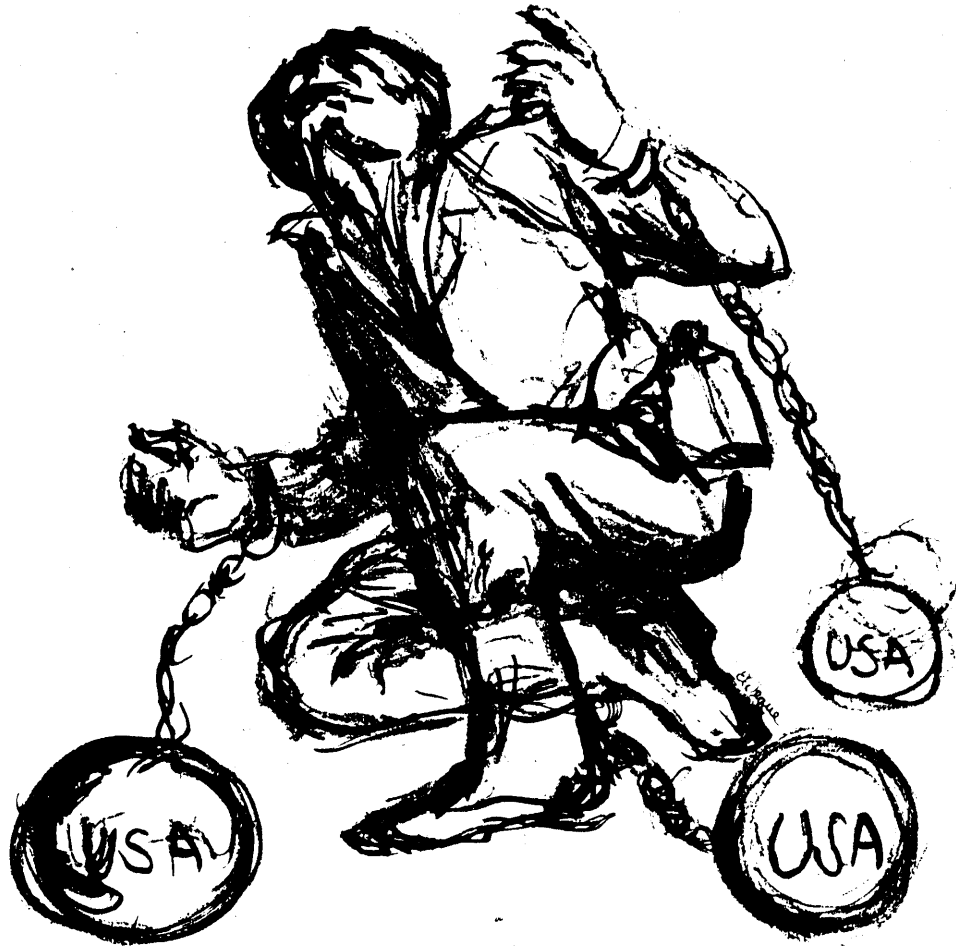
Both the FMLN and the FPL have issued communiques defining their positions with respect to the formation of the Movimiento Obrero Revolucionario (MOR-Revolutionary Workers Movement). These statements not only make sharp criticisms of the MOR but publicly accuse Cayetano Carpio (Marcial) of ordering the murder of Compañera Ana Maria. The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT-Revolutionary Workers Party) considers it necessary to make clear its disagreements with these communiques.

1. The FMLN has publicized three different versions to explain the terrible murder of Comandante Ana Maria. The first was that the CIA had committed the crime. Then it said that the perpetrator was an FPL leader called Marcelo. Now it says that the one fundamentally responsible for Ana Maria's death was Cayetano Carpio.

The FMLN has publicized two versions to explain the suicide of Compañero Cayetano Carpio. The first was that Carpio committed suicide out of grief at the murder of his long-time comrade Ana Maria. Carpio was hailed as a hero of the revolution and guide of the FMLN. Today it is said that his suicide was an act of cowardice prompted by the discovery of his role in Ana Maria's murder.

2. The FMLN criticizes those who disseminate the "sectarian and dogmatic thought of Cayetano Carpio." The PRT published an editorial in *Bandera Socialista* in which it accepted the first version about the suicide. It ran a sketch of Cayetano Carpio's life, using the biography published in the Nicaraguan *Barriada* (the organ of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, FSLN). It published in *La Batalla* (the PRT's theoretical journal) excerpts from Cayetano Carpio's last speech, in which he talked about the party and the sort of unity that has to be built.

We might argue, and in fact we think it is correct to do so, that the fact that the FMLN has put out so many different versions about these events—with a hero transformed overnight into a sectarian dogmatist—has, to say the least, complicated the task of the left organizations



involved in the work of solidarity with Salvadoran revolution in properly informing the workers and peasants in our countries. But this is only part of the problem, and unfortunately the least important part.

3. The FMLN and FPL communiques characterize Marcial's thought as "sectarian and dogmatic," but they do not explain why, they just assert it. They say that Carpio was against unity. Anybody would wonder, was he breaking up the FMLN? What specific form of unity was he against? This is just an example. We need more information, in particular the Salvadoran masses need more information. We are convinced that a debate has been going on in the FMLN and that it is not over. It has not been conducted

in the best way. This debate is over the general political orientation in El Salvador and not about the role of one or another person.

Because, if it is true, as the FMLN says, that Marcial ordered the murder of Ana Maria, this would mean that political arguments were replaced by violence within the mass movement, and that would obviously make it impossible to carry out a debate.

4. We think that, considering the political positions and what we know, that the debate that was going on was among revolutionaries. It is normal in a situation such as the one developing in El Salvador for different ideas and proposals to come forward. In fact, what is reflected in this debate are various levels of mass consciousness. Such a dispute can be resolved in a positive way if there are adequate channels for debating the various positions. The best way to fight factionalism is through democratic discussion, both in the political and in the social organizations.

5. The MOR represents Marcial's positions. We think that its place is in the FMLN and not outside it. We do not consider them counterrevolutionaries or agents of the CIA, since they have not

committed any counterrevolutionary act. What is more, the press has reported repressive actions by the government against the MOR, and so we are obliged to offer it our solidarity.

It is true that the MOR has broken with the FPL. But to be a counterrevolutionary today in El Salvador you would have to go over to the side of the government and imperialists. The compañeros of the MOR have not done that.

So, we are convinced that the best place for revolutionaries is in the FMLN, since we remained convinced that the FMLN is the vanguard of the Salvadoran revolution, we think that the MOR should be in the FMLN.

6. The FMLN has accused Cayetano Carpio of murdering Ana Maria. Carpio, however, is one of the best known leaders of the FMLN. Therefore, the evidence for this accusation should be presented to the entire revolutionary movement. Charges of such gravity cannot be made without proof.

However, if the accusation made is true, we would have to say that this is not the first time such a thing has happened, either in the world or in El Salvador. We repudiate such methods not only because we have been the target of them but because we are convinced that they lead to the destruction of the revolutionary vanguard. Recent examples such as the split in the New Jewel Movement in Grenada and the murder of its leader, Maurice Bishop, show us how disastrous the consequences of these methods can be. Revolutionaries cannot allow violence to become the basis of relations among the organizations of the mass movement.

For this reason, we are convinced that workers' democracy is not some sort of luxury that should be left to workers in the imperialist countries. We do not think that workers' democracy is something that you can decide arbitrarily when to apply and when not to apply. After what has happened in El Salvador and Grenada, that is more evident than ever.

7. We reaffirm our commitment to the Salvadoran revolution and to its vanguard, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional and the Frente Democrático Revolucionario. We will continue to support the revolutionary democratic program and fight for greater solidarity. Yankee imperialism, which bears the main responsibility for the travail that the Salvadoran masses are going through, is more intent on war than ever. It is the duty of all of us to defeat this No. 1 common enemy. We understand the difficulties the FMLN has in confronting such a powerful enemy. But we are certain that sooner or later the Salvadoran people will emerge victorious and take control of their own fate by building a new society in which there is no exploitation or oppression.

Political Committee of the PRT, Mexico City, January 23, 1984.

FMLN statement (Excerpts)

Salvador Cayetano Carpio, Marcial, caused temporary damage to the process of the unity of all the Salvadoran revolutionary forces in the FMLN. His corrosive sectarianism even transcended the borders of our country, affecting the cohesion and confidence of the international solidarity movement toward our struggle. But the maturity of the leaders of all our organizations, including the other leaders of the FPL, made it possible for the FMLN to preserve its unity, which is the primary element for the advancement and victory of the Salvadoran revolution....

The murder of Ana Maria, committed under his orders, and his subsequent cowardly suicide were desperate acts at the moment of his political and moral isolation and defeat. The last lines he wrote before taking his life were his final attempt to embitter the revolutionary ranks, to sow lack of confidence and confusion among them. But he failed this attempt as well....

Only a small group, contaminated by fanaticism, remained confused. Today, they turn up, scattered in various countries, raising the name of Salvador Cayetano Carpio, and are linked to the emergence of the so-called Revolutionary Workers Movement (MOR). There are some equally fanatical individuals who are enemies of unity and will try to channel economic aid from brother peoples toward the MOR so that it can survive.

It will not take long for the CIA to dress in sheep's clothing and use its money to give a shot of oxygen to this group, and its existence will permit the CIA to step up its propaganda about a supposed split in the FMLN....

We categorically assert that in El Salvador there are not and cannot be revolutionaries outside of or against the FMLN, precisely because under its leadership the revolution is advancing and winning.

Anyone who truly wants the victory of the revolution must not cast aspersions on the FMLN, but rather must aid it, or that person is not a revolutionary....

If the enemy of our forces should detect any divisions among us, it will only be a division of labor and combat missions in order to insure that the forceful and crushing blows that await them have the greatest possible coordination, cohesion, effectiveness and scope.

Higher forms of unity are being worked out in the FMLN. Little by little the reasons for the existence of different organizations are disappearing. The eagerly awaited objective of integrating all revolutionaries into a single party is already clearly looming on the victorious horizon toward which we are marching.

Unity in the fight, until final victory!

Signed by six commanders of the FMLN on Dec. 16, 1983

Cayetano Carpio Interview (October 1982—excerpts)

Our experience has shown us that the broadest unity is necessary to firmly advance toward the revolution. But this broad unity must be based on something. It cannot be an abstract, amorphous, or classless unity, but must be based on the workers-peasant alliance. Because if it is not based on the workers-peasant alliance, the unity will simply be led by a class with much greater ability and experience in wielding power. Without such an alliance, this other class will be allowed to take the reins of the broad unity and direct it toward its own interest....

It is not because ours is a struggle of national liberation that the working class must step aside, defaulting in its obligation to lead the struggle. The working class must lead because the revolutionary process must accomplish the task of national liberation and deepen its revolutionary conquests in such a way as to create the economic, political, social condi-

tions—as well as to increase the class consciousness of the people—in order to move on to socialism....

In war, there is a sharpening of the class struggle between the national and international bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the working class and peasantry, on the other. So if the ideological struggle is not carried out, this paves the way for the development of conditions which are unfavorable for the working class, the peasantry and their most consistent revolutionary organizations within the alliances. Naturally, the ideological struggle must be waged with good methods since this is not a fight against the enemy. Against the enemy—imperialism and its puppets—one must use bullets and mortars. But within the organizations of the people, one must use persuasion and the ideological struggle with its proper methods, but this must be done without relinquishing one's revolutionary principles. ■

(April 1983—excerpts)

We were already called sectarian during our struggle in the old organization [the Salvadoran Communist Party] because we thought that the working class had to be in the forefront of the revolutionary struggle; because we felt that class alliances should not serve to assure a place in power for the bourgeoisie; because the FPL had a new approach to the problem of alliances and held the opinion that the role of leadership in popular alliances does not belong to the bourgeoisie, who would impose compromises running against the interests of the great majority of the population...

It is necessary, therefore, to forge an alliance with a great force, loyal and as decisive as the working class itself. This force is the peasantry. The poor peasantry is the semi-proletariat of the country. If we can accomplish the organization and alliance of the workers, the agricultural workers, and the poor peasants in a country where, together, they make up more than 70 percent of the population, that would mean the working class could play the role of leadership in a class alliance where sectors of the bourgeoisie are also present...

On negotiations

In El Salvador, where a heroic war is being waged by the people, negotiations can only be conceived of as a weapon in the arsenal of the strategic struggle. They must serve as an aid to advance the fight of our combatants. In this context we can sit down at the negotiating table, but on the condition that we are clear about waging an intransigent defense of the interests of the people...

In this way we can dialogue and negotiate for months, even years, thus helping our armies advance to the point where they will deal the final blow to the enemy. At that point they will put an end

to the genocide of our people, and negotiations will result in our victory, with the enemy signing its surrender...

As far as our weapons, one thing must be perfectly clear: We will not surrender them. On the contrary, we must at all times seize more arms from the enemy. Moreover, we will not accept any ceasefire as a precondition to sit down at the negotiating table... A ceasefire can only help the enemy—who has been terribly weakened—to recover and prepare a counterattack against the revolutionary forces...

On the unity of the FMLN

At the meeting of our Central Command in 1981, the historic agreements we reached were based on the fundamental and dialectical elements of our strategy—on the need for unity in the revolutionary movement. We affirmed that in order to attain unity in a realistic manner, it was necessary to promote cooperation and coordination of our forces...

When we put forward this line last year, it was not properly understood by everyone. It was said that there existed two different political lines in the FMLN, one for unity and the other for coordination. It was said that the proponents of coordination were against unity...

The truth of the matter is that in El Salvador today there is not any coordination at the political level among the different military organizations. On the military front, relations are bad. There is no coordination... and there is no friendship either...

Accordingly, the FPL declared that coordination was necessary. This was an urgent matter and our Central Command proposed ten norms to regulate the process of coordination. At present, we are putting this into practice. We are witnessing greater cooperation among the



Grieving women with slain members of a popular organization.

different fronts, each of which maintains its zone of control and its command over its own troops...

We can be confident that we are in the process of overcoming some of the more difficult situations. We are convinced that the unity of the entire people is a strategic necessity to win the war. Our organization will do everything in its power to move the FMLN and the FDR in a realistic direction. It will be necessary to develop a correct ideological struggle against the incorrect tendencies which exist in these organizations...

[Our organization] has permitted to bring together greater forces, and to promote their unity, even though deep ideo-

logical, strategic and tactical differences remain among the different organizations...

On the discussion within the FPL

We must avoid making the mistake Lenin warned against where we begin to characterize as sectarian everything that has led to the growth of the FPL and everything that is valid...

The war is not yet well defined. The hegemony of one class is not yet defined. Why should we now begin to beat our breasts and say that we have behaved improperly and that we are sectarian because we have spoken about the need of the worker-peasant alliance? Should we not advocate such an alliance? And if not, why shouldn't we? Because it might frighten certain allies? Well, it is true that for a certain period of time we might distance ourselves from certain allies. But it is also possible that this is the only way to win other allies—which does not imply any pretensions on our part for total power...

It would be very serious if one were to say that to defend the interests of the working class is sectarian, or that we want to go too far. The FPL emerged from the working class. It is really incredible that in a country which has fought so hard and participated in a revolutionary struggle, there does not yet exist a Marxist-Leninist party. Our aspiration of becoming the Marxist-Leninist party is therefore not sectarian, it is a fundamental task of the revolution...

We must not begin to say that it is sectarian to want to transform the FPL into a Marxist-Leninist party, or that it is sectarian to affirm that the base alliance is the workers-peasant alliance, or to think that the motor force of our revolution remain the working class...

Speech to FPL, April 1, 1983

...Philippines

(Continued from page 1)

inhabitants of the southern Philippines.

Although retaining the perspective of rural guerrilla warfare, the NDF has responded to the rapid urbanization of the society by organizing its network among city workers, students, and slum-dwellers. Its program calls for the armed overthrow of the dictatorship, the expropriation of imperialist property, and radical land reform. The extent of the NDF's success has been reflected in the predominance in recent demonstrations of its openly anti-imperialist slogan of "Down With the U.S.-Marcos Dictatorship." The NDF has clearly become the key political force in these demonstrations. According to some, the NDF's mass worker-peasant base is roughly 10 million people, including 4 million in urban areas.

Paralleling and overlapping the illegal NDF, and responding to the 30% slash in the standard of living that accompanied the imposition of martial law has been the expansion of trade-union organizations particularly the umbrella federations, Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU/May 1st Movement) and the Pagkakaisang Pilipino (PMP/United Filipino Workers), each with roughly a half million members and both formed after 1980. With the deterioration of the economy, the resistance of the workers stiffened, culminating in the 1982 general strike in the key Bataan Export Processing Zone. This action was repeated in October 1983 in the wake of the Aquino assassination.

In addition, a large proportion of the clergy in this predominantly Catholic country openly or surreptitiously oppose the dictatorship.

The opposition bourgeoisie has two wings. Its left wing is the Nationalist Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Equality, whose first public rally in November 1983 drew 35,000 people. Headed by

former Senators Lorenzo Tanada and Jose Diokno, the Nationalist Alliance calls for dismantling the dictatorship and replacing it with a caretaker coalition government, boycotting the May 1984 presidential elections, implementing land reform, ending foreign economic control, and closing the U.S. bases. The Nationalist Alliance hopes to draw the mass movement under its umbrella. At present it includes unions; peasant organizations; and student, civil liberties, and church groups, many of which are close to the NDF.

The bourgeois "elite opposition" to Marcos was initially demoralized by the Aquino assassination. Immediately after the murder, Salvador Laurel, a prominent leader, advised the crowd awaiting Aquino at the Manila airport to go home and pray. The upsurge that followed, however, breathed spirit into this sector, even galvanizing the big capitalists of the Makati district of Manila (the Philippine Wall Street) to act against Marcos' policies. The Makati demonstrations led by these forces, which have been widely covered by the Western media, have

stopped short of calling for the dismantlement of the dictatorship, fearing the possible consequences—on the one hand open military rule, and on the other the probability that Marcos' successor will be unable to control the mass movement.

The main organization of the elite opposition is at present the United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), a coalition of 12 political parties headed by Laurel. While calling for Marcos to step aside, UNIDO and other groups are not only opposed to closing the U.S. bases but are actively currying favor with Washington.

The Crisis Continues

In formally ending martial law last year and calling presidential elections for May of this year, Marcos sought to legitimize his rule. The brutal murder of his main contender for the presidency was meant to ensure Marcos' incumbency and present the U.S. with no viable option but continued support to the president. And indeed, the U.S. has no other

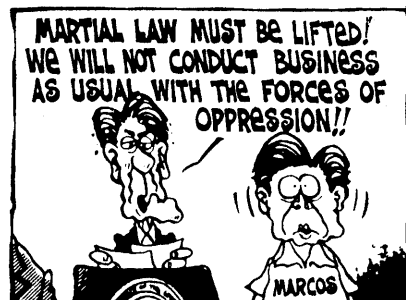
choice in the short run but to bite the bullet and demand cosmetic changes.

But the assassination of Benigno Aquino threw a wild card into Marcos' plan by sparking the beginnings of a mass popular mobilization. At the core of this upsurge, the main slogans of which are an end to the dictatorship and to the economic, political, and military presence of U.S. imperialism, are the urban working class and displaced peasants.

For the moment, Marcos may be able to weather the storm. The elite opposition lacks the organization and the will to contest political power, while the NDF is presently committed to gradually building its military and political strength. Another crisis will occur within the elite opposition over whether to boycott the May election.

Whether the regime will be able to survive in the long run, and whether the bourgeois opposition can co-opt the mass movement, are open questions that depend in large measure on the leadership of the mass movement of workers and peasants, in particular, on the Nationalist Democratic Front led by the Communist Party.

Although founded in 1968 on Maoist principles and continuing to advocate "people's war," the CPP has been forced to look on the cities with new eyes and to question its old schemas. The Central American revolution has had its impact. By virtue of its history of struggle and sacrifice, and in the absence of a mass revolutionary Marxist party, the NDF/CPP alone are presently capable of coordinating the anti-Marcos struggle and giving the movement a perspective for the future—that of the armed overthrow of the dictatorship. But the necessary mobilization of the workers and peasants that this would entail would draw the revolution in an anticapitalist direction. This is the specter that haunts Washington as it attempts to resolve in its favor the dilemma of who, or what will follow Ferdinand Marcos.



Zionism's sordid history

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

I'm especially pleased to be able to speak to a forum of Socialist Action, not only because I sympathize with both of those words but in particular with the organization that bears the name.

Much has been said lately about the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon which culminated in the massacre of Sabra and Shatila. Much was made of the Kahan report, the official nominal inquiry on the part of the Israeli authorities of that series of massacres in the Palestinian camps in Beirut—massacres, by the way, which followed upon like events throughout the Lebanese south.

There are mass graves in the Palestinian camps in Ain el Helwehi and Rashidiya. There is a mass grave adjacent to the government hospital in Saida. There is a mass grave at the crossroads that lead to Suhr or Tyre coming from the town of Saida just facing the St. Joseph Convent School where so many of the Palestinian and Lebanese detainees were subjected to torture.

According to the Kahan report, the Israeli authorities were guilty at best of a certain laxity. But even the bourgeois media had to present some of the facts about what really happened. London's *Sunday Times* of Sept. 26, 1982, stated that, "This carefully pre-planned military operation to purge the camps (Sabra and Shatila) was called Moah Barzel, Iron Brain. The plan was familiar to Sharon and Begin and was part of Sharon's larger plan...discussed by the Israeli cabinet on July 17."

Time Magazine of Oct. 4, 1982, reported that, "Top Israeli officers planned many months ago to enlist the Lebanese Forces, made up of the combined Christian militias headed by Bechir Gemayel, to enter the Palestinian refugee camps once an Israeli encirclement of West Beirut had been completed." And according to *Ha'aretz* of Sept. 26, 1982, "The aim was to create a panic to convince all the Palestinians of Lebanon that they were no longer safe in that country."

On July 23, 1982, Major Saqr of the Lebanese Phalange, also known as Abu Arz, gave an interview to the *Jerusalem Post*. "It is the Palestinians we have to deal with. Ten years ago there were 84,000; now there are between 600,000 and 700,000. In six years they will be two million. We can't let it come to that," he said. When asked by the *Jerusalem Post* how he would "solve" this, Major Saqr replied, "Very simple. We shall drive them to the borders of 'brotherly' Syria. Anyone who looks back, stops or returns will be shot on the spot."

After the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, Major Saqr held a press conference in Jerusalem in which he took responsibility for the slaughter, declaring that "no one has the right to criticize us; we carried out our duty, our sacred responsibility."

Well, one of the colleagues of Major Saqr gave an interview to *Der Spiegel*, called "Each of You is an Avenger" on Feb. 14, 1983. He said:

"It was Wednesday, the 15th of September. Some days before our leader, Bechir Gemayel, had fallen victim to murderers. We were approximately 300 men from East Beirut, south Lebanon, and the Akkar Mountains in the north—almost all members of the Phalange militia. All of us wore their uniform, including those who, like I, belonged to the Tiger Militia of ex-President Camille Chamoun. Phalange officers had summoned us and brought us to the meeting place. They told us that they needed us for a 'special action.' Then a good

dozen Israelis in green uniforms without indication of rank came along.

"Our officers told us that we had the honorable task of freeing Lebanon of its last enemies. We were to comb the camps and take prisoner all able-bodied men. We were quite proud. The next afternoon our group met once again. We had to swear an oath never to divulge anything about our action.

"At about 10 p.m. we climbed into an American army truck that the Israelis had given over to us. We parked the vehicle near the airport tower. There, immediately next to the Israeli positions, several such trucks were already parked.

bodies, shot and stabbed all eye witnesses. What else could you do? Killing others is easy once you have done it a few times.

"Now came the first Israeli army bulldozers. 'Plow everything under the ground,' the Israelis said. 'Don't let any witnesses stay alive.'

Now the atrocities committed by the Zionist state against the Palestinian people in Sabra and Shatila did not constitute some sort of abnormal excess on their part. The very Zionist state is predicated upon the eradication of the national existence of the Palestinian people. We can see this clearly by reviewing



Israeli peace movement protests Lebanon invasion.

The prisoners were to be transported in them later.

"Some Israelis in Phalange uniforms were with the party. 'The Israeli friends who accompany you,' our officers told us, 'are also volunteers who have not told their army that they are taking part. They will make your work easier.' They directed us not to make use of our firearms, if at all possible. 'Everything must proceed noiselessly. We expect you back in three hours.' A Phalange officer kept contact with the Israelis at the entrance to the camp.

"Then we saw other comrades. Up until then they had also observed instructions and had not shot. They had to do their work with bayonettes and knives. Bloody corpses were lying in the alleys in the entrances to the houses. Now I saw once again the Israeli advisers who had been at our secret meeting. One, using a loud speaker, signalled us to move back to the area of the camp entrance. A few minutes later the Israelis opened up with all their guns on the troublesome area of the camp.

"At about four in the morning my squad went back to the truck. Up until that point apparently only one had been used. We drove back to spend the night at the entrance to the area. When there was morning light we went back into the camp.

"We went past bodies, stumbled over

what some of the ideologues of the Zionist movement have had to say.

In 1923 Vladimir Jabotinsky, who is the ideological forebearer of the Likud leadership of Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, wrote an article called "The Iron Wall," which became one of the decisive documents of the entire Zionist movement. Jabotinsky wrote as follows:

"There can be no kind of discussion of a voluntary reconciliation between us and the Arabs, not now, and not in the foreseeable future... The natives will always obstinately struggle against the colonists—and it is all the same whether they are cultured or uncultured... All colonization, even the most restricted, must continue in defiance of the will of the native population. Therefore it can continue and develop only under defense forces which comprise an *Iron Wall* through which the local population cannot break through. This is our Arab policy." (*"The Iron Wall," Rassvet, Nov. 4, 1923*)

The Zionist program involved not just expropriation of resources and the exploitation of labor. It involved the substitution of a colonizing workforce for the indigenous population. It involved the denial of the existence of that population through the program of "A land without a people for a people without a land."

It involved the denial of Palestinian identity, nationhood, existence, right to hold property, right to labor on the land, right to exist as a national organized community, right to have any cultural, social, political, historical claim to the land in which they lived.

The decision to partition Palestine joined in by the leading imperialist powers and the Soviet Union gave 50 percent of the fertile land to the Jewish population—to the Zionist movement—but before the state of Israel was established the Irgun and the Haganah had already seized three-quarters of the land and expelled virtually all of the inhabitants.

In 1948 there were 475 Palestinian villages and towns. Of these, 385 were razed to the ground and 90 remained stripped of their land. Today, some 93 percent of the land in what is called the state of Israel is administered by the Jewish National Fund under the following rules:

"In order to be entitled to live on land, to lease land or to work on land, you must prove that you have a Jewish mother, grandmother and great grandmother."

The Israeli government's *Koenig Report* stated this policy even more bluntly: "We must use terror, assassination, intimidation, land confiscation, cutting of all social services to rid the Galilee of its Arab population." (*Al Hamishard* Sept. 7, 1976)

Zionist-Nazi collaboration

There is another important aspect of Zionism which has been purposefully hidden from world public opinion. And this is the fact that the early Zionists and later the entire history of the state of Israel has been replete with collaboration with the most explicit advocates of anti-semitic racism.

This is true of Herzl and Weizman who swore to the Russian czar that they would help rid Eastern Europe and Russia of those "noxious and subversive Anarcho-Bolshevik Jews." And it was the leaders of the Zionist movement who brought to Palestine Adolph Eichman and Baron Von Mildenstein of the SS in 1932 and 1933.

Indeed, this collaboration between the leaders of the Zionist movement and the Nazis, can best be demonstrated by a proposal for cooperation dated Jan. 11, 1941, between the National Military Organization, that is to say the Irgun, and the Third Reich. This proposal became known as the Ankara document, having been discovered after the war in the files of the German Embassy in Turkey. It states the following:

"The evacuation of the Jewish masses from Europe is a precondition for solving the Jewish question; but this can only be made possible and complete through the settlement of these masses in the home of the Jewish people, Palestine, and through the establishment of a Jewish state in its historical boundaries....

"The NMO, which is well-acquainted with the goodwill of the German Reich government and its authorities towards Zionist activity inside Germany and towards Zionist emigration plans, is of the opinion that:

"1. Common interests could exist between the establishment of a New Order in Europe in conformity with the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO.

"2. Cooperation between the new Germany and a renewed volkish-national Hebrum would be possible and

"3. The establishment of the historical Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, and bound by a treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interest of a maintained and strengthened future German position of power in the Near East.

"Proceeding from these considerations, the NMO in Palestine, under the condition the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement are recognized on the side of the

(Continued on page 15)

Ralph Schoenman is presently the director of the Committee in Defense of the Palestinian and Lebanese Peoples. He is the former executive director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.



"Twin parties won't get my vote"

By KWAME M. A. SOMBURU

Real and continued progress toward the goal of Black liberation is impossible without the development of a movement, leadership, and program cognizant of the present circumstances and needs of the Black masses.

The founding of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) in November 1980 heralded the promise that this need might be fulfilled. However, NBIPP has fulfilled this promise only in the written words of its charter.

That charter stated the necessity "to liberate the masses of Black people from genocide and the dehumanizing conditions of racism, imperialism, sexual oppression and capitalist exploitation."

The preface to its Principles of Unity stated: "The Party must have an historical analysis that examines the present condition of Black people as it derives from the African experience through the European slave trade and development of imperialism and the capitalist system."

The charter then argues that we must develop a strategy and tactic that include as one of its main tenets the incompatibility of support to capitalist parties and reformist candidates like Jesse Jackson with the goal of Black liberation.

Many people joined NBIPP without having either read, understood, or agreed with the charter. If the majority of the founding members and elected leadership of NBIPP fully understood or agreed with the basic text of the charter, and knew how to implement it, NBIPP would not now be subject to an internal crisis of such serious proportions over the issue of support to Black Democratic office seekers.

I have been politically active against capitalism and its twin parties since 1960. It does not matter to me what the color, sex, or nationality of a candidate is. If that candidate belongs to the Democratic or Republican parties they will not get my vote. I've had this position for years and that is why I joined NBIPP.

The current political leaders of the United States are clearly aware of which class they represent. The ruling class of

this country has never, in fact, supported a candidate who opposed capitalism. The time is long overdue for the Black liberation movement to be just as clear thinking about who are our real friends. We must be just as dedicated in our commitment to creating a new society as the ruling class is in maintaining its old system of oppression.

A response to a survey

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

It came in the mail last week: an "Official 1984 Democratic Presidential Survey".

The survey wanted my answer within ten days. The big question: Which of the following eight "wonderful" men would I choose for president? The choices given by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee ran from Askeu to Mondale. Minnie Mouse was left out because she was obviously the wrong sex.

Before I had time to answer this "urgent" survey, three of the "Mr. Wonderfuls" had dropped out of the race. Left with the "choice" of Glenn, Hart, Jackson, McGovern and Mondale, I searched my mind for anything these five "leftovers" had done to improve the lot of women, and came up with nothing.

The survey letter made the amazing argument that the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives had blocked Reagan's cutbacks in social programs. Well, with friends like these, who needs enemies.

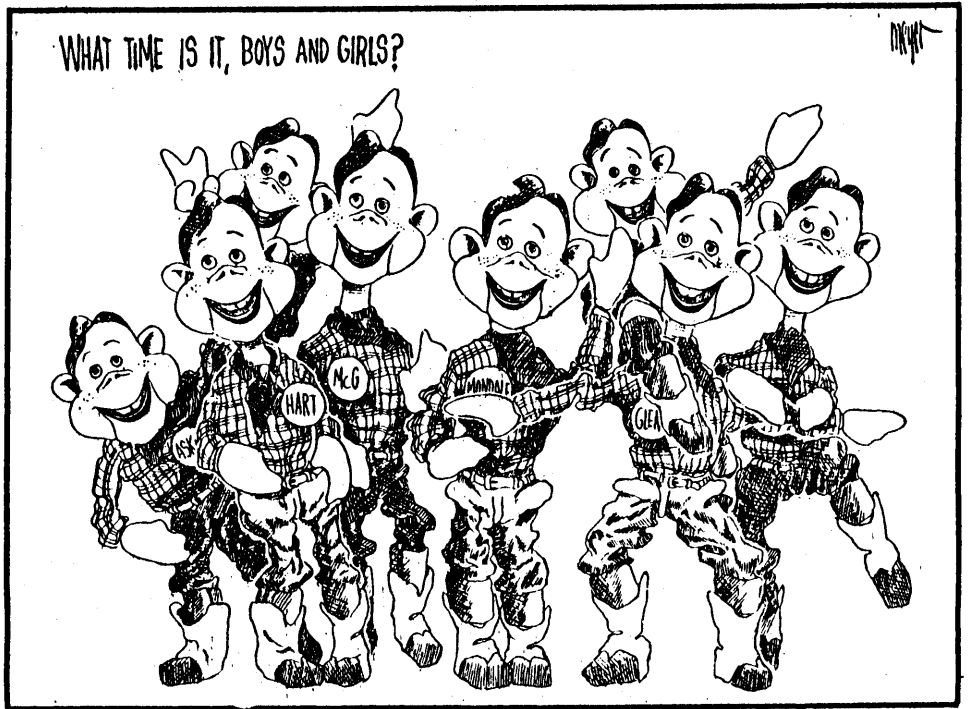
According to data compiled by the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C., the Black infant mortality rate in the nation's capital is greater than in Jamaica. The United States ranked 12th in 1980 in infant mortality rates, behind Great Britain and East Germany. Nationally, infant mortality is rising.

There is one last thing that must also be clear: The Zionist state is nothing but the extension of American imperialist power in the region. Its extermination plans, its occupations, its extensions of territory are on behalf of the principal imperialist power of the region. Whatever may be the tactical divergences which emerge from time to time, there is no Zionist campaign that can sustain itself without the backing of its principal sponsor. The U.S. government in 1983 provided \$65 billion in military aid, economic aid, loans and grants to the state of Israel. As Joseph C. Harsch put it in the Aug. 5, 1982, issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*:

"Few countries in history have ever been as dependent on another as Israel is in the United States. Israel's major weapons come from the United States—either as gifts or on long term, low interest loans which few seriously expect to be repaid (in full). Israel's survival is underwritten and subsidized from Washington. Without American arms Israel would soon lose the quantitative and qualitative advantage which President Reagan has promised to maintain for them. Without the economic subsidy Israel's credit would vanish and its economy would collapse.

"In other words, Israel can only do what Washington allows it to do. It dares not conduct a single military operation without the tacit consent of Washington. When it does undertake a military offensive the world assumes, correctly, that it has Washington's tacit consent."

(PART ONE OF A TWO-PART SERIES)



Letter to the editor

To the Editors,

Your article on the Jesse Jackson campaign brought out a much needed discussion of Jackson's role in the electoral process. While I agree with your conclusions, no analysis of Jackson's campaign would be complete without citing his acrobatics on the abortion issue.

The right of all women to chose safe, legal, funded abortion on demand is central to women's liberation. The legalization of abortion during the wave of feminist activism of the 1970s has been under relentless attack from the right. Of all the charismatic, evangelical orators against abortion, the Rev. Jesse Jackson has been a star. In fact, Jackson was the keynote speaker at annual youth conventions of the National Right to Life Committee during the '70s.

If taking a stance that devalues and endangers all women were not bad enough, Jackson dealt a double blow against minority women by supporting the Hyde Amendment, which outlawed Medicaid funding of abortions.

Black and other minority women are hit hardest by these cut-offs, and some have died at the hands of back-alley abortionists since the Hyde Amendment was passed. According to a spokesperson for the National Right to Life Committee, "We could always count on Jackson to send telegrams against public funding to Congress whenever we needed it."

Upon deciding to enter the presidential race, Jackson has done a 180-degree turn-around on the abortion issue. The only point of agreement between pro-choice and antichoice action committees is that Jackson's flip-flop resulted from political pragmatism. Neither the Rainbow Coalition nor the Democratic Party can afford to alienate women this election year. Yet several questions beg to be answered, or at least asked out loud:

- How could a man be trusted to implement a political policy that contradicts his self-stated "strong personal and religious convictions in opposition to abortion?"

- How cynical is the assumption that women will believe and support a man who exchanges his position of many years for its opposite on election eve?

- How worthy of followers is a leader who has advocated a law that oppresses his own constituency?

Those who are rushing to jump on the Jackson bandwagon had better kick the tires and check the roadmap!

Kathy Setian
San Francisco, Calif.

...Zionism

(Continued from page 14)

German Reich, offers to actively take part in the war on Germany's side." ("Proposal of the National Military Organisation—Irgun Zvai Leumi—Concerning the Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe and the Participation of the NMO in the War on the side of Germany," printed in *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, by Lenni Brenner, p. 267, Lawrence and Hill, 1983.)

And this proposal wasn't made by some sort of fanatic fringe as the Irgun has sometimes been portrayed. When Begin became prime-minister in 1977 and then appointed Yitzhak Shamir (one of the signers of the Ankara document) as his foreign minister, it was evident that the Irgun was just simply part of the mainstream Zionist movement. Their motto had been "The Historical Jewish State on a National and Totalitarian Basis," and they intended to carry out these policies once in Palestine. And as I have shown, this they have done faithfully.

So there is therefore nothing new about the plans for the liquidation of the Palestinian people. Nothing new about the open declaration to reduce the Palestinians in Lebanon by 90 percent. Nothing new about Sabra and Shatila because it was not an excess of the Israeli occupation of Lebanon but indeed the very purpose of that occupation. The very focus of the war, the very intent of the Zionist leadership was the elimination of the Palestinian existence.

Federal medicaid payments were cut by \$1 billion in 1981 (with a Democratic majority in the House) and the projected defense budget of 1984-1988 is \$1 billion per day. Food stamps, education and housing were cut by Democratic President Carter.

The defense budget was higher under Carter than under any other president except Reagan. *Scientific American* reports in its September 1983 issue that building 239 MX missiles rather than the projected 240 would save \$110 million — enough to fund medicaid benefits for every pregnant woman living below the poverty level.

Just imagine what we could do by cutting the entire defense budget!

On housing, what has the Democratic majority accomplished? Nothing whatsoever! Walk down San Francisco's Market Street and (like other American cities) you will see the hundreds of homeless women carrying their entire possessions around on their backs all day.

Here's another shocking lie in this survey concerning the Democratic majority: "We stood firm," it says "against dangerous policies which would escalate the nuclear arms race and give a virtual free hand in wasteful military spending."

Oh really? I remember "Hiroshima-Nagasaki Truman," "Bay-of-Pigs Kennedy," "Vietnam Johnson," and "Born-again Carter". (The latter was praying for human rights while backing the monstrous dictatorship in El Salvador.) Under Carter, abortion rights were cut back and right-to-lifers were given a big boost. The Equal Rights Amendment died a disgraceful death thanks to this yoo-hoo's betrayal. Carter and his "boys" didn't lift a finger to save it from defeat.

In San Francisco a women's event has been held every year since 1973 to commemorate International Women's Day. Tens of thousands of women would gather in Golden Gate Park for "Day in The Park for Women's Rights." This year, for the first time in ten years, Golden Gate Park will be silent. Instead, the "official" leaders of the women's movement are planning a fund raiser for Mondale at the Fairmont Hotel.

The so-called "leaders" of the women's movement are trying to pass Mondale, Hart, Jackson, or McGovern off as champions of women's rights. Women will not be fooled. Rather they will be angered by the betrayal of women's rights by whatever Democrat or Republican gets elected. Even more, they will know that their "leaders" lied to them. The interest of women and the interest of the capitalist class have nothing in common.

This campaign for the Democrats is passed off as getting into the "mainstream." The mainstream is not a stream. It is a sewer that women should stay out of. Once again we should affirm our determination: OUT OF THE MAINSTREAM AND INTO THE STREETS!



'Women in the global factory'

By CAROL McALLISTER

Women in the Global Factory, by Annette Fuentes and Barbara Ehrenreich, South End Press, 64 pp., \$3.75

"In Malaysia, a woman may suddenly see a 'hantu' or 'jin,' a hideous mythological spirit, while peering through a microscope. She falls to the floor in convulsions, screaming with 'masuk hantu,' spirit possession. Within minutes the hysteria spreads up and down the assembly line. Sometimes factories must be closed for a week or more while the evil spirits are exorcised... In Malaysia, where labor unions are outlawed, women have virtually no other outlets to protest working conditions." (*Women in the Global Factory*, p.38)

In their pamphlet, Fuentes and Ehrenreich present a succinct and useful portrait of recent industrialization in the Third World, its control by multinational corporations and financial institutions, and its impact on the women workers in these new industries. Drawing their material primarily from Asia (Taiwan, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines) and from Central America (especially Mexico), they do a fine job of interweaving a sense of the experiences of individual women with an overall description and analysis of the problem.

Women in the Global Factory focuses on women factory workers—especially in the textile, electronics, and micro-processor industries—who are employed in free

BOOK REVIEW

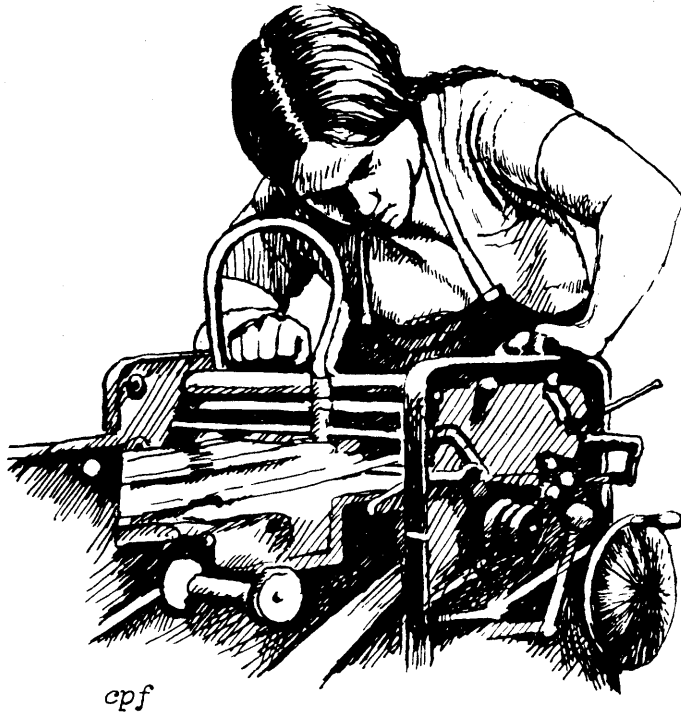
trade zones. Free trade zones, or export processing zones as they are also called, are areas set aside in underdeveloped countries where foreign corporations (the majority are U.S.-controlled) can set up shop without paying taxes or custom-import duties, and where they are provided with a controlled workforce.

As Fuentes and Ehrenreich say, "Free trade zones—there are now over 100—mean more freedom for business and less freedom for people. Inside, behind walls often topped with barbed wire, the zones resemble a huge labor camp where trade unions, strikes and freedom of movement are severely limited, if not forbidden. A special police force is on hand to search people and vehicles entering or leaving the zones."

The majority of workers in these free trade zones are young women, who work on light-assembly lines. These women are usually paid \$3 to \$5 a day, an income that cannot provide the basic necessities for a single person, let alone for a woman trying to support her children. They are also subjected to particular forms of harassment and exploitation ranging from pregnancy tests (and being fired immediately if they are found to be pregnant), to lay-offs at age 25 (since they are past their "most productive" years), to sexist advertising attempting to attract foreign investors.

A Malaysian government investment brochure advertises: "The manual dexterity of the Oriental female is famous the world over. Her hands are small, and she works fast with extreme care... Who, therefore, could be better qualified by nature and inheritance, to contribute to the efficiency of a bench-assembly production line than the Oriental girl?"

One aspect of this new industrial work which Fuentes and Ehrenreich focus on is the health and safety hazards it



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involves. They point out that the conditions in the garment and textile industries are "visibly unhealthy, rivaling those of any 19th century sweatshop."

But even more dangerous are the electronic and micro-processor industries. Here women are daily exposed to toxic chemicals, eye-damaging microscope work, and high levels of stress. There are no health benefits; vacation or sick days; unemployment or disability insurance; social security; or adequate services such as daycare centers, health clinics, and decent housing to meet their new needs.

Fuentes and Ehrenreich point out that capitalist corporations are *really* creating global factories (the title of the pamphlet is not just a metaphor) where work is broken down and farmed out on an international basis. The least skilled and most noxious and tedious work goes to Third World countries—especially to the women. The whole system is of course designed to facilitate increased profit-making.

But Fuentes and Ehrenreich do not fully draw out the implications of this trend. They fail to note that workers in

the neo-colonial world are in a less favorable position to unionize and to demand basic rights because they control only a small and easily movable part of the total production process.

Forced into "new" economy

One of the most serious limitations of *Women in the Global Factory* is that, in focusing on factory workers, it only touches the surface of the deep transformations occurring in women's lives throughout Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Most women in these regions are not yet assembly-line workers, but their lives are just as surely being changed as a result of capitalist development.

With the expansion of capitalism there is a whole shift of the agricultural economy away from production of basic food crops, often on a semi-communal basis, to cash-cropping and mono-cropping, on a capitalist basis—usually in the form of large plantations or small freeholdings. Many women in the countryside are forced to become agricultural wage-laborers and often are able to find

only migratory and seasonal work. Although still involved in food production, rural women—both peasant and proletarian—often go hungry and they and their children experience life-threatening malnutrition.

Other women find themselves pushed out of the agricultural economy and into the cities, with little chance of even finding factory work. The overwhelming majority seek work as domestic servants, where their low pay is combined with a lack of freedom and often with less than humane treatment. Others who are more fortunate, may find work in the low-paid but ever-expanding service, clerical, and sales sectors within the "pink collar ghetto."

Many women, however, can find no regular niche in the "new" economy. If still embedded in a traditional family structure, these women may become "housewives," economically dependent on and increasingly subordinate to husbands and other male family members. But most of these women are on their own and try to create their means of survival in the margins of the economy as day-workers, street vendors, or prostitutes.

Capitalist development does not just affect women economically. It transforms all aspects of their lives. It causes women's self-images and the images others have of them—of their roles, their abilities, their persons, their sexuality—to generally become narrowed, negative, and denigrating. This is especially clear with the explosion of personal violence against women, as well as the military terror needed to keep capitalism intact in places like El Salvador and Guatemala.

What can be done?

What are the solutions to these problems facing Third World women? What answers do Fuentes and Ehrenreich offer?

The picture presented in *Women in the Global Factory* clearly shows the need for a revolutionary solution. Yet the authors' suggestions for what can be done are limited to reforms in the system. But it is capitalist development, itself—the whole system of production based on private property and profit-making for a few—that is at the core of the increase in oppression and suffering of these women.

Fuentes and Ehrenreich emphasize that the solution must be global, which seems absolutely correct, and talk about creating links between women around the world such as an international network to share information on hazardous substances and corporate policies. But most of their proposals are limited to suggestions of ways to counter particular abuses of multinational corporations, along the lines of the Nestle boycott.

Fuentes and Ehrenreich present a clear description of the function of governments in both underdeveloped and advanced capitalist states—especially in the United States—in underwriting this exploitative process of "development." This support ranges from economic incentives to military repression.

The struggles of Third World women for economic and political freedom must therefore involve workplace actions and strikes—many examples of which are documented in this pamphlet. But they must also attain a level of political organization that opposes capitalism and goes in a revolutionary socialist direction. This is also the only real solution for working people in the United States. Our struggles are intertwined. ■

International Women's Day March 8



SOJOURNER TRUTH

"That man over there say that a woman needs to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helped me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gives me a best place... And ain't I a woman? Look at me. Look at my arm! I have plowed and planted and gathered into barns, and no man could head me... And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man when I could get it, and bear the lash as well... And ain't I a woman? I have borned thirteen children and seen them most of all sold off into slavery. And when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus heard... And ain't I a woman?"

Sojourner Truth: Speech before the Woman's Rights Convention at Akron, Ohio, in 1851.