

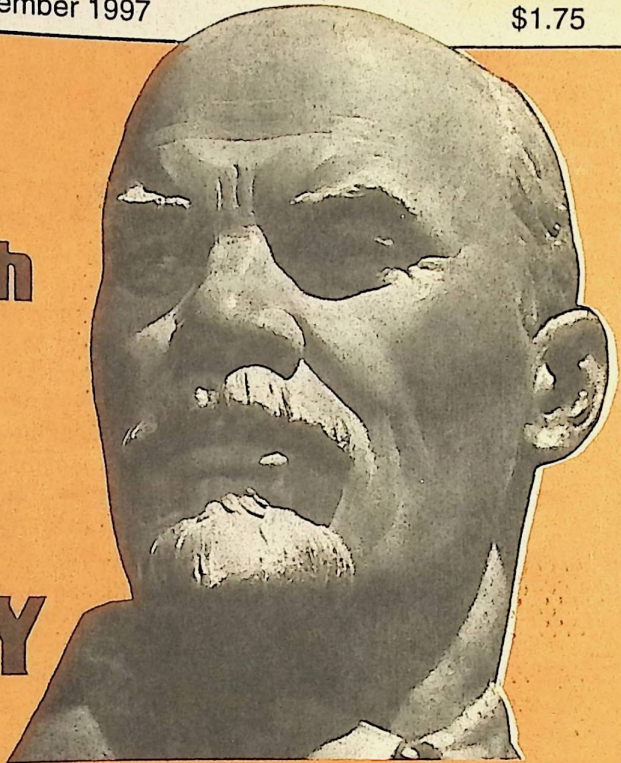
Political Affairs

Theoretical Journal, Communist Party USA, November 1997

\$1.75

1917 ★ 1997

80th



ANNIVERSARY
OF THE

OCTOBER
REVOLUTION

- Truth over Anti-Communism - Hall
- Hollywood Writers - Bonosky
- Class Struggle in Canada - CP Canada

- Global Warming - Zeitlin
- Fighting Welfare Reform - Chapman
- International Notes

Political Affairs

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Political Affairs (ISSN 0032 3128) is published monthly, except for combined September/October, by Political Affairs Publishers, Inc., 235 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011. [This address is for all correspondence.] ☎ 212 989-4994

Manuscripts are invited. If a manuscript return is requested, please enclose a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope.

Subscription rates: \$18 for one year (Individuals); \$27 for one year (Institutions); foreign subscriptions: Canada and Mexico, \$20 a year; all others, on request; single issues, \$1.75. Periodical postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send changes of address to: Political Affairs, 235 West 23 St., New York, NY 10011.



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Socialism's 80th Anniversary

When victory was proclaimed in Petersburg on November 7, 1917, the whole world responded to that tremendous event in its own various ways. To the capitalists this was the tolling of the funeral bell. But to the working class the whole world over, this was a moment of inexpressible joy.

Almost immediately the working class recognized the revolution in November (as contrasted to the one in February) as theirs – as their revolution. There was dancing in the streets of New York City. Echoes of the guns from the Aurora on the Neva River reached around the world, heard by workers, peasants, intellectuals, those in colonial bondage.

Around the world, the exploited, the oppressed, the downtrodden felt that enormous compressed energy which was the energy of the revolution expressed through this extraordinary man, Lenin, to which millions throughout the world vibrated like tuning forks vibrating to music.

History placed on the shoulders of the Russian and Soviet people an extraordinary responsibility, which is both an incredible honor and terrible burden. Looking over the last 80 years – taking the long view of history – no person in whom a shred of sympathy and hope for the exploited and oppressed persists, can fail to respond to the unfading glory which those Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, brought to mankind, to its confirmation of the profound truth that the working class will lead the struggle for liberation of all humankind.

In the face of reactionary howls of triumph that can be heard in every corner of the world – that Greed is King – this achievement, both morally and intellectually, is immortal, is eternal, cannot be wiped out of the consciousness of the world's working class and its oppressed. Like *Lady MacBeth*, the reactionaries of the world keep crying: "Out, out damned spot!" But, they cannot eliminate those almost 80 years nor can they stop the inevitable triumph of socialism.

That remarkable instrument of the working class, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as founded by Lenin, achieved two historic victories which completely changed the course of history: the victory of the world's working class, acting through

the Bolsheviks of Russia, over capitalism in 1917, and, then, barely 24 years later, the incredible feat of defeating the most powerful army in the world, Germany's Wehrmacht, which was the spearhead of world reaction.

This second victory, already implicit in the first victory, promised a future in which socialism would spread and flourish, as indeed, from every logical point of view, should have happened. Never was the prestige of the ideas of Lenin so high, never was the influence of the Soviet Union so great as when the Red Army delivered the last blows to that hated Nazi regime in Berlin. The world had every reason to believe that the ideas and forces that had won such a great triumph on the field of battle would be continued into the postwar peace. And so it seemed. In a few postwar years one-third of the world had become socialist or had arrived at some stage in the direction of socialism. Colonialism was defeated.

What happened?

The full and decisive answer to this question has occupied the minds of the world's working class ever since those betrayers in the Soviet Union delivered what can accurately be characterized as a "stab in the back." Under the slogan of "more democracy – more socialism," under the beguiling formula of the "market economy" these conspirators, managed through lies and deceit to bring about what Hitler failed to do with guns and terror.

Is this a true victory for reaction? Millions from the working class, in Russia and the world over roar back "No." For it is their revolution, as well as the Soviet people's, that has been betrayed. They want to understand the real process by which this took place in order, when they apply themselves to restoring socialism again, they will do it much more wisely. The vision of a world without the exploitation of man by man is too keenly rooted in human consciousness to be wiped out by the treacherous action of a handful of criminals who have sold themselves to the devil of history and will be rewarded as they deserve in due course. "Workers of the world," the old cry went, and we repeat it now, "unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains." □

After 50 Years: Truth Triumphs Over Anti-Communism

Gus Hall

It is a great honor for me to be honored by so many honorable people. It is a very special privilege for me to be here with all of you at the New Haven Colony Historical Society and to congratulate the Society for its fine exhibition honoring the Amistad slave rebellion.

I want to thank especially the city of New Haven for its welcome proclamation and all the prominent Connecticut political and labor leaders who are hosting this event. Connecticut has a long, proud history of labor and people's struggles and I have been proud to be part of some of them. And, of course, it is just wonderful to be back in Connecticut. If having family in a state makes one an honorary citizen, then I guess I can also call Connecticut my home state. I must say it does feel a bit odd that I was invited to Connecticut and no one has yet asked me to walk a picket line. In the past, my visits included picket lines at Circuit Wise, Winchester, Yale and a Greenwich support rally for Pittston miners.

I have been walking picket lines all my life. I have probably walked one kind of a line or another in most of these United States. And I have also walked quite a few prison yard lines during my lifetime. Then there were the protests, the rallies, the mass demonstrations and marches to Washington, D.C.

Since politics, organizing and union struggles have been my main occupation, and since so many of you also chose the same line of work, perhaps you will be interested in hearing some unusual stories – and even some never before told secrets – about Communists in the history of our country.

The first is about strikes and Communists. In many class struggles union leaders, who often meet with us on tactics, ask if they can spread the word that the Communists are around, and that if the corporation doesn't settle the strike their workers just might join the Communist Party.

Over many years and many strikes, we have often added that secret ingredient that pushed a company to the bargaining table.

Why? Well, you can imagine that corporate executives just shudder at the thought of their companies getting a reputation as hotbeds of Communist organizing.

And shudder they should. As times get tougher, as downsizing, privatizing, mass layoffs, part-time work and poverty rise, with them rise the anger, radicalization and militancy that is now taking hold in the trade union and people's movements. Just this week corporations announced another 50,000 layoffs in 1998. Kodak's 10,000 is just the beginning. Then there were those hard but exciting times during the Depression and the organizing of the first unions in the basic industries. I was part of both movements, as a steel union organizer, and as a leader of the unemployed and hunger marches that finally won the New Deal.

Here's just a few untold stories of the workers I knew and grew to love because of their courage, their initiatives and creativity in the battles that won unions and made life better for everyone. I started political work in the Young Communist League at almost the same time I started to work at 15 in the lumber camps of Minnesota.

In Minneapolis, during the Great Depression, Communists were recognized leaders in the struggles of the unemployed. With over 30,000 jobless, hungry workers we even took over the City Hall complex for a day. In these same city blocks, there was a huge Armour Packing Company retail outlet. We decided to open this building to the hungry. A committee in charge led the thousands of demonstrators to the building where they broke into the front door and workers streamed in.

In my very vivid memory, as if by plan, in a very orderly fashion workers took their places behind the counters to pass out food.

What impressed me most was how these workers, who were not in on the planning, quickly organized the whole operation.

The police wisely stayed out of sight and the whole packing plant was cleaned out within a few minutes.

I can still see men and women workers walking away with huge slabs of bacon saying, "I'll be

Gus Hall is national chairman of the Communist Party. Presented at the New Haven Colony Historical Society, November 16, 1997.

damned if I'm going to let my family die of starvation while this fat cat company lays off workers."

In the '30s, it was thousands of actions like this that began to shake the foundation of the capitalist system and strike fear into the hearts of big business.

My sharpest recollection of early union organizing was the fierce fight that broke the back of resistance of the steel industry. This is the story of how I got my first job in steel and changed my name at the same time. As a Young Communist League organizer I was being sent to West Virginia to work in the mine fields to help coal miners organize a union.

HOW THE STEEL WAS TEMPERED □ On the way, I made a quick stop in Youngstown that turned into years. Before I knew it I was deeply involved in the struggles of the unemployed, the hungry, the steel workers. But I knew that to organize steel workers I would have to get a job in the steel industry, not an easy task since there wasn't much hiring going on. And, besides, I knew nothing about making steel. So, I took a short welding course and then headed for the steel plant to see how the hiring was done. When I got there about 200 were lined up for jobs. I joined them.

Before I knew it one of the bosses pointed his finger and motioned at me to come into the office. I knew that meant a job offer. Slowly, I walked toward the building, making some quick decisions. I knew that if I gave my real name, Arvo Gus Halberg, I would not last one day because I had run for the Youngstown City Council on the Communist Party ticket. So, in desperation, just as I walked in the door, I cut both ends off my name and gave them what was left - Gus Hall. Next morning, when I reported for work I learned why I was hired so quickly. Everyone in my department weighed 200 pounds or more because the job required lifting heavy pieces of steel. And I fit the bill.

Years later, in Leavenworth Penitentiary, where I served seven years under the notorious anti-Communist Smith Act for "conspiracy to teach the duty and necessity for the violent overthrow of the U.S. government," I had a chance to do a lot of thinking about that first steel job of mine.

The job was putting together and welding the structure for rows of prison gates. During those prison years I always looked for flaws in those gates, but I never found any. I guess I turned out to be a pretty good welder.

Of course, soon as I started work I also started organizing for the union. It didn't take long before a

strike was on the horizon. But the two key plants - Warren and Niles - were then under a company union. In those days, when organizing drives were in trouble the union called in a Communist to take over. So I was asked to work on preparing these two plants for a strike. The company prepared for all-out war, knowing that if they could break the strike at the key plant in Warren they could break the whole organizing drive, and the industry would remain non-union.

Among the many problems we had to deal with was the fact that the plant was situated in an area where it was difficult to set up picket lines. The company was out to use everything it could, including the swamp land in the back, and the fact that so many streets ran right into the plant. This plant was on property big enough for landing planes. So Republic hired small planes and filled them with scabs and food. That's how they brought in strike breakers. But the bosses underestimated the courage, determination and ingenuity of the strikers.

Well, many of the workers were deer hunters. So they got out their guns and set themselves up in the swamps waiting for the planes. Two planes were shot down. This brought Republic's scab flights to a quick end.

In another brilliant move, the strikers closed off the streets leading to the plant. Only those with a pass signed by me, as chairman of the strike committee, could come and go. It was quite a sight to see the Mayor and Chief of Police asking a known Communist for a pass to walk up the block.

Warren was a conservative steel town and it was difficult to find a place to house the strike headquarters. But some workers knew a small underworld character who owned a large, fully-equipped nightclub that was closed at the time.

The workers knew that the owner had a grudge against the steel companies because when he was a boy a steel company fired his father. Well, we got the most elaborate, luxurious strike headquarters in all labor history - and it didn't cost us a penny.

Then there was the day some strikers got wind of a planned assassination plot against me. The workers gave the information to the police and everyone waited for the gunman to show up.

Sure enough, a young man appeared with a rifle, a five-gallon can of gas and a pile of rags soaked in gasoline. He was arrested but let go almost immediately. The workers found out that the would-be assassin was a thug hired by a Republic steel executive.

There were a few more foiled assassination plots, including the conspiracy to poison a famous Arabian horse, Guzall. The FBI thought if they could ruin my brother's horse breeding business they could cut off a funding source of the Communist Party.

All of you know the victorious outcome of the class war to organize the steel union. My wife, Elizabeth, and I are proud to be founding members of the United Steel Workers of America and current members of SOAR, the organization of active steelworker retirees.

Because of their experiences, many of the best workers in steel and other industries joined the Communist Party and became the backbone of its membership. Many of them remain active and in the leadership of our Party to this day. They are still some of the best writers for the *People's Weekly World*.

A HISTORIC VICTORY ■ Since those days, many, many important changes have taken place in our country and especially in the labor movement. Some of them are history making. I know you are aware of many of them. Some of you have even taken part in bringing them about.

However, there is one recent event I want to single out because of its great significance not only to Communists, to Communist trade unionists, but to the whole trade union and all people's movements. I am very happy to be here to welcome a historic event I have been waiting almost 50 years to celebrate.

On September 22, 1997 at the national convention of the AFL-CIO in Pittsburgh, 800 delegates unanimously passed the Executive Council's resolution to remove all the anti-Communist clauses from their federation constitution.

The removal of all specific references to the Communist Party as a so-called "subversive" organization has ramifications way beyond the trade union movement.

For over 50 years Communist trade unionists, and many others "by association," were subject to restrictions, penalties and removal from trade union leadership and membership.

For over 50 years, our Party has had to deal with the biggest of all lies - anti-Communism. It was started and spread by Gingrich-like politicians of the Cold War '50s and big business. It was a vicious, many-sided attack. One big lie was that Communists join trade unions to take them over to push a hidden agenda. Communists became union members, activists and leaders. Communists were, and

are, elected to leadership positions in unions. And they have not taken them over.

We have and always will live by the principle that Communists should be elected on the basis of their work, their consistent contributions to the trade union movement. However, for over 50 years our Party has worked with trade unions that have anti-Communist clauses in their constitutions. Many Communists were not permitted to be union officers and were expelled from unions under these notorious, unconstitutional clauses that were put there by the right wing, the FBI, Hoover and McCarthy. Many including myself, spent years in prison under the notorious Smith Act, the biggest lie in U.S. legal and legislative history. Others lost their jobs, their careers and some even their lives.

Some sections of the Smith Act were revoked by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional and a violation of first amendment rights. But only after prison terms were served and lives were ruined. The elimination of all the anti-Communist clauses removes one of the last holdovers of Cold War anti-Communism. It frees working people and their unions to re-establish and build more open, healthy, mutually beneficial relations with our Party and paper.

Perhaps most important, it will make it easier to unite the trade union movement. It will eliminate a corporate weapon against the trade union and working-class movements.

Anti-Communists spread big lies that hurt not only Communists but did great damage to democracy, the constitution and people's lives.

The recent Hollywood commemoration on the 50th anniversary of the McCarthy-era blacklist paid long overdue tribute to the Hollywood Ten and hundreds of other artists who suffered horrible persecution because they refused to become stoolpigeons. It is another sign that the era of anti-Communism is withering away.

Yet another sign of the new times is that despite a vicious, no-holds-barred Republican-run-and-paid-for anti-Communist red-baiting campaign, the people of Wilkensburg, Pennsylvania, a steel suburb of Pittsburgh, elected to their Borough Council Denise Winebrenner Edwards, a local and national leader of the Communist Party, USA. This, and a Communist electoral victory in Ohio, also signals the end of the era of anti-Communism.

Another big lie was that Communists advocate the violent overthrow of the U.S. government. When the truth is that we have always advocated a peace-

ful path to socialism. The truth is that no political party, including the Communist Party, can bring about revolution. We do advocate socialism as a logical replacement for capitalism. However, it is the people, the working class, that must decide when they have had enough of capitalism. Socialism will come about when the majority of Americans are convinced that it is a better form of society and necessary for improving most people's lives.

Another feature of the big lie was that Communists were foreign agents – agents of the Soviet Union. Communists have never been spies.

As stated in our Party's Constitution, Party members cannot be foreign agents of any country.

Right-wing forces also spread the lie that Communists are anti-religion. In all my years I have never heard anyone in our Party make an anti-religion remark or speech. It may surprise you that most of our Party members are members of a church, synagogue or other religious organization. I, myself, have a certificate of baptism from the most conservative religious denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

It is also a feature of the big lie that Communists are anti-democratic. The truth is that we are the most democratic people and organization in our country. We know from first-hand experience that to win people to any struggle you have to win them democratically, to convince them to participate in the fullest sense.

The truth is that from its founding in 1919, our Party has been and is in the forefront of every struggle and movement for social progress, human and civil rights in this country's history. For 78 years our Party has fought against racism and for equality. We have been involved in and led struggles against racism and discrimination in jobs, housing, education.

It is a great source of pride that our Party was the first, and for a long time the only integrated organization to fight for African American equality and against all forms of racism and bigotry. It was a big lie that we were in the struggle against racism to "mislead" African Americans.

For 78 years, our Party has been up front in the struggle for women's equality in all areas of life. For 78 years, we have been among the best fighters against, exploitation, oppression, all forms of bigotry, prejudice and intolerance, to save the environment and for a world at peace.

Finally, if I may, I would like to say a few words about Connecticut.

First, congratulations to New Haven on its 80 percent vote for the Martinez Living Wage Public Works Jobs Bill Referendum. This majority sentiment puts New Haven in the lead of building a national movement for a massive, emergency federal jobs program to rebuild our cities.

Connecticut will need this legislation, perhaps more than most, because it is also the first to cut off all welfare payments. As of a few weeks ago, thousands of Connecticut families, cut off welfare, will begin to sink into hunger and homelessness.

They will go from low-income to no-income victims of Clinton's cruel new welfare laws. You have a right to ask your governor, your Congresspeople and Senators why they are silent while this tragedy is unfolding, and to demand immediate emergency measures. The postponement of the vote on Clinton's trade bill is a sign that labor's new strength and political power is being felt in Congress – it is a signal that labor's political independence can now build electoral coalitions that can change the political balance of power in Congress in 1998. It is now possible to defeat your Governor John Rowland and elect labor candidates to Congress from Connecticut.

The Connecticut Communist Party is growing among working and poor, Black, Brown and white people in Connecticut because it offers a program of struggle on immediate crisis issues. It is growing because it offers hope for a better life through united struggle today and a vision for winning a socialist USA tomorrow.

Finally, if any of you are for socialism but have not worked with Communists or joined the Communist Party because of the big lies, times are changing. The big lie is disappearing.

In its place is a growing awareness and recognition of the real history and role of the Communist Party and the *People's Weekly World*.

It is a new day. We can now build a working-class and people's unity that includes the Communists. We hope that the end of big lie anti-Communism will mean many more people will read and enjoy our newspaper.

We hope it will mean that many more of you will consider socialism as a solution to the terrible problems of every day life that you are facing because capitalism doesn't work for working and poor people anymore.

We hope you will consider joining the Communist Party, the political party of the working class and socialism, USA. □

Hollywood Writers on the Rack

Phillip Bonosky

*Of my deep hunger
great dreams grew
and I made of my ideal
my bread...*

Sol Funaroff
The Spider and the Clock

Marx had put it clearly enough in his day: "The writer must, naturally, make a living in order to exist and write, but he must not exist and write in order to make a living." He went on in words that almost have lost their significance today:

The writer in no way regards his works as a means. They are ends to themselves: as little are they a means for him and others, that, when necessary, he sacrifices his existence to theirs, and, like the preacher of religion, he takes as his principles: 'Obey God more than men,' men among whom he is himself included along with his human needs and desires.

No Hollywood writer, no matter how "red" he was, ever wrote a movie that was so cunningly devised, couched in such arcane symbols, that though they passed the eagle eyes of dozens of Hollywood censors who saw nothing "red" in them, the masses nevertheless responded to them as though given explicit orders to storm the citadels of power.

Thus the whole struggle around the Hollywood writers was compromised from the beginning. The issue was not whether they wrote "revolutionary" movies, but how they voted as citizens in their after-hours – how they stood on questions of unionism, most importantly of all. The movies they actually wrote were so acceptable and remained so clearly within the parameters of bourgeois ideology, that even Ronald Reagan, FBI spy and union scab, who fought the Hollywood Reds tooth and nail, found himself recommending a movie to Gor-

bachev as an example of American tolerance, one (he did not tell Gorbachev) written by a Hollywood "Red" who had been blacklisted (perhaps named for blacklisting by Reagan himself). The movie *Friendly Persuasion* bore no name of a writer – it wrote itself. The non-writer was Michael Wilson who also went on to write the independently produced *Salt of the Earth*, which being genuinely "revolutionary" was boycotted by all the movie houses in the country.

Nevertheless, having said all this, it must be added that the element of free expression was involved, for the attacks against Hollywood were not aimed at Communist ideas but at democratic ideas, and therefore the attacks struck at the very root of America's democratic heritage and tradition. It may be ironic, but it is not unprecedented that it was precisely Communists who became the de facto defenders of democratic rights and liberties. Nor is it just a coincidence that two of the most popular patriotic songs at the time were written by Communists: *The House I Live In* by Earl Robinson and Lewis Allan, and *This Land is My Land* by Woodie Guthrie, not to mention the earlier *Brother, Can you Spare a Dime* by Yip Harburg, Jay Gorney and *Strange Fruit*.

But the ground for the massive full-scale attack on all democratic opinion in the U.S. had been prepared well in advance with the Congressional institution, and continued tolerance and support of the original Un-American Activities Committee, usually referred to by the name of its belligerent Texas Dixiecrat chairman, Martin Dies, in 1936.

It is worth noting if only in passing, that in order to get the consent of the Congress – then a largely New Deal Congress – to set up the Committee, the Congressman from Texas simply lied. He promised to go after the domestic fascists whose organizations had proliferated like mushrooms after rain with the inauguration of the New Deal, or more accurately, after FDR went "left."

But hardly had Dies won approval of the House on this calculated misunderstanding than he showed his true colors; he went after "the left" – i.e., the New Deal. It was this Committee which institu-

Phillip Bonosky is writing a book on the Cold War.

tionalized the style, the method, the essence of the formula by which hundreds of individuals had their careers blasted, and some of their very lives destroyed with absolutely not the slightest Constitutional straw to put up in defense. Absolutely necessary to achieve his ends was the "cooperation" of the press. And that press, instead of supplying that defense for the persecuted, helped destroy it, earning even then the later judgment of a journalist published in the *New Yorker* (1989): "Every journalist ... knows that what he does is morally indefensible. He is a kind of confidence man, preying on people's vanity, ignorance or loneliness, gaining their trust and betraying them without remorse."

Coming from a poll tax state where less than five percent of the eligible voters ever voted, Dies didn't need to worry about alienating his constituency. He truly represented that handful of voters who had paid for the right to vote for him. But the fact is that in representing the interests of the rich few in Texas, he also voiced the interests of the richer few in New York City, and of banking stops all the way to San Francisco and beyond, which is why they tolerated this provincial boor whose every word and gesture violated the most elementary norms of civilized behavior. Only a handful of Congressmen, led by Representative Vito Marcantonio, worked to stop him, trying to get him to investigate the KKK and getting back a promise that he, Marcantonio, would be investigated instead.

Nor should one imagine that Dies' presence on the scene had no lasting effect. In fact, Senator McCarran invoked the Dies Committee "findings" to draft his own bill which all but outlawed the Communist Party. And when Truman needed guidelines to determine who belonged to a subversive "front" organization, he cited the authority of the Un-American Committee (though by that time under a different chairman) as his source.

WPA ARTS PROJECT ■ But Dies perfected the techniques which became routine by usurping the function and formulating the style of all Congressional committees. One episode which contained all the elements that became so notorious later will do. For it we must go back to 1939, still substantially a year of the Depression. There were 25,000 men and women on four WPA arts projects (writing, painting, music and theater) actually feeding and housing what later was recognized as America's cultural

elite, in better times.

Little noted in the history of American culture is the fact that in order to qualify for these projects, all of the prospective WPA art workers had to take a pauper's oath: They had to swear that they had no means (and no relatives who had the means) to support themselves. The projects "paid" \$103.50 per month in New York and \$50 in Mississippi, with appropriate salary adjustments in between. Each national region figured out precisely, to the decimal point, what was the minimum necessary in their area to keep a writer in food while he wrote. From these projects America was to harvest its most famous artists – from Jackson Pollock to Alice Neel. Writers included Chicago's Saul Bellow (later Nobel Prize winner), Studs Terkel and Nelson Algren. From other states writers like Conrad Aiken were kept alive on WPA; also Maxwell Bodenheim, the New York Bohemian, later to be hideously murdered by a pathological anti-Communist; Vardis Fisher, Jack Conroy (*The Disinherited*) and even John Cheever who helped put out the WPA, New York City Guide.

Perhaps more significant than the help given to white writers was the start given to Black writers, who included Richard Wright (*Native Son*), Frank Yerby (*Foxes of Yarrow*), and Richard Ellison (*The Invisible Man*) as well as Arna Bontemps and others. Even more significant was the help extended to Black women writers, most notably Margaret Walker. Also the WPA gave a start to the modern Black dancer, Katherine Dunham. Altogether some 10,000 writers scattered all over the country were literally kept alive by the WPA.

It was significant enough that in order to qualify for the project, writers and others had to swear a pauper's oath. Even so, of 3,500 writers who were registered as destitute in New York City there were places for only 447 on WPA projects.

"Successful" writers were not faring much better. In 1929, there were 721 publishing houses making an annual \$182 million profit. Four years later, 1933, there were only 410 making \$92 million. Scribner's profits in 1929, for example, totaled \$280,309. In 1932, three years later, profits had shrunk to \$40,661 and so did authors' royalties. Publishers did not take on new writers, or rarely. Most books, purchased by libraries and other institutions, were replacements of wornout classics or confirmed "best sellers" (a term hardly identifiable with its modern version).

No family could (even then) be sustained on a WPA income. It was the time of the bachelor, of delayed marriages. The time for the young, unfolding writer (Kenneth Rexroth, Sol Funaroff, Willard Mass), still only starting out, including the author who was for a time on the Washington, D.C. writers' project. The Depression – that vast catastrophe which brought the intellectual world into instant democracy, (one literally stood in the same line for welfare handouts as did the more traditionally recognizable down-and-outers) was the mother of them all. They came to intellectual maturity early. And only one question engrossed them. Why?

Why such universal poverty? Why must artists swear they are paupers before they are allowed to eat? Why was there no place in America for the writer? Many, in addition, came from the families of immigrants that had arrived in America with such high hopes and had survived (not all survived) to see these hopes destroyed. Many were Jews and felt a double oppression. Few were Blacks – lifted for the first time (after the Black Renaissance of the 1920s) to the visible literary horizon, only to be teased by a promise that was no promise. ("America was promises" – Langston Hughes).

Such writers, burning with unanswered questions, saw in art, not an evasion of life, not a decoration, nor mere entertainment, but a means of searching out the meaning of life and changing it. Mike Gold's very popular column in the *Daily Worker* was a challenge, a hope and a promise: "Change the World!"

WRITING TO CHANGE THE WORLD ■ These writers from Depression homes scoffed at commercial writers, and to be published in the *Saturday Evening Post* (like *Collier's* top-paying mass commercial weekly) was what amounted to a confession of public prostitution. Going to Hollywood was seen as no different from selling one's talents to furnish a brothel.

By the time you understood the implications of your seething ideas, brought to white heat in the oven of youth, you were not only ready to call yourself a Communist, but you looked down upon the flesh-and-blood Communists as too mild, too conservative and overly timid, who had betrayed the revolution before it had arrived. Two types existed, as Malcolm Cowley would see it. One whose

usual sacrifice was to walk in a local picket line, to be carried off in a paddy wagon, to sing "The International" with the other jailed pickets – Mike Gold would carry the bass ... (then) to rush home and write a turgid account of the strike as the first glow of a revolutionary dawn. Yes, they were the romantics and in due course woke up and denounced their dream. But, there were other writers, however, who played a part in serious strikes like the big ones in Minneapolis and San Francisco, where the pickets were likely to be slugged and given stiff sentences.

Later, too, writers put down their pens (or typewriters) including those coin-operated that could be "rented" for 2 cents and stopped working when the 2 cents was used up, and enlisted in the International Brigade and went to Spain to die there, like James Lardner, "to lie forever under the olive trees."

Whatever was to be claimed for it or charged against later, the fact was that the "proletarian thirties" were an organic, logical continuation of America's literary mainstream. Indeed, before WW I, most of America's writers, including Walt Whitman and Mark Twain, of themselves, in one degree or another, identified as "socialist," however distant that imagined "socialism" might in actuality have been from the real thing. In any case, they were universally against the monopolization of the country's natural resources, and only the genuine aristocrats like Henry James, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and Henry Miller would flee the country because it was too crude, too "democratic" for their tastes. Those who remained were rooted in the working class, or perhaps more accurately, hoping to get a job so that they could be rooted in the working class, and their striving to realize democracy on the most elementary level – staying alive – gave that decade its characteristic flavor, tone and spirit.

By definition an artist was a rebel. And this fact is what alarmed the Dixiecrats, but not only the Dixiecrats. They set their favorite pit bull dog on them – Martin Dies.

Probably what really frightened the Dixiecrats most of all – and first of all – was the fact that the WPA projects ignored – or at least did not observe – the color line. To them this was the inevitable red flag that sent them into instant operation. These projects represented the shock troops of the revolution to the eyes of Dies and his ilk. They wheeled their guns into line. In opening fire on the Projects, Dies was well aware that his real target was the New

Deal itself, was President Roosevelt, but more immediately Mrs. Roosevelt.

So the tip of the camel's nose was ignoring the color line. Far better than Northerners ever understood it, the Southern Dixiecrat realized that the secret to unraveling the whole fabric of their special status and power (and fortunes), lay in this one loose string, Black and white equality. Representative Howard Smith of Virginia would encase segregation into law – his law – and for a long time managed to equate the system of oppression and exploitation in the South with the Constitution itself.

THE WEAPON OF PREJUDICE □ But to get down to exactly how the Dies Committee worked, starting with that section which he believed was most vulnerable, and attacks on which would be applauded back in his home territory where nobody read, let alone owned a book, he invoked America's well-known anti-intellectuals, and particularly the prejudice that flourished against "New York intellectuals" in America's backwoods and small towns.

He used spies, informers, renegades, misfits and malcontents of every variety, and provocateurs. The FBI and the Dies Committee, for a time, worked hand-in-glove, although eventually J. Edgar Hoover broke off relations with the Committee on the suspicion that it was under the influence of Communists. Nevertheless, the FBI supplied the Committee with information fed to it by its spies. In the end, with the support of Northern reactionary Republicans, Dies would succeed in scuttling the whole project, cutting 25,000 men and women, as we now admit, the best artists of the times, off their subsistence-level jobs and back to the welfare rolls or the soup line. All told, an enterprise that was to leave its mark on American culture forever lasted only seven years.

The formula which Dies inaugurated was simple and with use became stereotyped. It started with a certain Mrs. Florence D. Shreeve, "a former agent for the McCormick Committee on Un-American Activities," in charge of proofreading copy and galleys of the guidebooks. (About 1000 books and pamphlets were published and dozens of others remained in the archives).

Mrs. Shreeve testified before a hearing of the Dies Committee that "suddenly one day all that work was taken away from me, with not a particle of warning, and I was told that I was a fascist and must not be allowed to handle copy because I would

attempt to write terrible things in it. I had been taking out the little subtle things..."

That is, she had been "editing" other writers' copy to conform to her prejudices without their knowledge, and if they had known, most certainly without their permission. And what were those "subtle" things she'd taken out in her effort to save the republic?

Dies: What had you been taking out? Just characterize it.

Mrs. Shreeve: Oh, the struggle between capital and labor, and that the Negro had been downtrodden, and always – there was a word they used –

Mrs. Lazelle (another informer): Underprivileged.

Mrs. Shreeve: That is it, underprivileged; the underprivileged Negro. Those subtle little things were coming in quietly at the time. They were just creeping in. At first I was thinking that there were just certain stray writers that were a little bit prejudiced...

Dies: What do you mean by "things creeping in?"

Mrs. Shreeve: Propaganda.

Dies: What kind of propaganda?

Mrs. Shreeve: Radical labor propaganda, subtle propaganda which the Communists now use to promote prejudice between capital and labor...

It must be remembered that in 1939, Southern Democrats like Dies, the unique beneficiaries of a system by which the acute minority "outvoted" the suppressed, supine and wrong-colored majority could not dream that a day would ever come, short of violent revolution, when a Black person would freely vote in the South, ride a bus and sit in any seat of a public conveyance he chose to, or enter into any public building, restaurant, bus station, hospital or school where whites also freely entered. Who could see a day, short of "violent revolution" led by Communists, when all the "Colored Only" signs would go down in every state in the Southland?

Of course, in one thing they were right. Communists most certainly promoted the "propaganda" line that white autocracy should be abolished in every aspect of social life. Of this, brought as a nefarious charge against them, Communists can justifiably be proud. But even so, to champion full equality was not a socialist proposal as such, but no more than the continuation of the democratic revolution which had been so abruptly interrupted in the South in 1887.

The forbidden then is today the law of the land, and though it was indeed accomplished with great violence, with death and massive destruction, still (as is generally the case) the violence and destruction originated not from those wanting change but from those resisting it.

Along with this know-nothingness, this total intellectual and moral inertness toward the ideas of progress (clearly defined), went a kind of grotesque puritanism that today garners guffaws of scornful laughter everywhere. Congressman Everett McKinley Dirksen (later a serious contender for the GOP candidacy for president), got up one day in Congress and in a high dudgeon listed WPA Federal Theater plays which he denounced as Communist and pornographic, the two went together in his mind. Calls for sexual freedom led to social revolt. He had seen none of the plays but this in no way inhibited him. Cried he:

A New Kind of Love I wonder what that can be. It smacks somewhat of the Soviet. Then there's *Up in Mabel's Room*. There is an intriguing title for you... *Did Adam Sin? Lend me your Husband*, and *Just a Love Nest*. Now if you want that kind of salacious tripe, very well, vote for it, but if anyone has an interest in real cultural values, you will not find it in this kind of junk...

None of the above plays qualifies for the Index Librorum Prohibitorium. At worst today the plays might – just might – be called “naughty.” At best the “sagaciousness” existed only in the titles and in the prurient minds of Congressmen.

At the Dies Hearing in New York, Congressman Starnes read an article by Richard Wright entitled: “Ethics of Living Jim Crow.” He proceeded to read passages from Wright’s contribution which included such words as “son of a bitch” and “fukin” (spelled in that manner). Starnes refused to read the latter word aloud. “I will supply that word for the stenographer because I don’t like to use such a word.” Dies’ comment was: “That is the most filthy thing I have seen.”

One doubts it. But it was, after all, only a word. But characterizing millions of American citizens as a racial epithet, pronouncing the whole word, was not too filthy for Dies to let pass his virginal lips, nor were his eyes too delicate to look upon a lynched Black man – that “strange fruit” which the South produced such a great harvest of year by year without being overcome by nausea or shame.

All of this should have been laughed out of court, and indeed, in the early phases of the Dies Committee, when even Roosevelt publicly condemned its methods as “squalid,” efforts in the sophisticated press to laugh it out of court were made. In the smart set intellectual community – the Algonquin Club set – Dies was a buffoon. Cartoonists of the left and liberal press alike loved to caricature him. They were certain that laughter would drive him back to Texas. They were sure that a smidgen of common sense would reduce him to nothing but a joke.

But what they could not then grasp and which came like a blow on their social complacency, was the fact that such objective insanity, such public buffoonery, was not needed solely by Mencken’s “books” in the “Bible belt” but by the Morgans and Rockefellers. This is what was new.

COMPLEX MECHANISM OF REPRESSION □ But if saying “the Morgans and the Rockefellers” has a too-schematic ring for some ears today – these over-beaten horses of the soap box orators – then it should be added that the actual living process of repression and intimidation was indeed far more complicated, a mixture of many elements, some of which operated “instinctively,” some shamefacedly, some opportunistically. (“Here’s our chance to settle scores with the Communists without being blamed for it!”)

Anti-democratic forces had respectable backing. It wasn’t just fly-by-night hate groups who published scurrilous racist and warmongering tracts. At the height of the Cold War (soon to bloom in full neophyte flower) hundreds of books, 2,000 of them, were published by “respectable” publishers, though they knew that the CIA had secretly financed the writing and that the books were fakes, their contents dictated by CIA needs. As if this wasn’t bad enough, all the prestigious and influential organs of opinion led by the *New York Times*, though they knew quite well that they were reviewing books secretly written by CIA agents, nevertheless gave these books serious and dignified attention and treatment. No anti-Communist book was too turgid, too obscene, too extreme to be ignored, although, as later would be admitted, none of them made money. Most people smelled a rat.

Corrupt books and corrupt intellectuals corrupted the general intellectual atmosphere. With the “Marxists” driven out of the market, only spoiled

goods could be put up for sale in their place. "If whores are what they want" Peter Ghent would say in another context, "then we'll give them the best whores there are." Nobody fit the specifications, or burlesqued in modern terms the tragedy of Faustian man better than did Elia Kazan. Though awarded the Freedom Prize by none other than the one-time FBI informer T-10, Ronald Reagan, Kazan goes about the world like Lady Macbeth crying: "Out, out damned spot!"

A SNITCH IS BORN ■ Kazan came out of the thirties, when to be "Left" was to be alive. And not merely "Left" but often to the left of the Communist Party itself. He joined the Communist Party as an actor in the Group Theater of New York, an avant-garde theater which popularized the theories of Stanislavsky, and whose members spoke familiarly of the Moscow Art Theater which they certainly saw on visits to New York or even traveled 5,000 miles to see it on its home grounds.

Kazan made his appearance on the theater scene with a play co-authored by Art Smith, dramatizing the Bulgarian Communist Dimitrov's courageous defiance of the Nazis in court in Leipzig in 1933, a defense which played a large part in exposing the Nazis as criminals at a time when they first sought respectability. He exposed them, especially as having set the Reichstag on fire as a political provocation. This cynical act by Goering and Goebbels would become classic as the typical prototype for a political and class immorality that transcended all previous social limits for public crime, most notably brought to evil fruition in the CIA.

In those early 1930 days, publishers, theater, Hollywood, all were on the lookout (like experienced roue's) for young, new talent. And all young new talent was "left." Marxism was exciting; it was, even from the faddist point of view, the coming thing. In a time of world depression and volcanic political events abroad, simply to be aware of the world at all was to be automatically left. You were against Hitler and Mussolini and Franco; you were left. As a later McCarthyite-seasoned youth would remark to Viola Brothers Shore, screen writer, black-listed, who had "done" Clara Bow's last picture: "I'm glad I'm too young to be compromised by the '30s." To have been born in the '30s in itself earned you a dossier!

Again, one would be reminded that money

played a small role in affecting one's writing. Art, by the very fact that it existed, fought to change men's minds, fought as surely as did a pot of geraniums in the window of the poor against the grimness of poverty. Merely to note that the nation was on the dole, that millions were unemployed, made you, willy-nilly, an exponent of left ideas no matter how your father voted.

Art was still free, that is, it earned no money, it was given free, it was a hobo. The condition for its freedom was that it should have no money value. It was free as long as it was not a commodity and could fetch no prices in the market. It was not bought and sold and did not compete for sales. Writers still asked, "Is it true?" And only later, years later, did they ask: "Will it sell?" And the more insidious: "If it's true, will it sell?" And: "If it sells, is it true - can it be true?" By the time, in 1989, it was possible to report that a second-rate writer by the name of Tom Wolfe was offered (if the newspapers don't lie) \$7.1 million for his "next novel" sight unseen, the game was over.

Making money was not in Kazan's mind when he wrote the play about Dimitrov.

But one thing led to another. In those days Hollywood, you might say, still lusted for honest, free talent. And the writer who looked toward the revolution, however mistily, scorned Hollywood's values and understood that in accepting much money for his work, and even going on contract, he was selling his soul. Although nobody hesitates to sell his soul today, in fact, clamors in the market to get buyers of cut-down Faustian men - in those days there were still artists so naive that they believed with Marx that writing was an end in itself, not as a means to make not a mere living but a killing!

So they went to Hollywood protesting that it was "only long enough to make a boodle," and then it was off to that little cabin in the deep woods of Maine where they would settle in peace and quiet and write the great American novel. But the reality was that once in Hollywood they stayed. The money was irresistible, and now and then it was possible to contribute to the making of a movie for which one did not have to blush. In fact, during the '30s a number of movies with anti-fascist themes were made. At the same time nobody interfered with one's political beliefs or questioned what organization one belonged to, or hesitated to add one's name to a petition to save someone's life. Indeed, for a short

historical moment such free souls were truly blessed. Not only could they write what they believed in (more or less) but be left and be paid.

And so it went. Hemingway had diagnosed it long before:

We destroy them [American writers] in many ways. First economically. They make money. It is only by hazard that a writer makes money although good books always make money eventually. Then our writers when they make some money increase their standard of living and they are caught. They have to write to keep up their establishments, their wives and so on, and they write slop. It is not slop on purpose but because it is hurried. Because they write when there is nothing to say or no water in the well. Because they are ambitious. Then, once they have betrayed themselves, they justify it and you get more slop.

The first time the Un-American Activities Committee summoned Kazan to appear he refused. But his courage lasted only two weeks. In that time it apparently occurred to him that in the real world you really could be fired, you could be sent to jail, could be blacklisted forever, could be reduced to poverty. When he appeared before the Committee "of his own volition" he explained: "I have come to the conclusion that I did wrong to withhold the news before, because secrecy serves the Communists..."

NAMING NAMES ■ Names! Even he knew that the Committee was not out for names. (It had all the names it could handle in its bulging files, and if it needed any more, FBI's Hoover would oblige at bargain prices). What they were after was a public ritual of self-degradation. They, the Yahoo Congressmen who were barely literate, wanted to see – and for the world to see – a famous, well-paid, well-fed, well-liquored and respected artist, an intellectual, grovel, crawl before them, the Yahoos of the Barnyard. They wanted to be able to report the scene to their wives or mistresses that evening.

You know that famous millionaire Hollywood stuck-up writer? The one who's supposed to have had an affair with Bette Davis? Wouldn't give you the time of day? You should have seen him eat shit this morning, right off the tip of my shoe! We had him sitting up and begging for more.

They wanted to destroy thought itself.

And sitting up and begging is just what Kazan did. But he did more. He went on to say:

Firsthand experience of dictatorships and thought-control. [He was speaking before the most notorious thought-control committee in American history] left me with an abiding hatred of Communist philosophy and methods...

I am talking about free speech, a free press, the rights of labor, racial equality, and, above all, individual rights. I value peace, too, when it is not bought at the price of fundamental decencies. I believe these things must be fought for where they are threatened.

And, with smooth transition, he went on to say further: "I have placed a copy of this affidavit with Mr. Spyros B. Skouras, president of Twentieth Century Fox..."

That is, his boss (who was himself a pathological anti-Communist). Kazan went on to testify: "For approximately 19 months of my membership, I was assigned to a 'unit' composed of those party members who were, like myself, members of the Group Theater acting company. These were..."

And the names rolled out of his mouth as if from an opened can of peas. They were the names of former comrades, friends, some of whom he had been "intimate" with, even as he fully intended to expose them as "Communists" and knowing that in doing so he would wreck their careers. Among those he named was a dead man; even the dead would not be spared. He went on: "Those are the only members of the unit whom I recall and I believe this to be a complete list. Even at this date I do not believe it would be possible for me to forget anyone."

The hearing continued:

Mr. Travenner (chief counsel for the committee): Mr. Kazan, the staff or members of this committee may desire to recall you at some future time for the purpose of asking you to make further explanations of some of the matters contained in your statement.

Nodding, Mr. Kazan: "I will be glad to do anything to help – anything you consider necessary or valuable." Thus putting himself permanently on recall, as a spy on his fellow-workers, friends and family!

But this didn't end it. At a certain point, Kazan

went through his entire works title by title, explaining: "There follows a list of my entire professional career as a director, all the plays I have done and the films I have made:"

Cafe Crown ... no politics ... *The Strings, My Lord, Are False* ... no politics ... (this film) shows human courage and endurance in many kinds of people, including prominently a priest... *Yacobosky and the Colonel* ... not political but full of American tradition and spirit ... *Streetcar Named Desire* ... not political ... *Viva Zapata* ... my recent picture ... this is an anti-Communist picture...

And so on. Mr. Kazan, champion of non-interference in the content of the artist's work, himself (with no SS men with a truncheon poking him in the ribs, standing over him) twisted the meaning of the Mexican Revolution under Zapata, to make it an anti-revolutionary tract, an anti-Communist piece of raw propaganda. Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919) was the peasant leader of the Mexican Revolution of 1911 whose slogan was - land to the peasants. Zapata's forces even occupied Mexico City in 1914-15. He was finally betrayed and murdered.

To turn this episode in Mexico's history into an anti-Communist tract, when the Communist Party in Mexico hadn't even been formed yet, nor in the USA, was a travesty on history, a forgery and an insult to the Mexicans themselves, who, indeed, saw it as an insult, as an unbelievable act of forgery. All Mexican public opinion, from right to left, denounced the film. And indeed, it stands as a monument to intellectual corruption equaled only by similar works extolling Nazism.

The same day Kazan appeared before the Un-American Activities Committee, he published a full-page ad (at about \$8,000 then) in the *New York Times* - another one in *Variety* - in which he publicly "explained" his renegacy, and called upon all other writers and actors who still had, or once had progressive views to join with him. Later, with Budd Schulberg (another recanter and testifier of names, including that of a friend who had died in Spain), he made a film adapted from a novel by Schulberg *On the Waterfront* in which he put forward a rationale for ratting on former friends and relatives. FBI's Cummings, an informer, had also turned in the names of friends and relatives to the FBI. But he did it openly for money and had the good grace not to write (or have written for him) a book about it,

explaining it was actually committed with great moral anguish.

DEFENDING THE INDEFENSIBLE □ Kazan was an intellectual. That means he had to justify himself morally somehow. So, in *On the Waterfront* he gave himself the benefit of the best scenario in which the hero is confronted with the problem of squealing on fellow criminals out to kill, or keeping to the code of silence. Easy dilemma to solve! The formula: "It's bad to squeal only on your friends, not on your enemies."

To get around the embarrassment of denouncing on Friday, as the nation's enemies, men and women you had publicly embraced as friends on Monday - the sweat of love was still on your pillow - you needed a formula. And it was found with Budd Schulberg's help.

In any case, he went on to write his "loose-lip" (Zero Mostel's words) books read by only God knows who (though they made the Best Seller lists). He climaxed his book writing with a voluminous *apologia pro sua vita* - except that he did not - that ran into several hundred thousand words.

Still, though Justice, wounded and in hiding, sometimes comes out for air, a day arrived when Kazan wanted to visit the Greece of his forebears to do a film, and the Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri told him, *never!* He, Kazan, had stooled on her husband, the American writer Jules Dassin, author of *Never on Sunday* and had him driven out of Hollywood altogether into exile in Europe.

It is a shock to Americans, even the least of us, to be reminded that American Power does not necessarily reign unchallenged outside the 12-mile limit. The list of moral catastrophes of the period is long. Clifford Odets, who had publicly denounced the jailing of Communists (as Arthur Miller denounced the jailing of Howard Fast from the same platform in 1947) and coined the phrase that films in Hollywood were conceived on "the cold marble floor of a bank," also at first denounced the Committee and refused to cooperate. But his courage lasted no longer than Kazan's. Quietly after he had looked into the vast yawning crevice that opened up in front of his feet once he got fired, he betook himself back to the Committee "voluntarily" and there went through the self-abasement ritual demanded of all, recanting wayward sheep. He named the

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Class Struggle in Canada

Communist Party of Canada

The 32nd Convention of our Party takes place at a complex and difficult juncture for the working-class and the democratic movements in Canada and around the world. As we approach the 21st century, major issues confront humankind: the growing impoverishment of working people; the ongoing imperialist drive towards militarism and war; and global environmental crises.

International finance capital and the leading imperialist states – U.S. imperialism in the first place – are intensifying the drive to radically restructure international relations. Regardless of the human or environmental consequences, they seek to maximize corporate profits by intensifying the exploitation of labor and natural resources on a global scale. At the same time, however, capitalist restructuring is evoking a sharp, escalating struggle by the working class and the popular democratic forces at home and across the globe.

As our 1995 Convention correctly stated: "Global capitalism is incapable of satisfying the needs and aspirations of the vast majority of humanity, substituting instead its own need for the maximization of private profit." The process of capitalist development is giving rise to growing unemployment, and precarious forms of employment; to the narrowing concentration of wealth and power for a small minority together with the spread of economic hardship and poverty for the vast majority; to social and cultural decay; to increasing racism, sexism, discrimination and intolerance; to the curbing and denial of democratic rights; and to the advance of neo-fascist and authoritarian laws, values and practices.

Not least, capitalist development is engendering continued militarism, local and regional conflicts, and the real possibility of wider wars. It is also responsible for the degradation and wholesale destruction of the natural environment. The late 20th century is marked by continued massive pollution of the earth's air, soil and water, widespread deforestation, the decline of fish stocks and other

species, and an increasing threat of global warming and weather instability. These dangers are leading to powerful environmental movements which implicitly challenge corporate domination of the planet.

In Canada and elsewhere, the ruling capitalist classes, especially their most concentrated, monopoly sections (the transnational corporations and large financial institutions), are waging a ferocious offensive to advance their own narrow interests. This class offensive is being waged on all fronts and is now clearly international in character and scope.

The objective conditions for international resistance to this capitalist, imperialist offensive are rooted in the contradictions maturing within the system itself. The most basic of these continues to be the contradiction between capital and labor on a global scale.

Struggles at the level of the nation-state continue to be the main arena of resistance to the offensive of transnational monopoly capital. But given the global character of this offensive, class resistance at the national level - in and of itself - is no longer sufficient. National forms of struggle must be combined to an ever greater extent with coordinated regional and global forms of democratic and anti-imperialist struggle.

Since our last Convention, the multi-sided crisis afflicting the country has deepened on all fronts. Despite a modest pick-up in economic activity, joblessness remains at near-record highs, and poverty is rampant. The crisis of Confederation has substantially deepened, and the process of fragmentation and loss of Canadian sovereignty has accelerated.

The June 1997 federal election brought Canada no closer to a just resolution of the crisis of Confederation, and left working people little hope for positive change from Ottawa. The reduced Liberal majority government remains committed to neo-conservative economic policies and to preserving the unworkable constitutional status quo, by force if necessary. The new Official Opposition headed by Preston Manning, and the revived Conservative Party, will be strong forces pulling the Liberals even further to the right. The Bloc Quebecois, now the

Excerpted from the draft document of the 32nd convention of the Communist Party of Canada.

third largest group in the Commons, will have a wide range of anti-Quebec, right-wing forces in Parliament to point to as proof that Quebecers should opt for independence.

The election of 21 NDP MPs, up from nine in the previous Parliament, restored the social democrats to official party status, although not to their former levels of public support. Especially in Atlantic Canada, the election of NDPers was a welcome rejection of the anti-working class policies of the Chrétien government on unemployment and taxation issues. But the NDP's actions to stifle highly visible campaigns by the labor movement and other democratic forces during the election, and its ties to the rightward-moving Romanow and Clark governments in Saskatchewan and B.C., prove again that working people cannot rely on the NDP caucus to be an effective opposition in Parliament. Extra-parliamentary action and independent political action by labor will remain the key to stemming the corporate attack.

BIG BUSINESS OFFENSIVE ▣ More and more, the parties of big business speak only for the interests of the largest Canadian monopolies and the TNCs which control our economy. Small and some medium-sized non-monopoly businesses are being adversely affected by the corporate agenda. Even within the core of the Canadian capitalist class, certain important differences exist on tactical questions such as the deficit/taxation issue, and even some strategic questions (e.g., Quebec sovereignty). The labor movement and other democratic forces must try to take skillful advantage of such differences in building a powerful, united people's fightback to stop the corporate attack.

The weak economic "recovery" of the last five years has done little to reverse the 20-year decline in living standards for most working people. Record corporate profits of the banks (up nearly 40 percent over their record \$6 billion plus in 1996), the oil companies and other transnationals, and skyrocketing stock market gains of recent years go hand in hand with historic levels of debt, massive unemployment and high numbers of business failures and bankruptcies. While the incomes of top executives and big shareholders go through the roof, millions of Canadians are living in desperate poverty and insecurity. The rich are getting richer, and the poor poorer, at an unprecedented rate.

While some big business pundits crow about the

arrival of "crisis-free," non-inflationary global capitalism, other more realistic voices warn that the present boom cannot continue indefinitely. The capitalist business cycle cannot be wished away by optimistic predictions. There remains an inherent contradiction in the system: the necessity of individual corporations to maintain profits by reducing labor costs comes into conflict with the resulting decreased purchasing power of working people. Much of the incredible wealth of today's new billionaires exists mainly on paper, in the form of inflated values of stocks, real estate, etc. At some point the economy will be jolted, by a stock market price meltdown, by huge losses of corporations in sections of the economy which are not expanding, or by some other shock, and the boom will be followed by a collapse and a serious depression, with all its dire consequences for working people. Given the growing interconnections of all the major imperialist economies, and especially Canada's continued domination by the U.S., Canada cannot avoid such a crisis. Only a radical change of course to put "people's needs before corporate greed," such as outlined in our Party's call for a People's Alternative, can avert such a scenario.

ECONOMIC CRISES ▣ High unemployment remains the single most crushing feature of the economic crisis facing Canadians. Official jobless rates are down slightly but remain over 9 percent, and in reality are much higher. Taking into account the huge numbers of part-time workers and those who have given up looking for non-existent jobs, there is a "reserve army of the unemployed" nearly three million strong in Canada today, a factor which employers use to exert relentless pressure to force down wages and undermine working conditions.

Women are particularly hard hit by the economic crisis. The gap between male and female wages remains in the 30 percent range, and earlier progress towards pay and employment equity has been stalled or even reversed. As governments slash funding for vital social programs like child care and long-term care, working women face increasing pressure to "return to the home" or to accept the enormous double burden of jobs and family responsibilities. Growing numbers of women are turning to rape-crisis centers and battered women's shelters, yet governments use questionable "statistics" to claim that violence against women is declining as an excuse to cut funding for these services. The right to

reproductive choice is under continual attack by right-wing, fundamentalist anti-choice groups, which are turning increasingly to harassment and violence. The "Women's March Against Poverty," organized in 1996 brought together trade unionists, young women, aboriginal women, anti-poverty activists, and many others, in a powerful protest which showed the great potential of the women's movement in the fightback.

RESTRUCTURING OF CAPITAL ▣ Faced with increasing global competition, corporations in Canada are engaged in ruthless "restructuring" and "down-sizing" as part of their drive to lower unit labor costs and maximize productivity. Governments at all levels are also reducing employment, by slashing social spending and privatizing parts of the public sector. The Chrétien Liberals have stepped up the push to strip away eligibility to and benefit levels of unemployment insurance, which is now available to fewer than half of the registered unemployed in Canada.

In line with the so-called "new economic reality," employers are demanding greater labor flexibility in the workplace. As a result, full-time, permanent jobs in both the private and public sectors are being replaced by casual labor in which workers must constantly retrain and upgrade their skills to get temporary, contract or part-time jobs with no benefits, no security, and no unions. Meanwhile other workers are being called upon to put in massive amounts of mandatory (and often unpaid) overtime. In order to respond to this attack on jobs and the conditions of work, it is more urgent than ever for the working-class movement to step up the campaign for job creation and a shorter work week, which must be at the heart of a real people's alternative to the corporate agenda.

Big capital's drive to maximize profits is behind deregulation, rapid privatization and the across-the-board assault on the "social wage" of all Canadians. In recent years, the big corporations have increasingly penetrated the health care system, social programs, labor standards enforcement and even our public schools. The Harris government in Ontario has become the cutting edge in promoting privatization but the same agenda, to greater or lesser degrees, is being carried out by governments at all levels. In every case, this agenda means a shift towards "two-tier" medical care, declining quality of education, starvation welfare rates, the elimina-

tion of government inspection and controls, and the elimination of jobs. Even when the right-wing forces carrying out these attacks promise "lower taxes," the reality has been tax breaks for the rich, but higher "user fees" and the down-loading of the tax burden to lower levels of government, at the expense of working people and the poor.

The FTA and NAFTA aim to tie the hands of any government which might wish to resist the right-wing attack. In the new "globalized" economy, governments will be prevented from restricting the movements and investment decisions of transnational capital or restoring public ownership, or even imposing higher corporate taxes or preventing corporations from polluting the environment. Combined with foreign ownership of the Canadian economy, already one of the highest in the industrialized world and rising again in this decade, this will mean the end of Canada's sovereignty over our country's economy and social development.

QUEBEC AND THE CRISIS OF CONFEDERATION ▣

The crisis of Confederation continues to fester and deepen. In the two years since the October 1995 Referendum in Quebec, virtually nothing has been done to create a political climate which could lead to a negotiated resolution of the crisis. Bouchard, most of the other provincial premiers, and the Chrétien government have all rejected (each for their own narrow opportunist reasons) the possibility of new constitutional talks. By opting for the so-called Plan B which is based on the rejection of Quebec's right to decide its future, the federal Liberals and ruling circles have chosen the route of confrontation, threats and ultimatums, rather than the route towards a peaceful, democratic solution.

The federal government is proceeding with its Supreme Court action challenging Quebec's legal right to separate and has given open encouragement of the so-called "partitionist" movement in Quebec, and has launched an aggressive "letters war" with the Quebec government. Together with the virulent anti-Quebec positions of Manning's Reform Party (now the official opposition in Ottawa), this constitutes brinkmanship of the worst, most dangerous kind. This approach kindles both narrow nationalist fires inside Quebec, and anti-Quebec chauvinism and hatred in other parts of Canada. It is a recipe for heightened conflict, and perhaps even war.

Meanwhile, the trend towards devolution of federal powers and cutbacks in social spending, as

exemplified at the Premiers' Conference in August around the loaded slogan of "re-balancing" confederation, only makes the situation worse by speeding up the fragmentation of the country. While Harris, Klein, Manning, and the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI) try to present their "provincialization" schemes as a solution to the "national unity problem," their proposals really serve quite different, pro-corporate interests. At the same time, they give narrow nationalist forces within Quebec a powerful argument that Quebecers have nothing to gain or save by remaining within Canada.

The October 1995 referendum showed that most Quebecois, whether they voted "yes" or "no," want some form of recognition of their nationhood, either in a renewed Canadian state or through independence. Since then, support for Quebec sovereignty has remained strong. In the absence of any real progress towards a democratic renewal of the Canadian federation, the Parti Quebecois government may well win re-election and call a new referendum. At the same time however, the unnatural alliance between the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois-led nationalist movement, on the one hand, and labor and democratic forces in Quebec, on the other, is beginning to become unglued. As the true neo-conservative colors of the Bouchard government have started to appear, workers and other democratic forces have begun to resist and the three main trade union centrals have been forced to distance themselves from the PQ/BQ leadership, as seen during the recent federal elections.

The break-up of Canada would have a devastating impact on economic and social conditions for working people in all parts of the country, and open the door even wider to U.S. domination. But this scenario cannot be averted through legal arguments for the status quo or some reluctant nod to Quebec's "distinctiveness," nor by military force, which would bring only bloodshed and tragedy, and not only in Quebec.

Neither will the historic injustices against aboriginal peoples disappear if most governments continue to ignore the desperate poverty of most aboriginal people and the need for a fair resolution of treaty rights and land claims.

The only just solution lies in the recognition of Quebec's right to self-determination, up to and including secession, and the right to self-government and full economic, social and cultural equality for the aboriginal peoples. Our Party has cam-

paigned consistently in all parts of Canada for such a democratic and peaceful solution to the crisis. In our opinion, given the current conditions of the drive to continentalism by U.S. imperialism and the transnational corporations, the best alternative for the working class of both Quebec and English-speaking Canada is to continue to fight for an equal and voluntary partnership of our two nations, together with the aboriginal peoples, in a new confederal state. The best vehicle for achieving a new constitution would be via a democratically-elected Constituent Assembly with equal representation from Quebec and the rest of Canada, and with the full participation of the First Nations.

Some influential voices outside Quebec have raised the need to take account of Quebec's national consciousness in discussions around constitutional change, or to convene a Constituent Assembly, but these voices are not nearly enough. Labor's silence on this critical issue is of particular concern. Given the high stakes involved, it is absolutely incumbent on our Party to double – and double again – its efforts to bring the trade union movement and other democratic forces into the struggle for a democratic solution. Central to the success of our endeavors will be the taking of a principled, class approach, struggling against both big-nation chauvinism in English-speaking Canada and narrow bourgeois nationalism in Quebec.

GROWING FIGHTBACK □ NAFTA, APEC, and the MAI, and the entire process of economic globalization, call for an upsurge of the class struggle in Canada, and for the building of a People's Coalition to reverse the drive to the right.

In general, labor and mass democratic struggles across Canada have increased since our last convention, but the fightback continues to be largely uneven, spontaneous and sporadic in character. The number of strikes and lockouts remained relatively low during the past two years, but have increased somewhat over the record lows set in 1993 and 1994 for industrial action; in addition, a number of political strikes have occurred. The decision of the CAW, Steelworkers and other unions to launch aggressive organizing drives to bring new sections of workers into the ranks of organized labor are a welcome development and should be encouraged and expanded.

The main weakness in the current fightback stems from the continued domination of reformist

and class collaborationist leaders in labor and other democratic organizations, and their reliance on "contracting out" political activity to the NDP while stifling political action inside the different movements. Divisions within labor, a lack of clarity around the objectives of the fightback and the objectives of the fightback and the alternatives to neo-conservatism, and the left's lack of sufficient size and influence have sharply impeded the development of a united and militant response to the corporate offensive.

Another critical shortcoming of the fightback to date has been the lack of focus and leadership. The absence of a coordinated Canada-wide thrust to the fightback reflects objective factors: the unevenness of the depth of the crisis, which is impacting unemployment and living standards in Atlantic and Central Canada harder than in Alberta and BC.; the structural nature of the federal-provincial division of powers; and the fact that the majority of the most draconian neo-conservative "reforms" have been introduced by provincial governments, even when spurred – at least in part – by federal off-loading and cuts in transfer payments. Since adopting its "Action Plan" in 1996, the CLC's only Canada-wide action to date has been the May 3, 1997 day of protest against unemployment. The low turnout for this action in many cities emphasizes the urgent need for strong and organized pressure from the left on the CLC to carry out its Action Plan in a more militant, dynamic way.

THE STRUGGLE IN ONTARIO ■ The most significant and sustained fightback over the recent period has been in Ontario, Canada's most populous province and its industrial, commercial and financial hub. But organized resistance to anti-labor and anti-social corporate actions and to the neo-conservative policies of governments has erupted from coast to coast.

The special significance of the current fightback in Ontario against the Harris government, apart from the fact that it is unfolding in the strategic centre of both monopoly capital and the working class of Canada, is, first of all, that it has arisen in response to the most sweeping and ferocious neo-conservative assault carried out to date anywhere in the country. Since coming to power at Queen's Park in the summer of 1995, the Tory/Reform coalition government under Mike Harris has relentlessly implemented a reactionary policy agenda unparalleled in both scope and intensity. The union-busting

Ontario Tories are carrying out a frontal assault on the right to strike and collective bargaining, in an attempt to destroy the labor movement and militant trade unionism in Canada.

For the fightback to be successful across Canada as a whole, the Tory/Reform neo-conservative assault must first be stopped "dead in its tracks" in Ontario, and the Harris government forced to retreat. Conversely, if the Harris-Tory-monopoly-capital juggernaut is successful in Ontario, it will be more difficult to arrest the neo-conservative onslaught in the rest of Canada.

The Ontario fightback is also significant because of its breadth and militancy, and because of its protracted, sustained character. Analysis of the Ontario experience is particularly important at this critical juncture, because it reveals both the strengths and potentialities of the fightback movement in general, as well as the objective and subjective weaknesses which tend to retard its development.

The organization of regional "days of action" (which have included political strikes in addition to mass marches and rallies) in London, Hamilton, Peterborough, Metro Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo, Sudbury and Thunder Bay over the past two years has proven to be an outstanding success. The Toronto Days of Action last October, which shut down much of Canada's largest city one day and drew almost a quarter of a million people into the streets on the next, marked a historic watershed in labor and democratic mass struggle in Canada. It was followed shortly thereafter by the broad campaign, led by Citizens for Local Democracy, the Metro Network for Social Justice and the Labor Council, to oppose the "mega-city" proposal and the provincial down-loading of services. Next came fights around the massive hospital closures across the province. The next stage in the fightback is set to take off around the draconian union-busting measures aimed at public-sector trade unions contained in Bill 136.

ROLE OF THE LEFT ■ Communists and other left forces in the trade union movement must lead this fight to break with a narrow, self-interested approach and to situate organized labor in the forefront of the concerns and struggles of the working class as a whole. At present, however, the left is still too small, and lacks unity around a comprehensive left program for labor and the cohesive organization necessary to help bring about such a transformation.

In the absence of a clear line of march, left interventions sometimes suffer from subjectivism and adventurism, errors which only serve to help right-wing collaborationist forces to isolate the left. Building the Party within organized labor, helping to unite the left forces, and winning "left-center" unity must be seen as a central priority in our work.

Such a radically new direction for the Canadian labor movement would require not only different bargaining strategies, but also – and more importantly – a wide-ranging program of independent labor political action. This leads to the related issue of latter-day social democracy and labor's relations with it.

ROLE OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY ■ Recent Party statements have gone into some detail examining the political and ideological crisis confronting social democracy both in Canada and around the world. In summary, our Party notes that the rightward political drift of the vast majority of self-proclaimed social democratic parties and movements – the NDP included – is hardly coincidental. Rather, it is a reflection of the theoretical crisis of social democratic and reformist ideas today.

In the current conditions of the systemic crisis of capitalism, transnational monopoly capital has neither the wish nor capacity to grant the same level of economic and social concessions which it was prepared to make during most of the post-war years. On the contrary, monopoly capital has launched an unprecedented campaign to re-take those concessions, and to demand new sacrifices from working people. It is ruthlessly dismantling the public sector and "welfare state" to meet its own endless appetite for profit.

This does not mean that meaningful reforms are no longer possible under capitalism. It does mean however that social-democratic, reformist ideology of accommodation to, and of conciliation with the interests of capital is today more clearly revealed as bankrupt in theory and harmful in practice. Only militant class and democratic struggle can meet this attack, achieve immediate reforms, and create the conditions necessary to stop reaction, achieve real social advance, and win revolutionary transformations.

Given the shrinking room for winning reforms through narrow parliamentary avenues, social democratic leaders have everywhere chosen the rightward "path of least resistance," instead of moving to the left and adopting more pro-struggle positions. The leaderships of virtually all social democ-

atic parties have shed the last vestiges of "socialism" and have proclaimed themselves to be "the best managers of capitalist modernization."

In Canada, the New Democratic Party, while still attempting to situate itself to the left of an ever rightward-moving center, has little more to offer working people than "capitalism with a human face." The increasing embrace of neo-conservative policy and dogma by the NDP leadership explains why the federal party failed during the last election campaign to call for the abrogation of NAFTA; failed to call for the immediate halt and reversal of privatization; and even refused the call for a shorter work week with no loss in take-home pay. It also explains the provincial NDP loss in take-home pay. It also explains the provincial NDP governments' reactionary opposition to Quebec's right to self-determination, and their abysmal record of broken promises and outright betrayals during their terms in office. Not surprisingly, the NDP leadership's rightward shift has been accompanied by efforts to distance itself from the labor and democratic movements, and to actively discourage extra-parliamentary action.

This is not to say that all social democrats are guilty of such a full-blown retreat into bourgeois ideology. Many committed socialists remain within the ranks of the NDP, and are continuing to fight the rightward slide of their party. These activists find themselves increasingly "trapped" inside the party, and alienated from the right-wing leadership.

Nor is this to say that there no longer exists any basis for common action between Communists and social democrats. In the struggle against the main enemy – U.S. imperialism and Canadian and transnational monopoly capital – Canadian Communists have worked and continue to work with NDPers in all fields of struggle, and to build solid alliances with any and all left and democratic forces, including social democrats.

And what of labor's relations to the NDP? In our estimation, those relations are not about to be burst asunder in the immediate future. The decisive task before the labor movement is and will continue to be the elaboration of its own economic, political and social alternative and the development of forms of independent labor political action to achieve that alternative. This is where the left forces in the labor movement must concentrate their main energies. The concrete relations between labor and the NDP will largely be determined by the degree to which the NDP accepts labor's program and works

towards its realization, always bearing in mind that historically, the NDP was conceived as the "political arm" of labor, and not labor as the organizational and financial "tail" of the NDP.

UNITY ■ We have placed – appropriately, in our opinion – central and crucial emphasis on the labor movement's leading role in building the fightback and in constructing a "people's coalition." But labor will not accomplish this task on its own. It needs stronger, vibrant "partners" which also appreciate the vital necessity of labor and democratic unity. Building all of the progressive and democratic movements – the women's, youth and student, seniors, native, anti-poverty, environmental, gay and lesbian, anti-racist, progressive civic reform, peace and solidarity and others - is of crucial importance today. Communists should and must play an active role in furthering the goals and united action of these democratic movements.

United action has built mutual understanding and respect between labor and the various people's democratic movements, and has opened the door to greater cooperation and coalition-building at the local, regional and Canada-wide levels. Because of the ebb and flow of the struggle, some of these organizations and coalitions have atrophied over time, while new alliances and coalitions have sprung up. Communists must work diligently and flexibly to strengthen existing coalitions and build new organizations and broader alliances alike, constantly keeping in mind our strategic objective of creating a Canada-wide and broadly based people's coalition.

We consider that the development of a wide-ranging people's alternative platform remains key to cementing unity among labor and the other democratic movements. The CLC, Action Canada Network, Canadian Center on Policy Alternatives, the Council of Canadians, and Solidarite Populaire du Quebec (to name only a few) have already done some creative and important work towards this goal, as has our own Party. Our Convention will be considering a special resolution which will set out in greater detail our thinking and proposals around a people's alternative platform as a contribution to this objective.

Achieving unity around a common people's alternative, and joining in battle to win its implementation, will mark a new stage in the struggle of our class to curb monopoly power, extend democracy and put people's needs before corporate profits.

That victory, in turn, will open the door to more far-reaching fundamental change, and bring a truly socialist Canada ever closer.

BUILDING A STRONGER PARTY ■ The struggle for socialism cannot and will not unfold spontaneously in the course of economic and political resistance. It also calls for ideological resistance to confront bourgeois claims of the "inherent supremacy" of capitalism, and to make the case for socialism as the only strategic alternative to crisis-ridden capitalism for Canadian society and for humanity as a whole. As a decisive part of its conscious and purposeful struggle for social emancipation, the working class therefore continues to require the building of a revolutionary party, deeply rooted in our class and guided by Marxism-Leninism and its creative application.

Our Party's rich history of working-class struggle over 76 years testifies to the fact that the Canadian working class does indeed have such a Party. Our task in the period ahead will be to make the Communist Party of Canada a larger, stronger and more influential force, theoretically and politically equipped to play its leading role more fully.

In our estimation, the objective conditions for such an advance do exist, and are improving steadily. The deepening socio-economic crisis and the offensive of transnational monopoly capital are having a certain radicalizing effect on workers and other affected strata of Canadian society. More and more, real life experience is leading working people to question bourgeois orthodoxy and to search for alternatives. Some of these are finding their way to our Party through the pages of our press, through party leaflets and mass campaigning, through contacts with party activists in the labor and mass democratic movements, and recently through our homepage on the Internet.

But for most workers, there remains a great political and ideological "distance" from rejecting neo-conservatism, and even petty reformism, to embracing a scientific socialist world outlook. We must construct a bridge to these working class and democratic activists, and help them to cross over to our Party.

These developments drive home the point that a much greater public presence will bring a much larger membership for our party. This means more and better public campaigns, improved efforts to break into the mass media, and especially expanding the frequency and circulation of the Communist

press.

Since our last convention, much has been done to improve the Communist press and to make it more visible in the fightback. Particular emphasis has been placed on efforts to strengthen coverage of the labor movement, youth issues, and the women's movement. Since September 1995, the circulation of *People's Voice* has increased by about 10 percent – an important gain, although less than our target. During the Metro Days of Action last fall, our press had a big impact at plant gates, on the street and at rallies. Our press is a crucial tool in our struggle to build the Party and to help strengthen the fightback across Canada.

In determining how best to strengthen Party work, we should start with a critical examination of our past performance, determine our present needs, and then establish firm priorities for the period ahead.

In terms of independent public work (besides the federal election), we undertook two major campaigns: the "Jobs not Cuts" campaign, and activity around the constitutional crisis (particularly leading up to and immediately following the October 1995 Referendum in Quebec). Both efforts started reasonably well, and our campaign materials were well received by our members and close supporters, and by broader circles. Many people were surprised and pleased to see Communists on the streets with banners, placards and flyers. Unfortunately however, the open-ended character of these campaigns (without well-defined high points and concluding dates), meant they tended to tail off as other urgent political priorities arose.

The most important of those priorities was the fightback in Ontario, which has engaged the entire Party structure and membership in the province for over two years and has also drawn on the resources of the Central office. A large number of Party and press materials have been distributed at the various mass actions, including more than 50,000 special PV supplements during the Toronto Days of Action.

Our fight against the undemocratic changes to the Canada Elections Act has also been sporadic. Unexpected problems and legal delays stalled our court case against the federal government for almost two years. This made it difficult to maintain momentum on other fronts (petitioning, lobbying, obtaining press coverage, etc.).

Overall, the Party's election campaign was quite successful in raising our People's Alternative, despite our limited resources and the Election Act's ongoing denial of our candidates' political affiliation on the ballot. Our platform was well received, and our candi-

dates were strong and effective. A good number of new contacts were made, some of whom decided to join, and two new Party clubs were formed. The average vote for our candidates was up from 1993, but remains very modest.

As we all know, for our Party to grow it must attract young workers, students and other democratic and progressive youth who are moving into struggle and just beginning to embrace socialist and Marxist-Leninist ideas. We have made some important headway in reaching such youth. A functioning Youth & Student Commission has been established.

We applaud the efforts of this Commission and its members to build the Canadian contingent to the World Festival of Youth and Students, held at the end of July in Havana. A number of young Communists participated, and several party members worked hard, under difficult circumstances, to advance the preparations for the large Canadian delegation. Many participants acknowledged and thanked the Party for playing a leading role to help ensure the success of the Canadian participation in the Festival.

A big weakness in our work amongst youth remains the absence of a Canada-wide Communist youth organization. Conditions are improving for the re-establishment of such an organization, which could take any of a number of forms. We should do everything possible to further this process, beginning with the publication of a youth newsletter or bulletin, under the editorship of the Youth & Student Commission, and with an organized campaign to build local study/action groups of left and Communist-minded youth, as the nucleus for a Canada-wide organization.

BUILDING THE PARTY & PRESS ■ Party-and-press-building must be seen as central to all our political, ideological and organizational activities, and to our work in the trade unions and mass democratic movements. As we have said time and again, a larger, stronger and more influential Party is the key to overall advance of the left, labor and democratic forces in our country. But experience has taught us that Party growth does not occur simply as a natural and spontaneous by-product of our good work in the mass fields of activity, or even as a result of improved independent public work. On the contrary, recruitment and press-building must be put on an organized and systematic basis, becoming the constant concern of every sphere of Party life, from the club level to our highest bodies.

Stronger clubs are the key to successful Party

building. To develop as a more meaningful and effective collective, capable of recruiting, integrating and developing new members as Communists, the Party club – the basic unit of our Party – must be a vibrant center giving leadership to local political activity. It must strive to meet regularly, develop a realistic yet challenging plan of work, undertake consistent educational and press work, and make timely assignments and check-up. It must assist and guide the mass political work of its members, and increase its own visibility within the larger local community.

For the most part, the collectivity and work of our Party clubs has improved, but much remains to be done. One recurrent problem is that while members participate regularly in club meetings and activities, too often there appears to be a “disconnect” between members’ club participation and their mass political activities. This problem can only be overcome by clubs providing more time for individual members to discuss their mass activities, and to receive feedback and guidance.

The Central Committee has a major responsibility to lift up Party-building efforts, by leading mass independent Party campaigns, by improving communication with clubs and by providing more educational and political materials, organizing manuals, and through direct visits. The incoming Central Committee must take concrete steps to realize such measures.

After several years without a Party presence in Quebec, our Party has begun the process of rebuilding there. This Convention wholeheartedly endorses this initiative, and welcomes the attendance at our Convention of Quebec delegates for the first time in several years. This has great significance for us, for several reasons. First, our political work will be strengthened as we become an all-Canada party once again. Second, building stronger unity between the working people of Quebec and the rest of Canada will strengthen the current fightback against the neo-conservative agenda. And finally, such unity is of strategic importance in the struggle for socialism. □

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names of friends, of the living, of the dead, of the soon to die. The Odets of the heroes in all his plays would have scorned the writer Odets on his knees. To recall Dorothy Parker’s quip after one of his Hollywood films *The General Died at Dawn* appeared: “Odets where is thy sting?”

The pathetic Artie Shaw, famous band leader, reduced to tears before the Committee, pledged that “I wouldn’t sign anything today unless I had the advice of seven lawyers and the granting of permission or clearance by this committee.”

Robert Rossen, producer and screen writer, who had refused at first to cooperate, then “changed his mind” and declared in words worthy to be chiseled on his tomb: “I did a lot of thinking. I don’t think, after two years of thinking that one individual can even indulge himself in the luxury of individual morality.”

Others followed. Some even hired detectives, like Judy Holiday, to go over their past and gather information on themselves to bring to the Committee to prove how repentant they now were. But there were others who resisted. The whole circus

had appalled Albert Einstein who wrote to a teacher advising non-cooperation with the Committee. Einstein himself wrote to the plumber’s union, which was confronted with the same dilemma in November 1954 that “I would rather choose to be a plumber or a peddler in the hope to find that modest degree of independence still available under present circumstances.”

Einstein, a German like Thomas Mann, had seen how fascism rose in Germany and was shocked and alarmed to note the same symptoms arising here in his adopted country, the United States. Typically, the *New York Times* took him to task editorially, practically advising him to stick to theories about relativity and splitting the atom and all that jazz, proper play-pen games for misfits, but to keep his nose out of serious matters, American politics in particular, which was too complicated for his simple soul to grasp. In any case, one should protest only excesses, not the thing itself. Beneath the Parson’s prose of the editorial ran the barely-suppressed threat: you’re just an alien here, a “guest” of this country, and you can be kicked out of it. Don’t forget Charlie Chaplin: there was a warrant out for his arrest if he tried to land in New York Harbor (just to check up on . Lazarus’ lines). □

Global Warming and Working-Class Politics

Morris Zeitlin

Humanity, all of humanity, faces the deadly global danger of extinction by the continuing ruin of the natural environment. The contradictions of the ruling capitalist class have soured the gift of industrialization it presented humanity to befoul the planet it lives on. The ruling class makes inevitable the earth's gradual decay and its reactionary defense of dated ways. But it is equally inevitable that the historically opposite working class lead the struggle to save humanity from this danger. For being destined to inherit the earth the working class must be vitally concerned with the kind of earth it inherits.

The threat to the environment has been increasing for almost 300 years. Since the industrial revolution, physical and social scientists have warned of the dangers its polluting technology has posed to nature. In their scientific studies of capitalism, the founders of Marxism pointed to the damage the ruling capitalist class perforce inflicts upon nature in the heedless exploitation of labor and natural resources, in order to maximize profits. (Today, it is evident that the production technology it has developed to meet its class purposes, now threatens the very existence of all life on earth).

It had even affected the production technology of the first socialist states it managed to destroy. The history of hostile encirclement, war destruction and long post-war reconstruction compelled them to adopt capitalism's hand-me-down technology almost unchanged. Except for what nature-friendly technology they had managed to develop and the efficiency their socialist planning had been able to evolve, most of socialist industrial production has had the same damaging environmental effects.

Yet, the difference between the two social systems in respect to environmental protection clearly shows up in statistics. The USSR, for example, with six percent of the world's population and 20 percent of the world's production, contributed 10 percent of its environmental pollution. The United States, by contrast, with five percent of the world's population and 24.6 percent of industrial production, con-

tributed 31 percent of its environmental pollution.

Industrial technology has had various destructive effects on the life sustaining balance in nature. Of these, scientists say, the Greenhouse Effect is the most serious.

GREENHOUSE EFFECT ■ Just what is the Greenhouse Effect and what dangers does it pose? It is the greenhouse-like accumulation of the sun's heat within the earth's atmosphere. During the day, the sun's energy, radiating at short ultraviolet frequencies, penetrates through the glass enclosure of a greenhouse and heats the solid objects within it. These objects, in turn, radiate their acquired heat at long infrared frequencies to which the glass is largely opaque. Thus, the sun's heat becomes trapped and raises the temperature within the greenhouse. When the temperature rises above the optimum level for plant life, movable ceiling vents open to let the excess heat escape with the expanded hot air.

In effect, a greenhouse imitates the sun's warming of our planet's atmosphere. Imagine the earth's surface and its content to be the solid objects of a spherical greenhouse enveloped by a spherical ten-mile thick gaseous enclosure – the earth's troposphere. Within this troposphere, gases and vapors rising from the surface of the earth form a spherical blanket held in orbit by the earth's gravity force. This gaseous blanket is essential to life on earth; without it, the earth would be much colder and unlivable. It acts the same as the glass enclosure of a greenhouse. For it is transparent to the sun's rays radiating toward earth at short ultraviolet frequencies, and largely opaque to the earth's heat, received from the sun and produced by combustion, radiating outward at long infrared frequencies.

But there the similarity between the greenhouse and the planet ends, for unlike the constancy of the glass enclosing the greenhouse, the composition of gases in the troposphere's gaseous blanket enveloping the planet is not constant. Hence, its opacity to the earth's infrared radiation can vary.

For millennia the composition stayed fairly balanced, keeping the earth's average air temperature quite regular. But since the start of the industrial

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revolution, and the increasing combustion of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) on earth, there have been cumulative changes in the composition of the blanket. Although natural phenomena like volcanic eruptions and vegetable, animal and mineral emissions pollute the air with many gases, their effect is small compared to the emissions from industrial processes, power and heat generation, and the operation of internal combustion engines. The byproducts of combustion have been estimated to make up about 85 percent of all pollutants in the atmosphere, and the combustion of fossil fuels to have doubled every 20 years. The volumes of several gases, especially of carbon dioxide (CO₂), having a higher opacity to the earth's infrared rays, hence tending to raise the earth's average air temperature have therefore steadily increased.

What can that mean to life on earth?

Were the concentration of CO₂ in the gaseous blanket to double, for instance, the annual average temperature of the world's air would rise by 2.2 F. This would increase ocean evaporation and the ratio of water vapor in the troposphere tripling the warming caused by the doubled CO₂ levels and raise the earth's average air temperature by about 7° F – enough to melt the earth's snow and ice cover and unleash destructive climactic forces of catastrophic proportions.

How close have we come to the brink of such catastrophe?

Scientists have found that since the start of the industrial revolution, the CO₂ content in the atmosphere has risen by 25 percent, from 280 to 350 parts per million (ppm), and that the rate of increase has kept rising. In just the last 30 years it has risen by 11 percent, from 315 to 350 ppm. They have traced the rise to mainly three factors: the increasing burning of fossil fuels; the release of methane, nitrous oxide, and chlorofluorocarbons by industrial processes; and the destruction of the world's forests whose trees are the greatest absorbers of these gases. What does the increasing imbalance in the earth's gaseous blanket portend for humanity?

Scientists cannot at present predict exactly how much and how soon the world's average air temperature will rise or what its precise consequences will be. Some estimate a rise of 3.6° F by the year 2020. A rise of this magnitude, they think, would increase Washington, D.C.'s annual average of over 90° F days, from 36 to 87, that of Dallas' above 100° F days, from 19 to 78. Thermal ocean expansion and

greater glacial melting would raise sea levels one to three feet, destroying precious wetlands, contaminating water supplies with sea water in many coastal areas, and forcing coastal cities to choose between partial evacuation and building costly protection dikes. As the oceans will warm, the severity and frequency of tropical storms and hurricanes will increase. Altered rainfall patterns would cause water shortages in some areas and flooding in others, disrupting agricultural and industrial production. Many species of animals and plants, unable to adapt to changed climates or to migrate, would perish. Many think that we may expect significant climactic changes in the near future when very hot summers may come twice as often as in the 1950-1980 period, with all their dire consequences of drought, storms, forest fires, crop failures and food and water shortages.

HOW TO AVERT DANGER ■ We may not have experienced until now the full severity of the impending climactic changes only due to the natural time gap between the atmospheric increases of CO₂ and the consequent rise of the world's average air temperature. Indeed, the droughts, forest fires and storms suffered in the 1980s and 1990s may have been harbingers of things to come. Still, there is time, scientists think, to prevent the worst disasters, and urge all nations to take these measures with all possible haste:

- Improve controls over energy production by reducing combustion byproducts and making more efficient use of the energy produced;
- Reduce the dependence on fossil fuels as energy sources, and increase the use of non-combustion forms of energy – solar, wind, tidal and geothermal;
- Halt, or reduce the destruction of forests and expand afforestation;
- Adopt a worldwide ban on the use of fluorocarbons in refrigeration, air conditioning, insulating foams, aerosol sprays and solvents;
- Develop new closed-cycle, low-waste or no-waste, production processes to avoid or reduce the release of environmentally harmful substances into the air.

This last item may sound utopian, but it is more realizable than commonly thought. Even now, modern science and technology make possible producing high-grade textiles, for example, from such "wastes" as smoke and gases. Modern science, if given the chance, could imitate nature's thrifty way

of making the waste of some organisms provide food for others. Technology could then follow through to organize industries so the waste products of some make the raw materials of others, and the waste heat of some the best source of others. The atmosphere would then be rendered pollution free and the buildup of gases causing the Greenhouse Effect would stop and possibly reverse. Even today's technology is quite capable of achieving such feats. It can, for example, organize some industries so that their production processes convert carbon dioxide into life supporting free oxygen as industrial "waste."

Or it can retrieve the harmful emissions of sulfur dioxide released in the combustion of fossil fuels by means of catalytic oxidation and turned into sulfuric acid – a chemical widely used in many industrial applications. Or it can make automobiles – the biggest air polluters – burn gasoline more completely and change engine exhausts into harmless substances by means of catalytic converters. Or it can trap chimney-emitted particles with cyclones, electrostatic precipitators and filters, and retrieve them for use as raw materials and fuels in many industries.

If such ideal measures may require a long time to achieve, modern technology can greatly reduce pollution in a relatively short order. Industries can be equipped with purification plants to recycle, not dump retrieved wastes. The automobile industry can produce much more efficient motors to cut exhaust to a minimum. New prototype automobile motors in Japan have driven as much as 100 miles per gallon (mpg) of gas in contrast to the 28 mpg U.S. average. Much energy can be saved by raising the efficiency of heating and lighting equipment and consumer appliances. Co-generation, that is, using the waste heat from industrial processes to generate electricity, is even now producing two percent of the nation's electrical energy.

In the long run, such measures cannot solve the problem of environmental pollution, but they can stop it in the short run from getting much worse. Only developing a closed-cycle production technology can approach a solution.

Closed-cycle production technology has been slowly developing. That it has been slow in coming is due mainly to the world's still dominant capitalist system whose private ownership of the means of production and exploitation of human and natural resources resist social and environmental concerns. It tends to "milk" old means of production as long as

possible until the quest for profits forces introduction of a more efficient technology. The kind of technology used in production matters to the working class in both the short and long runs.

In the short run, technology's effect on working conditions affects working people's health and welfare in most tangible ways. A wasteful technology pollutes far more the environment inside than outside workplaces. Where it emits dangerous gases or mutes hazardous processes, workers go about their work at a risk to their health and their lives everyday. For many worker families, a closed-cycle technology would give a new lease on life. Its benefits would outweigh the temporary pain of dislocation or retraining a technological change usually brings, or of fighting off ruling class attempts to saddle the working class with the cost of technological reforms.

If technological changes may present some difficulties in the short-run, the long-run interests of the class overwhelmingly argue in favor of struggle for an environment-saving, closed-cycle production technology. As the nation's majority and the logical historical heir to its rule, the working class must take the long view in its political strategy. It must base its politics on the nation's future as well as the present welfare in a world environment. For today's growing national and world problems will be its problems to solve tomorrow when its class struggle ultimately leads it to assume political power. And saving the environment looms as a cardinal political issue on which political power may hinge.

WORKING-CLASS SOLUTIONS ■ How to grasp this issue and run with it in national politics? Should the working class compromise the defense of its interests for the sake of a united national effort? Some appear to think that that's the right course to take.

It is true that all classes of society in today's perishable world must pursue political strategies mindful of maintaining peace and saving the natural environment from further destruction. But that does not change the fact that human society remains a unity of opposite classes with irreconcilable contradictory interests whose very struggle drives society's progress. The working class is not free, therefore, to consider a pacifist strategy. As long as society is composed of us, the exploited, and them, the exploiters, there remains the reality of us against them. Part of that reality is that they will tend to maintain the polluting technology for an environmentally rational one and guard against their

"resort to profoundly reactionary solutions" of the pollution problem. Thus, the need to reform the existing production technology to save the natural environment will become an issue in a political battle they cannot win. Because they are not able to rationally plan and coordinate the national economy, our pressure for an environmentally compatible technology will prove politically embarrassing to them and a cogent argument for socialism among an increasingly environment-conscious people.

The class strategy on this issue requires an alliance of organized labor with environmentalists, scientists, writers, artists, consumer advocates and other intelligentsia to attack by every possible means the corporate strongholds where defenses of the right to pollute are hatched and deployed. It requires an all-out drive, similar to that of the indomitable peace movement, to win the minds and hearts of the people. It requires winning access to the mass media to enable all to hear, see and read who proposes to do what to save life on earth from mindless destruction of the natural environment.

What should the alliance demand to be done in the transition to a closed-cycle technology?

Much can and must be done without delay to reduce the damaging effect of the technology at hand. For example: polluting industries should be required by law to install purification plants and recycle, not dump, retrieved wastes. The automobile industry should be required to produce the most efficient possible motors to cut exhaust to a minimum. New prototype automobile motors in Japan can drive as much as 100 miles per gallon (mpg) of gas in contrast to the 28 mpg U.S. average. (Much energy can be saved by raising the efficiency standards of heating and lighting equipment and consumer appliances). All industries should be required to plant greenery around their factories, and cities should be called upon to plant trees along streets, in squares and in new parks.

Such measures cannot solve the problem but they can stop it from getting worse. Only closed-cycle production can approach a solution. While capitalism is inherently unable to ever effect it on a general scale, it must be made to apply it on the scale that it can.

With the threat of the Greenhouse Effect hanging over humanity, the capitalist definition of production costs as merely the sum costs of labor, materials and plant is no longer enough. Today, production costs must include the cost of environmental

protection.

This raises the question of who shall pay the added costs. At present, capitalist production, avoiding environmental protection as a necessary product input, forces society to pay for it in the form of higher health costs, disaster relief, drought and storm losses, and the costs of dislocation and unemployment.

How can we make sure that they, the exploiters, not we, the exploited, pay the price of environmental protection?

By keeping up democratic pressures to force them to pay! Won't that reduce their competitive position on the home and foreign markets? It may, but that's their problem. Let them in turn press their fellow capitalists to adopt the cost of environmental protection as a universally bona fide production-cost input.

Won't they try, however, to avoid the cost by fraud and cheating? Of course they will. That is why we must struggle for environmental protection laws with provisions for the people to have legal means to control and enforce them.

Finally, environmental protection cannot be effective within national boundaries alone. The atmosphere, the streams and the oceans know no national boundaries. The people must struggle to assure that, like peace and disarmament, environmental protection becomes a worldwide issue placed on the international negotiating table.

Won't that be hard to accomplish? No one said the class struggle was easy. But if we are to coexist and survive within the unity of opposites of their capitalist society and continue to propel humanity forward, we must fight and oppose them. □

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The Attack on Welfare and How to Combat It

Frank Chapman

First of all "welfare reform" is a frontal attack on the working class and oppressed people of color, especially African Americans and Latinos. This cardinal fact was acknowledged and responded to by Gus Hall, National Chairman of the Communist Party, U.S.A. "From now on," said Hall, "there is no struggle including the fight for jobs, that will not be affected by the issue of welfare. Welfare becomes critical as jobs continue to disappear. We have to help people see that welfare and food stamps and school food programs are class issues..."

Poverty in the midst of plenty has been an overall feature of capitalism from its inception. In fact, it is capitalism's vampire-like need to exploit labor that is the source of the impoverishment of the working class. The paradox, simply stated, is that the workers who sweat in the factories and mines, and toil in the fields, are the source of the wealth and splendor of modern civilization; yet, because workers are robbed of the fruits of their labor, by the capitalist bosses, they are forced to live on the brink of poverty and starvation.

The laws of capitalism, as discovered by Karl Marx over a century ago, dictate that poverty increases with wealth. In other words the most desired situation for the capitalists is that no matter how much the workers produce over and beyond their means of subsistence, they will only be paid enough wages to stay alive and return to work.

Welfare did not come about because capitalism became more humane, liberal and socially responsible toward workers and oppressed people of color. Like all social progress under capitalism, the working class in organized struggle through its trade union organizations, community-based organizations and the Communist Party forced the ruling class to make reforms.

In one of the principal forms of the labor movement in the 1929-33 period was the movement of the unemployed led by the Communist Party. The vast majority of the U.S. workers were hit hard by the unemployment crisis and were thus forced into des-

titution, hunger, and homelessness. This was clearly the objective basis for a mass struggle, whose ranks would be swollen by millions of the unemployed to satisfy the basic needs of existence.

The Communist Party, USA mobilized the workers and their allies to fight for Social Security, immediate aid for unemployed workers, women and children and those in need of healthcare. A Communist Party Convention, held in June 1930, established a National Unemployment Council to coordinate the activities of the numerous local councils of unemployed workers. African American workers played an important role in the movement of the unemployed.

The first mass movement of the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party, despite the class collaborationist policies of the AFL, is what forced concessions from the ruling class which led to the unionization of the trustified industries and welfare.

The so-called New Deal reforms, such as the Wagner Act, welfare, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Unemployment Insurance, Social Security, etc. were won in the dirt and blood of class struggle during the era of the Great Depression. The purpose of welfare then was to provide public relief to millions who were unemployed, homeless and starving. In fact AFDC was an integral part of the 1935 Social Security Act, specifically aimed at making government responsible for the most vulnerable - especially children.

RESERVE ARMY OF THE UNEMPLOYED ▣ The purpose of welfare reform today is to create a vast reservoir of cheap labor in the form of millions of unemployed, homeless and starving people. Already, in the early phase of this reform, thousands of immigrant workers are being forced off of welfare. And if welfare reform is carried through as mandated by Congress in the next five years, the United States will house the largest reservoir of cheap labor since slavery. As Evelina Alarcon, secretary of the CPUSA National Committee, pointed out earlier this year, this is "killer capitalism in the raw!" A mass human tragedy is already in the mak-

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ing – to avert it we must act now.

HOW THE WELFARE REFORM HOAX WORKS ■ The anti-welfare act called “welfare reform” is part of the structural crisis of capitalism the same as privatization, downsizing, layoffs and runaway shops. The difference, however, is that the anti-welfare act will push the unemployment crisis to a qualitatively new level causing the spread of mass poverty like we’ve never seen in the history of capitalism.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PL 104-193) is designed to do away with Aid to Families with Dependent Children and other entitlement programs. Congress has put a five year time limit on recipients, in other words after five years you are off welfare for life! Since November, 1994 eleven states have submitted proposals which would cut welfare recipients off sooner than five years. Some states even suggesting that the time limits of two years or less be imposed. This means that in the coming period, of two-five years, millions of children will be made homeless and turned out to starve.

Since the replacement in 1996 of AFDC by the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program federal funds available to the states will be \$15.4 billion for every year from 1996 to 2003. States are presently mandated to maintain 80 percent of fiscal year 1994 of their spending on AFDC, EA and JOBS. States that meet workfare requirements are allowed to maintain at 75 percent of their spending for fiscal year 1994. These requirements can be waived for those states that have their own approach to welfare; and in this way they can spend the money as they want to and cut the “safety net” by 25 percent. Presently most states have waivers and this has created a problem described by one observer as “racing to the bottom.” This means that:

- States have no duty to operate a program of cash assistance for poor families;
- States have no duty to maintain current level of benefit payments for needy families;
- And states have no duty to provide aid to needy families for any period of time.

“The concern about the ‘race to the bottom’ is not hypothetical,” says Mark Green, “Based on state conduct in 1995 ... there is clear evidence that some states would move to sharply reduce basic assistance levels.” Because the cash assistance funds will be frozen or near-frozen for the next seven years there will be no cost-of-living adjustments. States

will be able to transfer up to 30 percent of the grant monies to other social service programs and withdraw 25 percent of their current state funding from the system in order to cut taxes. All of this spells disaster for the poor in that it will inevitably lead to sharp reductions in basic assistance levels. Consider the following:

- Connecticut: Families with an “employable” caretaker are limited to 21 months of AFDC eligibility.
- South Carolina: Limit assistance to a family for no more than 24 months out of 120 and no more than 60 in a lifetime.
- Louisiana: Family ineligible for AFDC if received AFDC for at least 24 months, whether consecutive or not, out of the previous 60 months.
- Massachusetts: Family may not receive benefits for more than 24 months in a 60-month period.
- North Carolina: After 24 cumulative months from the date the individual becomes an active participant in Work First, family is no longer eligible for cash assistance; families can reapply for AFDC after 3 years.
- Ohio: Receipt of AFDC benefits limited to 36 months out of a 60 month period.
- Oregon: Benefit receipt time limited to no more than 24 of 84 months.
- Virginia: 24-month limit over the period of an eight-year waiver.

Under the block grant law no state is required to make exceptions (such as unable to find employment) for any family kicked off welfare.

FALSE IMPRESSIONS ■ A deliberate, false impression given by politicians is that a decrease in case-loads means that people are being moved successfully from welfare to work. For example, Governor Christine Todd Whitman, in her recent bid for reelection in New Jersey, ran commercials boasting that “welfare rolls were down 31 percent” due to her “work first initiative.” It is suggested that the Garden State will become the national model for solving the stubborn problems “of dependency and poverty.” However the latest figures show that 75 percent of the adults and children receiving welfare are not performing “work activities.” The *WSJ* maintains that the data indicates when the economy recently recovered employment increased and the welfare rolls went down and that this has nothing to do with “workfare.” In fact it is highly questionable as to whether “workfare” will be effective, given the

instability of the economy.

Those who will be hit the hardest by these drastic cuts are the 4 million women and 9 million children who are AFDC recipients, and who even before the reforms were getting only enough assistance to subsist in material poverty. According to the Children's Defense Fund the most immediate impact will be hunger and homelessness.

More needs to be said about the impact of so-called "welfare reforms" on children. In 1993 one out of every four children under the age of six was victimized by poverty. Today the child poverty rate of our country is double that of "other developed" nations.

The U.S. Census Bureau also reported in 1993 that 39 million people (i.e. 15 percent of the U.S. population) live in poverty. According to Ralph da Costa Nunez, President of Home for the Homeless, there is a tragic aspect of this burgeoning poverty which makes it different (a "new poverty" says Nunez), and that is the phenomenal increase in homeless families. In New York City and virtually every major city, families with children make up 75 percent of the homeless. Since 1979 the percentage of children living below the poverty line has increased 40 percent, and children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.

Nationally, according to a study released by The Second Harvest National Food Bank Network (1994), about four million children under age 12 go hungry and approximately 9.6 million more are at risk of hunger. We are talking about over 20 million children subjected to the inhuman brutalities of poverty.

CHARGING GENOCIDE ■ This is tantamount to genocide. To push millions of women and children to the brink of starvation is to subject them to conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction. The right-wing Republican racist propaganda campaign is the ideological prop of the genocidal policies inherent in "welfare reform." The principal targets are African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans, children and senior citizens. This is an expression of the predatory, reactionary policies of the U.S. Congress and the White House.

Another genocidal aspect is that many states in the Mid-West and South are pushing legislation that will penalize women for having children out of wedlock. Already the infant mortality rate in the African American and Latino communities is criti-

cally high.

This increase in poverty is due precisely to a dismantling of those programs that provided safety nets for the poor. Starting with President Reagan's Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, federal funds for social programs have been shifted to the big corporations that make up the military/industrial complex. The Jobs With Peace Campaign has demonstrated using government statistics that during the decade 1980-1990 the military budget increased by 50 percent while child nutrition decreased by 20 percent, and the median monthly AFDC grant for a family of three decreased by 47 percent. Before the Reagan era 72 percent of poor children were on AFDC - after his first five years in office this decreased to 54 percent. Add to this a 23 percent increase in the number of poor female headed families, and you see in full bloom the social barbarism ushered in by Reagan.

This dismantling took place during a period of 2.2 million lay offs a year between 1981-1986, mainly due to plant closings or run-away shops. In other words at a time when 10 million workers were laid off and the value of the minimum wage dropped 31 percent, whatever meager means we had were cruelly cut off! Such were the measures taken to balance the budget on the backs of oppressed people of color, the poor and the working class.

The minimum wage decrease of 31 percent is indicative of a fundamental feature of capitalism articulated by Marx long ago, and that is as the unemployment rate increases alongside the spread of poverty the competition for jobs sharpens and wages go down. According to a *New York Times* op-ed article (Oct. 28, 1997):

From 1979 to 1989, the real wages of the bottom 10 percent of American workers fell by an astounding 16 percent. And the recent economic recovery has not lifted the wage rates in the lowest tier. Almost half of young African Americans have incomes below the poverty level for a family of four; a level that is unrealistically low, at about \$15,000 a year.

RACIST BLAME THE VICTIM PLOYS ■ The "welfare reformers" are using the old standard bearers of racism and deep-rooted class biases to rationalize and/or justify the social savagery they intend to impose. The lie that is being peddled is that "welfare reform" will enforce a new set of "family val-

ues" consistent with the "family stability" so desperately needed by African Americans, Puerto Ricans and others caught up in the snares of "dependency."

Historically, this approach to "welfare reform" has its origins in the ideological position put forward by Senator Patrick Moynihan in his infamous monograph *The Negro Family*. This document, heralded by the bourgeois media as the Moynihan Report was issued in 1965 by the Government Printing Office. It came right on the tail of the historic 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Moynihan denied the connection between family structure and economics by arguing that family instability (characterized by matriarchal, single parent families) was a matter of culture, reflecting values and life-styles, transmitted from generation to generation since the days of slavery.

In short, the broken African American family created by the auction block of slavery is the tragic, unfortunate cultural heritage of the African American child. It is because of this culturally transmitted "mark of oppression" as it were, that the African American child is on welfare, is unsuccessful in school and later on has trouble getting a job. The handicapping effect of this so-called deviant family structure, according to Moynihan, is "...symptomatic of an ailment that began with slavery..." and continues today as the fundamental source of weakness of the African American community.

How does government address this "weakness?" Cut welfare, toughen up on child support enforcement, reverse affirmative action and establish a repressive regime of law and order for the unruly masses such measures usually create.

David Blankenhorn, President of the Institute for American Values, recently stated that the cause of poverty is "a lack of family formation" and therefore the solution is to increase marriage rates! This is more than "mean-spirited scapegoating" but bold-faced contempt for victims of poverty, racism and class exploitation. It effectively conceals the economic plunder of the poor by the rich by expounding, in sundry clever and crafty ways, that the victims of poverty are the cause of poverty.

There is something else here that racism is concealing; and that is certain class prejudices regarding the causes of poverty that have haunted us since the days of *laissez faire* capitalism. These ideas are:

- People are poor because they are lazy, thriftless and unwilling to work; therefore, relief should be made humiliating so people will seek jobs instead

of relief.

- People are most willing to work under the lash of hunger; consequently public relief should be at or below bare subsistence.

- Each community should be responsible for its own poor, not the national government.

These ancient, class-based beliefs of capitalism have been used for centuries to rationalize the exploitation of workers of every nation and race. Racist ideology reiterates these same beliefs when it talks about a "culture of poverty" which produces generation after generation of shiftless, poor people of color. And of course these ideas serve the same purpose, namely, blame the victims of capitalist exploitation for being victims.

This vicious ideological, racist assault on African Americans and the working class is designed to undercut the natural alliance between African Americans and the trade union movement.

IDEOLOGICAL SLAVERY ■ Those who are caught up in the ideological drift of the "promise keepers," "self atonement," and "do-for-self" schemers are, whether they realize it or not, an integral part of the current blame-the-victim syndrome. The white man is blamed for enslaving Black people and inculcating in them self-hatred. The Black man is blamed for allowing the handicaps of slavery to continue to hold him back, for allowing the present day destruction of his family and community and for depending on the white man to bail him out. On this platform fascist Republicans and reactionary Black nationalists (who see race oppression as moral issues) unite and hold hands.

The notion of "self atonement" is an obvious accommodation to racism in that it shifts the blame for the ills of oppression to the victims of oppression. Consequently, the dramatic increase in poverty caused by the twin evils of monopoly capital's drive for maximum profits and government spending policies goes unchallenged. It is no accident that the leaders who called the million person marches (for self atonement) have not called any demonstration to protest welfare cuts.

This blame-the-victim ideology is being pressed forward on every occasion, under various guises. Here as "welfare reform," breaking the cycle of poverty; there as the "restoration of family values" or "atonement" and everywhere as "moral regeneration" being the one true path of social progress. These illusions are being spread like butter over the

surface of society by the open and hidden lackeys of monopoly capitalists.

Their aim is not only to deny the true causes of poverty but also to denounce the progressive struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples of color for economic and social justice.

Blame-the-victim propaganda is carefully crafted by the intellectual serfs and stooges of the aristocracy of finance capital. Its purpose is to insensitize the working class to its own suffering and to cover up the bestial practices of racism. As a social syndrome it fosters the illusion of apparent harmony of interest based on race; thus, it is divisive by its very nature, using racial antagonism to weaken and divide the working class.

THE STRUGGLE AHEAD ■ The strategy of the reactionary Republicans in Congress is straightforward and ruthless. They want to quickly load up particular (public) sectors of the economy with TANF recipients in order to create a second, lower tier of employee protections for this group of workers.

What is going on in New York presently is a good gauge of how such policies would divide and weaken the working class. In the public parks virtually all jobs, except for supervisor, have been filled with workfare participants. In other words, union jobs that paid about \$18 per hour, are now being done by non-union WEP workers at minimum or below minimum wages. The same thing is happening with transit workers who sweep the subway platforms. In fact there are presently over 100,000 WEP workers working in union jobs in the public sector of New York City; and the numbers will no doubt increase.

Mayor Giuliani just gave Health Systems Services (HSS) an \$18 million three-year contract to medically approve welfare recipients for workfare. I have visited their operations site several times to interview welfare clients and gather information. It is a very shoddy operation with people being herded in and out like cattle. Several clients told me that they received slips in the mail saying show up or their benefits would be cut off immediately! HSS processes for the city about 300 clients a day, most of whom are approved to work. One client, a young African American woman with two children, told me that before she was laid off she did data processing. Having been approved she will be forced to work in public parks, picking up trash. When she asked the case worker how come she couldn't get a

job in her area of competence he simply said, "we're sending everybody to the park."

The labor movement has been opposing this obvious debasement of their fellow workers. Their fight for equal protection of the labor laws for workfare workers won a major victory from the Clinton administration in May when he announced that the FLSA would apply to workfare workers. The AFL-CIO Legislative Department, has correctly stated that:

It is wrong to send a message to participants in this program [workfare workers] that we don't mean what we say, we don't mean that you have an opportunity to work with dignity and earn enough money to support your family, we don't mean that we are to help you join the labor force and find permanent unsubsidized employment; we don't mean that you have the right to be treated like any other American citizen.

It was the struggle of the labor movement that gave birth to welfare and the concept of government responsibility for helping those who cannot help themselves. And it is the labor movement that today must lead the fight to save both concept and the program itself. Labor must lead a broad all-people's coalition to save this important lifeline to millions of Black, Brown and white children.

Encouraging signs are appearing that this is beginning to occur. However, time is of the essence. Already a year has past since the ending of welfare. Many state programs may come to an end in the next year or two. Taking action now can prevent a social catastrophe. To wait is to court disaster. □

MAKING PA BETTER

Greetings! It was a great pleasure to meet you and see where *Political Affairs* comes from. It was also a great honor and privilege to be in the meeting with the other wonderful comrades who were present on that Monday morning, (Oct. 6, after the Cuba Conference). A particular surprise and honor was meeting Si Gerson who just happened to be there at the time. This was my first opportunity to visit the National Headquarters. I'm looking forward to my next visit (being a young 70).

Now let's talk about *PA*. I am in complete accord that we need a periodical that utilizes all methods of presentation: poetry, pictures, cartoons, humor, satire, etc. Absolutely! We need articles that present theory and the role of the Party in a popular encyclopedic form if we are to grow into a truly mass Party. Poetry, cartoons and anecdotal pieces should be included in every issue. This is not to say that longer comprehensive articles should be condensed (i.e., Gerald Horne's recent article on Africa). Nor should we exclude serious, well-researched scientific articles such as John Pappedemous' "Origins of Science" (Aug. 95). I found it very exciting, a great tool for combating racism. The trade union and labor struggle reportage is excellent.

PA should be a theoretical periodical that reflects our working-class culture.

Other areas needing improvement:

- Larger type;
- More space in layout;
- Book reviews should list publishers' price.

Would it be obtainable in the book store?

- Information on non-commercial videos on trade union struggles (UFW comes to mind), Black issues, Black history (The "Four Voices," W.E.B. Du Bois video), women's issues, Cuba and blockade struggle tapes (Pastors for Peace is a good source), perhaps cassettes and records. These can be reviewed and reported on in the manner of a book. They have use as tools for struggle. These are different from current popular movies/videos/CDs which can be reviewed in the *PWW*.

I am certainly in accord with the changes suggested. Let's put *PA* on the cutting edge! As we used to say on the waterfront: "The only place you can move and lose is in the barbershop." We have an exciting story to tell and a socialist world to win.

My heartfelt thanks to all the very hard working editorial staff. *PA* just as it is has always been a great tool in the struggle. I eagerly look forward to every issue and generally read it from cover to cover within a week. Thanks again.

Chuck Drury

BILL OF RIGHTS SOCIALISM

I just received my copy of the September issue of *Political Affairs*, and found the excellent article by Gus Hall on "Socialism, USA."

First thing I thought was, "It's about time it got put down clearly on paper." Second thing was, "this needs broad distribution."

I sure hope that you'll consider printing this as a pamphlet in the same format as your other pamphlets - on the Economic Program, on the L.A. Rebellion, etc. I really think it says stuff that needs to be said, shows that your Party's more alive than perhaps it's ever been, and invites people who are new to socialist and Communist ideas to look at the world in a bit of a different way.

Yours for a Bill of Rights, Town Hall socialism!

Chris Faatz

Editor's Note: Thanks for the suggestion but we beat you to it - the article is a pamphlet. You have the right idea!

Rewriting History

David White

Imagine a Rembrandt painting: flawless in its detail, stunning in its use of light, and most evocative of the human spirit in the faces it depicts. Now step away from the detail and view as a whole the entire canvas. Imagine now that within the frame there comes into view the most infamous depiction of human depravity that you have ever seen or imagined! Such is the impression one can come away with after reading some of the works of the English historian David Irving. You have been entertained, informed and aroused. Have you also been had?

For inquirers with an eye on ethics, he is like many of the individuals and subjects he writes of – an enigma. In the course of reading some of his works, Irving brings historical curiosities to light. Here are just a few of his assertions: Adolph Hitler was unaware of the extermination of Jews until late 1943. The Nazis didn't run death camps per se, but labor camps with extraordinarily high mortality rates. The crematoriums were not installed in Auschwitz until 1948, when the Polish Communist Party decided to do so for the sake of increased tourist revenue. The list continues, *ad nauseum*. Add to this the highly jaundiced eye Mr. Irving casts upon wartime Allied leaders, and one might normally conclude that such statements are the work of a crank.

This may well be, but certain aspects of crankdown merge with enough serious scholarship in Mr. Irving's methods to compel one to sit up and take notice of this, shall we say, queer "gentleman" from Great Britain.

For one, Mr. Irving is a good writer. Even his enemies grant him this. Publications as lofty as the *New Yorker* have described his book, *Hitler's War* as: "A brilliant study of the war ... fascinating ... vivid." Neither have Mr. Irving's tenacious research methods gone unnoticed. Walter Laqueur, reviewing the same book for the April 3, 1997 edition of the *New York Times* book review, stated in his sarcastically entitled essay, "Springtime for Hitler,"

Mr. Irving is a prodigy of enterprise and industry, a researcher who almost literally left no stone unturned and succeeded in digging up papers, letters and diaries which were believed to be lost or non-existent, or which escaped, for other reasons, earlier writers. His dogged persistence puts many professional historians to shame.

A historian of no less stature than John Keegan called *Hitler's War*, one of the half dozen most important books of the war. Heady stuff indeed for one who many consider Hitler's apologist. Of course, being any of those lofty things does not mean Mr. Irving is without a darker agenda, or that he does not selectively use evidence to bolster some of his more outrageous points. In fact, at these methods he is a master. But it is in his literary method, the compelling nature of his language, that he seductively lures the reader into a canvas that on the whole is outrageous, but in its method is arresting. Awed by the compelling style of his prose, the comprehensive nature of his research and the apparent logic of his conclusions, the reader must be constantly vigilant as to the ultimate objective Irving's methodical discourse seeks to attain.

The questions that a character like Mr. Irving inspires are many. One, why would such a masterful researcher and compelling writer say such incendiary things about Adolph Hitler and the Holocaust? Two, why does the literary and academic establishment continue to be befuddled by such "revisionist" historians? Three, why do we persist in our moral expectations of writers who are merely educated, comprehensive and compelling?

In *Hitler's War*, Mr. Irving's perspective is an interesting one. In the introduction he states,

Confronted by the phenomenon of Hitler himself, historians cannot grasp that he was a walking, talking human weighing some 155 pounds, with graying hair, largely false teeth and chronic digestive ailments. He is to them the Devil incarnate: he has to be, because of the sacrifices that we made in destroying him.

Fair enough Hitler was human. Evil, but human. Now that Mr. Irving has humanized der Fuhrer, he

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later states, "Hitler was a far less omnipotent Fuhrer than had been believed, and his grip on his subordinates had weakened with each passing year." These points, greatly elaborated upon by Irving, lead us now to a very human and somewhat weaker leader of Germans. Nothing outrageous here. Yet!

Continue along with the author's gripping prose and you come upon another challenging assertion,

On several occasions in 1942 and 1943 Hitler made - in private - statements which are incompatible with the notion that he knew that a liquidation program had begun. We shall see in October 1943, even as Himmler was disclosing to privileged audiences of SS generals and Gauleiters that Europe's Jews had been systematically murdered, Hitler was still forbidding liquidation of the Italian Jews in Rome and ordering their internment instead.

Step back from the separate parts and look at the whole: Hitler was quite human. He was also a weak, vacillating, and often manipulated commander. Most significantly, he issued orders regarding the treatment of Jews throughout Europe that contradicted a state policy that sought their extermination. What emerges from David Irving's portrait of Hitler in *Hitler's War* is not so much a psychopath but an out-of-the-loop Austrian policy wonk.

These propositions are startling enough but it does not end there. There is a zealotry in Mr. Irving's promotion of his theory that belies a stumbled-upon nature to his findings. He is clearly on a mission. He has offered a one thousand pound reward to anyone who can provide written evidence that Adolph Hitler ordered or was aware of the extermination of the Jews. He states:

They postulated the existence of Fuhrer orders without the slightest written evidence of their existence. John Toland, Pulitzer prize winning author of a Hitler biography published in the United States, appealed emotionally in *Der Spiegel* for historians to refute my hypothesis, and they tried by fair means and foul.

Further along in the book he declares,

Most of my critics relied on weak and unprofessional evidence. For example, they offered alternative and often specious translations of words in Hitler's speeches (apparently the Final Solution was too secret for him to sign an order, but simultaneously not so secret that he could not brag about in public speeches!)

Disingenuous verbal gymnastics aside, it is not the historical assertions by themselves that inspires such popular and academic hostility toward Mr. Irving, but the zeal with which he pursues his beliefs. Again, that stumbled-upon construct seems unlikely. He regularly addresses (in their native language), German veterans' organizations. He makes pilgrimages to the Institute for Historical Reviews (the premier Holocaust denial organization) conferences, and he has even formed his own right-wing political party, seeing himself as "destined" to become Great Britain's ruler. Estimating the number of Jews killed in Germany between 1933-45 (he never uses the word Holocaust), at between one and four million, he may be the most chronically controversial historian of our time.

The motivations of Mr. Irving, considering the above, come into fairly bold relief. If he is not an outright Nazi, then he has somewhere skewed romantic assumptions of power and personal responsibility into a mutation both stunning and dangerous. He has compromised historical objectivity for the sake of pursuing ideological compulsions probably forged early in his exciting life.

If it were gardening, beer or skittles, and not hobnobbing with neo-Nazis or dabbling in the political fringe, we might give him the benefit of the doubt, but knowing what we do, we cannot. It is the role of the critical community, both popular and academic, while acknowledging the power of his prose and the diabolical ends of his method, to strongly challenge and discredit his assertions, so long as they are incorrect!

And so the popular and academic critical community is left to its own devices in dealing with this Englishman. He has been described as "a bucketful of slime," by the British newspaper, *The Observer*. He is everywhere characterized as a "holocaust denier" in the leftist press, a "controversial British historian," by more rightward critics, and is everywhere but amongst his own fringe considered a tarantula in the ointment.

But the response which the critical community must adhere to in meeting the challenge that men like Mr. Irving bring to life with their missionary zeal and academic gyrations, must be based on strong and honorable foundations.

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, author of *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, perhaps the most critically acclaimed writer on the Holocaust in the last 15 years, stated while speaking at Rollins College in

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BUCHAREST

Ignoring widespread protest demonstrations all across the country, the Romanian government began closing down 17 large state-owned plants. The closures were demanded by the International Monetary Fund as a condition for Rumania receiving further IMF credits.

KARACHI

Pakistan's parliament gave police broad new powers for repressive measures including the right to shoot on sight people suspected of being terrorists. Over 360 people have been slain in political strife this year.

PARIS

The 29 member countries of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) produced two-thirds of the world's goods and services. Their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) came to about \$240 billion. Over 36 million people were unemployed in OECD countries. The most advanced, richest countries of the OECD, known as G-7, had 23 million unemployed as of 1996. (The G-7 countries are: USA, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Canada and Italy).

Membership in the OECD is limited to countries with a "market economy and a pluralistic democracy." It serves as a clearinghouse and promoter of capitalism. It has a staff of 2,000 working in its secretariat in Paris. (Members of OECD are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States).

TOKYO

The Japanese Communist Party doubled its representation in the July election to the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly, winning 26 seats, making it the second largest party in the Assembly.

The Supreme Court of Japan upheld a lower court ruling and ordered the national government to pay \$35,000 in damages to the former head of the International Department of the Communist Party of Japan whose home phone had been bugged in violation of the constitutional right of privacy of communication and freedom of political activity.

BANGKOK

When Thailand's market economy caused the stock market to drop for seven straight sessions, the interior minister came to the rescue by sounding the alarm, warning that: "The reds are everywhere." According to the Thailand press on August 23rd, he proclaimed, "If you look around they are right among us. They are using the strategy to win the towns, to win the jungle." Coming from the man reputed to be the second most powerful person in the country, it resulted in intensified jitters and the stock market plunged even further. The players in the stock market then demanded that government officials keep their mouths shut.

ULAN BATOR

In an effort to shunt Mongolia onto the road to capitalism, Senator John McCain's International Republican Institute unfurled a "Contract With Mongolia" modeled after Gingrich's "Contract With America" roughly two years ago. Mongolia's National Democratic Party and Social Democratic Party received support to capture the presidency and a parliamentary majority. In one year's time after their electoral victory, real incomes fell by 30

percent. In less than 4 months after coming to power the pro-capitalist forces lost many provincial and county elections. In May, N. Bagabandi, national Communist leader, was elected president of Mongolia in a landslide. At this writing, the Communists hold 25 seats, the Social Democrats 15 and the National Democrats 35 seats. With the Communists pursuing a coalition policy, it appears certain that the Mongolian henchmen of the McCain-Gingrich strategists face a losing future.

BOGOTA

September 3rd was a National Day of Protest all across Colombia as tens of thousands of workers demonstrated for higher wages and other economic and social demands. Public health workers held a 24-hour stoppage in support of pay raises. Engineers and production workers at the state telephone company struck against privatization. Teachers in Bogota went out for 5 days, closing down the state school, winning wage concessions. The three main trade union centers were united in carrying out the protest strikes. They were supported by other unions in the oil, electrical, transport, communication and finance industries.

MOSCOW

Privatization of Rosneft, the state-owned Russian oil company will take place before the end of the year according to a senior official at the Fuel and Energy Ministry.

The officials agreed to privatize in December in order to ensure that the proceeds go to the federal budget in January 1998.

Rosneft's privatization plan will sell 63 percent of its shares in a cash action. A block of 3.75 percent will be distributed to employees.

NEPAL

The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) issued a pamphlet on its history, program and structure.

The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was founded April 22, 1949, during the struggle against the feudal Rana regime, backed by imperialism. The

Nepalese people were suppressed and kept in isolation from the outside world. In the early years, the Party called for the establishment of the new democracy by liberating the country from feudal and imperialist exploitation and preserving the independence of the country. People from all walks of life were mobilized. Mass organizations among the peasantry, workers, women and youth were organized. The Communist Party developed as a champion of the national interests, democracy and people's livelihood. Because of its staunch policies and actions in defense of people's rights and national independence, the party was banned for three years in 1952. However, the Party continued its struggle for the establishment of a new democratic system.

After years of repression and the splintering of the revolutionary movement, in 1990 various groups came together under the banner of the United Left Front and launched a mass struggle against the autocracy. After the establishment of the multi-party system in 1990, unification of the Communist forces took place and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) - CPN(UML) - was formed in January, 1991.

In January, 1993, at its 5th Congress, the CPN(UML) adopted the People's Multi-Party Democracy as the political program of the Nepalese revolution.

The CPN(UML) operates under the principles that it is a political representative of the working and patriotic people of Nepal; that it is firmly committed to democracy, equality and justice and to enhance progress and prosperity of the people. The Party upholds the principles of socialism and pursues the road of People's Multi-Party Democracy which is a "creative application of Marxism and Leninism in the Nepalese conditions." Consolidation of democracy, strengthening people's sovereign rights, changing the socio-economic relations and acceleration of economic development in the country are the major concerns of the Party. An economically self-sustained society, quality education and health services, full employment and social security are also important features of the Party program aiming to achieve the welfare state.

The Party fully believes in the harmony and unity among the people of all religions, castes, communities and ethnic groups living in different geographical regions of the country. The Party works against any discrimination on the basis of race, religion, caste, ethnicity, sex and geographical region.

The Party believes that the material development of society should be closely linked with the spiritual development of the people and it should be guided by the ideals of democracy and socialism. The Party considers Marxism-Leninism its guiding principle and socialism its goal.

In the 1991 elections the Party received 30 percent of the popular vote, the second largest vote and became the major opposition party in Parliament and firmly stood for democracy, national independence, integrity and social justice. By 1994, the CPN(UML) became the largest party with almost 31 percent of the vote and formed a minority government. Man Mohan Adhikari, Chairman of the Party and its Parliamentary leader, became the first Communist Prime Minister.

The government was successful for nine months in implementing many new policies and programs based on the Party's election pledges and the desires of the people. The government gave priority to improving the life of the people including the program of "Build Your Village Yourself" and welfare programs. Policies were developed to control inflation and corruption, for the smooth supply of necessary consumer goods, old age pensions, resettlement

programs for the the landless people, protection of human rights, a foreign policy based on the UN principles of non-alignment and good neighborly relations.

The right wing, angered by the popularity of the Party, orchestrated designs to overthrow the CPN(UML) government. In August 1995 they succeeded and a rightist coalition government, led by the Nepali Congress was formed.

The right coalition government failed in March 1997 and a new coalition government was formed by three national parties including the CPN(UML). The Party joined the coalition government in order to "protect the people and the country from the repressive and undemocratic practices of the rightist coalition and to contribute to the progressive and democratic development of the country."

In the local elections the Party gained over 50 percent of the vote at all levels. With these election results the CPN(UML) has become the largest party both in the Parliament and local bodies of government.

International Department, CPUSA

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Winter Park, Florida, on May 4, 1997, "Any society that wishes to prevent something like the Holocaust from happening again must recognize that each individual must act as his own moral agent." It is by educating ourselves as to the threats and assertions made by even those on the fringes of society, be they in the gutter or the ivory towers, that we can best address these threats.

As pathetic as it may sound, I wish I could speak to Mr. Irving. I wish that I could, after he finishes venting, or perhaps concludes an articulate speech, reach over, squeeze him on the knee (we'd be sitting across from one another), look him in the eye and ask him, "What's wrong David? How did

you develop this sympathy for the Führer and the Third Reich?" I know I wouldn't reach him, But I'd try, before someday, if his kind ever again becomes powerful enough the terrible war fought to defeat them might have been in vain. □

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