

# political affairs

JOURNAL OF MARXIST THOUGHT

JANUARY 1986 \$1

**New Tentacles  
of Financial Imperialism**

GUS HALL

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**LABOR IN 1986**

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of the Communist Party, USA**

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*Political Affairs* (ISSN 0032 3128) is published monthly by Political Affairs Publishers, Inc. at 235 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011, ☎ (212) 989-4994, to whom all orders, subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be addressed. Subscription rates: \$10 for one year (Individuals); \$15 for one year (Institutions); \$5 for six months; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, \$11 for one year; single issues, \$1. Second class postage paid at the post office in New York, NY. Postmaster: Send changes of address to Political Affairs, 235 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011.

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# New Tentacles Of Financial Imperialism

GUS HALL

Financial imperialism has become the largest source of plunder of the developing countries, which are treated as neocolonies by the United States, Japan and Western Europe.

Yearly, \$100 billion is drained from the developing countries to pay the interest alone on \$750 billion of debts—half paid by Latin American countries, the remainder by Asian and African nations. During the past ten years the debts have multiplied five times and the interest burden nearly ten times. This has a paralyzing impact on the economies of the developing countries.

The ruling circles in the debtor countries have used part of the borrowed sums to pay for imports of armaments and luxury products and to finance investments that lead to further exploitation of their own very low-paid workers. Other loans went to the transnational mining, manufacturing and trade companies to expand their investments and increase the booty extracted from these countries and the exploitation of their workers. The tax-free status of the transnationals adds to corporate profits and the debt crisis.

U.S. multinational corporations reap \$2.50 in profits for every dollar they have invested in Latin America. Every year the Latin American affiliates of multinationals transfer nearly \$40 billion in profits out of these countries.

## ***Austerity Imposed On the Debtor Nations***

On the other hand, very few dollars are invested for the needs of the people in the debtor countries. In fact, the more loans are made to these countries, the more sacrifices are

squeezed from the people through extreme austerity programs imposed on the debtor countries by the imperialist corporations and banks, and by the International Monetary Fund.

With the world capitalist economic crisis of the '80s, the price scissors operating against the developing countries widened. Prices of the products they imported rose rapidly while their receipts from sales to the industrialized countries decreased.

Overvaluation of the dollar increased the dollar-dominated debt and interest charges and the cost of imports. By 1982, the payments required of Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, the Philippines, Ivory Coast and other countries reached impossible levels. The costs of servicing their foreign debt reached a level that made it impossible to import materials needed to run their industries. The resulting crisis caused the workers of the debtor countries extreme suffering.

The share of developing-country borrowing which is from private foreign banks has gone up dramatically, from 16 per cent in the early 1970s to 80 per cent at the beginning of the 1980s. Per capita external debt jumped from 85.5 dollars in 1971 to 1,000 dollars in 1984.

The large financial institutions are the main profiteers from this enormous interest windfall. Over the years they have reaped more in interest alone than the amount of the original loans. Cancellation of these debts is fully justified and would permit the developing countries to make a fresh start.

However, the imperialist banks, their affiliated International Monetary Fund (IMF), and their governments are doing everything they can to ensure continued collection of all interest, regardless of the drain on the debtor countries. While U.S. banks are owed 30 per cent of the total, the U.S. acts as enforcer for the world's gang of creditors.

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Gus Hall is general secretary of the CPUSA.

Through its domination of the IMF, U.S. finance capital has imposed crippling terms on the debtors. Through intervention in Nicaragua, Angola and Afghanistan, massive military bases and political dominance of the Philippines, as well as the invasion of Grenada, the U.S. delivers warnings and threats that non-payment may be met by invasion or by imposition of puppet military dictatorships.

Through generous support of the murderous regimes in Central America and through big loans to dictators like Pinochet in Chile, the U.S. reinforces the most reactionary, militarist and fascist groups in the debtor countries. In many ways, U.S. finance capital tells the governments and ruling classes of the debtor nations they will be richly rewarded if they impose terrorist regimes that collaborate with the transnational banks and corporations.

For example, through the IMF, Washington and Wall Street have forced on Mexico, Brazil and Argentina—the largest Latin American debtors—"austerity" programs in order to guarantee interest and repayment on debts to the banks.

### ***Oppressive Effects Of the Austerity Programs***

The common feature of all these "austerity" programs is the forced cut in real wages of workers, in some cases a 30 per cent cut in the wages of workers who are already paid as little as one-tenth of U.S. wages. This dooms tens of millions more to hunger and extreme poverty, joblessness, homelessness, lack of medical care, education and housing.

The ruling capitalists and military of these countries tend to accept these orders because they, too, make profits from the low wages of their workers.

They also betray their own national interests by pouring billions into the U.S. and other "safe" countries, thereby canceling much of the "savings" in foreign exchange they get as a result of the "austerity" programs. The ruling cir-

cles of the debtor nations fear that any defiance of the bankers will lead to confiscation of their ill-gotten profits.

The deepening crisis of capitalism, the gross imbalances in international trade, the destabilization of currencies, all are factors that have contributed to the failure to achieve any easing of the international debt crisis, even in this period of partial economic recovery. It is bound to become more acute with the next cyclical crisis, which looms on the horizon.

The Baker plan is the latest imperialist swindle. The scheme is not new. It is more of the same. It provides more loans, without any reduction in interest rates, without any changes in the restrictions, in the low prices for exports and high prices for imports. But the scheme demands more "market-opening measures" by the debtor countries.

The plunder of developing countries by financial imperialism also costs U.S. workers. It forces reduction in sales of U.S. goods to debtor countries, throwing thousands of U.S. workers out of jobs. By further forcing down wages in developing countries, it encourages transnationals to close more U.S. plants, to move more production to where wages are super-low.

But there is a fightback against the bankers, the IMF, the transnationals and U.S. imperialism. Demonstrations and strikes are being carried out by workers in Brazil, Argentina, the Philippines and many other debtor countries. Protest actions in Peru and Bolivia have caused those governments to cut payments to the bankers. U.S. workers are beginning to see the connections between big corporations that exploit them and their transnational offspring that exploit workers in other countries.

The plunder can not be collected indefinitely. Sooner or later the crisis will be basically resolved when anti-imperialist forces, headed by the working class, come to power in the debtor countries and take radical corrective measures in defiance of the financial leeches.

The Wall Street banks raise the false alarm of bankruptcy if they don't get their interest payments, while their profits rise to new highs each year. What they want is government guar-

antees of bailouts for defaults, as in the notorious Continental Illinois bailout.

It is in the interests of U.S. workers to support the people's struggles and their demands to cancel the debts. The enemies of the people of the debtor nations are also our class enemies—the exploiters, the banks and racists.

It is also the internationalist duty of U.S. workers to support their fellow workers in developing countries, to follow the historic example of human rights advocates, of peace advocates who have opposed U.S. colonialism for over a century. Today the political heirs of those who opposed U.S. aggression against countries like Cuba and the Philippines are demonstrating in the same spirit.

***The Communist  
Party, USA  
Calls for:***

- Nationalization of the major banks and central banking system of the U.S., under the democratic control of workers' representatives.

The trillions of dollars of their resources must be used to finance essential improvements in the infrastructure—public housing, education, health, transportation, recreation, etc., for no-strings-attached aid to developing countries to enable them to recover from the poverty and unbalanced development imposed by centuries of colonial and neocolonial control.

- Support of all measures taken by the workers and progressive forces of developing countries to reduce or eliminate the debts and interest burden that is oppressing masses and crippling national economies. This calls for the unconditional cancellation of the debts of Latin American, Asian and African countries, debts

that have in reality been repaid many times over as a result of the looting by financial and industrial transnationals.

- An end to all intervention in the internal affairs of these countries. An end to all direct and indirect invasions, to all support for or imposition of military dictatorships. Remove all U.S. troops from all foreign bases.

- Implementation of the United Nations New International Economic Order, which provides for closing the price scissors and paying equitable prices for the commodities supplied by developing countries.

- Provision of long-term interest-free capital for use by debtor countries in developing their own industries in their own interests. Recognition of their right to expel transnational exploiters and to take back national ownership of appropriated properties.

- Immediate cancellation of all "austerity" programs imposed to pay the massive interest and debts.

Finance capital works to have it both ways—to keep squeezing the developing countries financially and economically, and to get the government to guarantee their profits and protect their investments.

Finance capital is ready to do anything as long as it can continue its loan sharking. Any concept that lets finance capital, the most ferocious sector of monopoly capital, off the hook, is of necessity at the expense of the working class.

The Communist Party urges and supports the establishment of direct cooperation between the U.S. working class and the workers of the developing, debtor nations, through trade union support of their struggles. It calls for an end to the intervention and provocative schemes of the CIA and its agents in the trade union affairs of the U.S. and the developing countries. □

# The 16th Convention of the AFL-CIO

GEORGE MEYERS

The 16th biennial convention of the AFL-CIO reflected many of the new, healthy trends now current in the ranks of labor. Held in Anaheim, California, October 28-31, it was attended by nearly 1,000 delegates representing the leadership of 97 affiliated national unions as well as central labor councils from the 50 states.

A number of factors went into making this convention a positive event in the life of the country. A new tone in the Officers' Report sought to reflect the probing discussions that have involved all levels of the trade union movement. Dozens of hard-hitting resolutions were introduced by affiliated unions and central labor bodies, on subjects ranging from plant closings to Nicaragua. A number tackled the question of racism. Several guest speakers made spirited contributions to the occasion.

The convention vigorously reasserted the AFL-CIO's unrelenting opposition to the reactionary, antilabor and racist Reagan Administration. It challenged the the ultra-Right forces in a head-on confrontation. It advanced its position in the fight against racism and for equal rights for women. The convention reports and resolutions were basically antimonopoly. By expressing a growing understanding of the antilabor foreign and domestic policies of the U.S. transnational corporations, the convention began to develop a conscious anti-imperialist position.

The tone of the convention reflected the growing spirit of militancy in the ranks of labor and a deemphasis on policies of "class partnership." On foreign policy, for the first time the Right-wing, pro-CIA elements in labor were put on the defensive. The convention placed strong emphasis on the essential role of the local unions and central labor councils. This was particularly true in relation to the organization of the unorganized, mass political action and

building grassroots coalitions with allies of labor in the communities.

The timing of the convention coincided with a nationwide wave of strikes challenging corporate attacks on wage rates, fringe benefits, shop steward systems and seniority provisions.

Echos of the Wheeling-Pittsburg steel strike could be heard inside the convention hall. The Massey coal strike in Appalachia, the Bath shipyard strike, the UAW strike against Chrysler, the meatpackers' strikes, and many others, recently settled or still in progress, had a definite impact. The strike of the heroic copper miners and smelter workers at Phelps Dodge was not forgotten. This strike is now into its third year.

A new spirit of optimism prevailed as the delegates began a wide-ranging discussion on how to staunch the sharp decline in union membership; how to deal with the many problems created by the ongoing structural crisis in the basic industries; the transnational corporations and their relationship to the export of jobs and the import-export crisis; the impact of the scientific and technological revolution; the unprecedented surge of mergers and conglomerates, and the relentless antilabor unionbusting offensive of the big corporations and the reactionary and racist Reagan Administration. Realizing that a larger trade union movement is critical to solving many of the political and economic problems faced by organized labor, the convention was united in making its priority the organization of the unorganized.

Peace sentiments welling up from the ranks found expression at the convention. The fact that 23 national unions (including major AFL-CIO affiliates representing over half the AFL-CIO membership) have endorsed a verifiable nuclear freeze, could not be ignored. This was reflected in the Officers' Report, which said, "The AFL-CIO welcomes the resumption of the Geneva negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and endorses the objec-

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George Meyers is chair of the Labor Commission of the CPUSA.

tive of a balanced reduction of nuclear arms within a system of verification guaranteeing collective security."

## PEACE WAS A MAIN CONVENTION CONCERN

**T**he resolution introduced by the United Auto Workers (UAW) declared that:

the AFL-CIO joins all Americans in hoping that the upcoming summit conference of President Reagan and Premier Gorbachev will lead to an easing of tensions between the two superpowers. The AFL-CIO urges President Reagan to propose that first step and to propose it now.

In another resolution, the UAW urged that "The AFL-CIO supports actions—including implementation of a nuclear weapons freeze, ratification of SALT II, and agreement on further reductions of nuclear arsenals—which would move us away from the dangers of nuclear war and the possibility of a nuclear winter."

A section of the Officers' Report critical of waste in military spending was particularly pertinent in view of the continued exposures of graft and corruption in the Pentagon and all the big weapons manufacturers. The report also called for "unity with forces in the community in political action for reduction of the defense budget."

Benjamin Hooks, executive secretary of the NAACP and a guest speaker, blazed away at the huge expenditures for Star Wars, charging the Reagan Administration with spending a trillion dollars for Star Wars while refusing to fund government agencies fighting discrimination or enforcing the Fair Employment Act. Hooks called for labor and Afro-American cooperation in the fight for civil rights programs and for peace. He received a prolonged standing ovation from the delegates at the conclusion of his speech.

History was made when the convention attacked the policies of the Reagan Administration in Central America. After a sharp, open de-

bate, the delegates voted overwhelmingly for a compromise resolution that demanded a political rather than a military settlement in both El Salvador and Nicaragua. In doing so they rejected the position put forward in the Officers' Report, which bitterly attacked Nicaragua.

The UAW and the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department (IUD) introduced hard-hitting resolutions, each headed: "Economic Conversion: Military Spending and Jobs." In strong language, the IUD questioned the harmful impact of defense appropriations on the economy and whether the Pentagon and NASA "were the agencies America should rely on . . . to promote employment, innovation and economic growth." Noting that "While the Defense Department can pay hundreds of millions of dollars to indemnify corporations when procurement contracts are cut off, there is no comparable program to assist workers," the IUD called for AFL-CIO endorsement of the concept of economic conversion "as a rational and responsible effort to deal with plant closings and mass layoffs in defense plants and military bases."

## REAGAN'S POLICIES CAME UNDER FIRE

**F**rom beginning to end, the convention was marked by a relentless hammering of the reactionary and racist policies of the Reagan Administration. In tones of outrage, the Officers' Report and dozens of strongly worded resolutions attacked Reaganism from all angles.

The Administration was roundly condemned for its assault on trade union rights; its attacks on affirmative action and civil rights laws, its misuse of the Voter Rights Act; for cuts in funds for social needs; its attack on Social Security, OSHA, and the environment; for promotion of a subminimum wage for young workers; for contracting out the jobs of government workers to private corporations for their own gain; for its attacks on public transportation.

Resolutions attacked Reagan's tax program



as pro-rich and demanded a shift of the tax burden from workers to corporations. The Gramm-Rudman "balanced budget" bill was singled out for special censure, as was the Right-wing campaign for a constitutional convention to "balance the budget."

The convention was antimonopoly. The Officers' Report attacked the

merger mania of Big Business and the corporate takeover epidemic . . . . A broad array of government actions is needed to limit abuses of corporate power, close tax loopholes, strengthen security laws, regulate bank lending practices, direct credit to productive uses, and protect workers, consumers and local communities.

### **MONOPOLY POWER WAS SHARPLY ATTACKED**

**D**ecaring that corporate power and corporate misconduct must be brought under control, the convention called for more effective enforcement of antitrust laws, federal chartering of major corporations, prohibition of interlocking directorates, measures to check media concentration, and more control of oil companies' investments. The convention also called for the restructuring of the Federal Reserve Board to include "representatives of labor, agriculture, small business and consumers."

Organization of the unorganized received the highest priority at the convention. Officers and delegates were keenly aware of the loss of over one million members in the last two years, which can be laid mainly to plant closings and runaway shops. Events of the last few years have graphically demonstrated that there is a desperate need for organized labor to strengthen its ranks.

In an upbeat mood of confidence, a call went out for new approaches toward organizing the nearly 90 million U.S. workers yet unorganized. The need for coordinated organizing campaigns rather than cutthroat competition was emphasized. The convention resolution noted that cooperative organizing programs

had proven both desirable and essential.

Various organizing tactics were projected, such as organizing drives based on geographical locations. But also "Organizing committees bringing a number of unions together to develop programs in given companies or industries also hold the potential of organizing success." Affiliated unions were urged to consider formation of such multiple-union projects, working with the AFL-CIO's Organizing Department. The resolution further urged that "internal organizing programs should be instituted as a continuing program for every local union." Emphasis was placed on the critical role of central labor councils in building community support as "an appropriate factor in a union campaign." And the resolution noted the importance of these bodies in "maintaining contact with natural allies in the community."

Unions were advised to avoid use of the Reorganized National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) whenever feasible alternatives could be found. The board, as presently constituted, was branded as proemployer.

The concept of associate membership was projected as a means of maintaining contact with union members who have lost their jobs due to plant closings and mass layoffs. (This would cover the hundreds of thousands of union members in steel, auto, rubber and other hard-hit basic industries who have lost their jobs because of the structural crisis.) Or with workers who have supported unions in unsuccessful organizing drives, as, for example, the 3,500 textile workers who voted pronoun in a recent unsuccessful organizing drive by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers at the Cannon Mills in North Carolina.

It was indicated that associate membership could provide such benefits as low cost insurance and consumer services to the tens of millions of workers who for one reason or another are no longer union members through no fault of their own.

Political action was also given a new forward thrust at this convention. There was an approach reminiscent of the 1930s, when the CIO played such a vigorous role in the fight for

New Deal reforms. Great stress was placed on the political mobilization of the whole trade union movement. The crucial role to be played by the local unions and central labor bodies was strongly emphasized.

### **A NEW IMPETUS TO POLITICAL ACTION**

**T**he political action resolution urged "Involving local union members as grassroots lobbyists," declaring, "this is labor's best first-line defense of workers' interest in the legislative halls of this nation."

AFL-CIO affiliates were urged to "place new stress on the formation of local union COPE committees to conduct year-around political programs."

The Officers' Report devoted considerable space to examining a newly established network of Labor Action Committees (LACs) that have already been operating in a number of congressional districts. In "face to face meetings, each grassroots committee spends an average of one or two hours with its legislator discussing issues," with selected members of Congress when they return to their home districts.

Noting the growing success of existing LACs, the convention called for their expansion, stressing that "the continued success of this program demands the fullest cooperation of the state and local central bodies and their local union affiliates."

Great emphasis was placed on the importance of the 1986 congressional elections. "We face a tremendous task . . . to roll back the strength of the antilabor Right wing in the Senate." The resolution continued on the importance of setting back Reaganism in the House as well. A number of Senate and House seats have already been targeted by the AFL-CIO for special attention.

An extensive legislative program was adopted ranging from the demand for legislation restoring workers' and union rights, tax reform based on the ability to pay, restoration of

civil rights enforcement and a jobs program to relieve massive unemployment.

The AFL-CIO policy of making preprimary endorsements in order to involve labor in the process of selecting political candidates was reaffirmed. "Whether or not the labor movement makes an endorsement will depend on the circumstances and whether or not there is a genuine membership consensus." The decision was taken in the face of bitter opposition from both the Democratic and Republican parties.

While there is still no break with the two-party system as such, the convention decisions are a far cry from past practices of hand-picked COPE committees waiting until the party machines made their selections, then sitting down and trying to decide who among them might warrant endorsement as "friends of labor." Past dependence on such "friends" cost labor dearly, as did reliance on political wheeling and dealing at the top.

### **COALITIONS ARE NEEDED WITH LABOR'S ALLIES**

**T**he convention adopted a number of resolutions designed to strengthen coalitions between organized labor and its allies. The Officers' Report urged central labor councils to involve themselves in community affairs in order to "strengthen understanding and communication at the national and local levels with civil rights and women's organizations," as part of its efforts to "achieve equal opportunity and social and economic justice."

Benjamin Hooks won a warm reception when he noted the "historical partnership" between the civil rights and labor movements in the "struggle for equality and a better life for all Americans."

The AFL-CIO position on civil rights, and particularly affirmative action, was notably strengthened at this convention.

The resolution adopted described the Administration's record on affirmative action as both deplorable and reactionary. The Civil

Rights Division of the Justice Department was described as having become an "adversary rather than an advocate of the people." The undermining of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights came under censure, as did the Justice Department's misuse of the Voter Rights Act. Justice Department attempts to reverse court decisions, such as *United Steel Workers of America v. Weber*, favorable to affirmative action programs were opposed.

The resolution noted that "Despite the fact that the Civil Rights Act is 20 years old, many barriers to equal access to jobs, promotions and other employment still remain. Effective affirmative action plans are as necessary in 1985 as those plans were in 1964."

In unequivocal language, the resolution declared that "the AFL-CIO reaffirms its unwavering support of affirmative action and condemns Administration efforts to end such programs."

While defending "non-discriminatory seniority systems which provide important protection to all workers regardless of race or sex," the convention went on to take favorable note of the fact that "the Civil Rights Act also permits workers in free collective bargaining to negotiate affirmative action plans *including plans that modify such seniority systems*" (Emphasis added PGM.)

The resolution concluded with a call to all AFL-CIO affiliates to "cooperate with our traditional civil rights allies in continuing and vigorous efforts to preserve and advance affirmative action and to advance the cause of affirmative action through collective bargaining."

The large increase in the number of women workers was noted as "the most significant change in the U.S. workforce over the past forty years." A number of reforms were called for to improve women's job and pension rights. Government action was urged to restore and strengthen social programs directly affecting women workers, day care centers, job training, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, etc.

Trade unions were urged to involve women unionists in all aspects of the movement. Women trade unionists were urged to participate in the activities of the Coalition of Labor

Union Women (CLUW). Support for the Equal Rights Amendment was reaffirmed.

Convention documents detailed the devastating economic and social impact of unemployment. Official government statistics were used to prove that between 22 and 24 per cent of the nation's workforce were unemployed at one time or another during 1984, with the jobless rate being double the national average for Afro-Americans and nearly as high for Latino workers.

The convention called for a comprehensive, federally-funded jobs program to put people back to work. A shorter work week, triple time for overtime, and an end to forced overtime were also called for. The demand was made that unemployment compensation be raised and extended to a minimum of 65 weeks.

Noting that "one-third of the nation's family-sized farms are experiencing serious financial problems," a program was adopted in support of family farms which urged such things as:

- A national moratorium on farm foreclosures.

Restrict farm income-support policies to benefit only family farmers.

- Fair price and income-support policies for family farmers without transferring loopholes and benefits to the giant agribusiness and tax shelter farms.

- A National Grain Board to handle foreign sales of U.S. grain in the interest of family farmers.

- The convention voted to support the boycott of table grapes called by the United Farm Workers.

Considerable space was devoted to defense of the public school system. A demand was made for "quality public education for all students." Reagan's budget cuts and other Administration attacks on public education were censured. Strong opposition was expressed to tax credits providing federal subsidies to private schools. One resolution called for a "radical increase in teachers' salaries."

A strong resolution was adopted calling for better laws to protect the environment. Concern was expressed over such things as the release of

hazardous chemicals, waste dumps, the danger of pesticides and toxic substances, the right of workers and the community to know about the use and storage of chemicals. The convention opposed the reduction of spending on the acquisition of land for parks and recreational areas and against the increase in users' fees.

A sharply worded resolution on extremist groups declared that:

the revived Ku Klux Klan continues to operate in fear and intimidation. The Klan shares its antidemocratic, anti-Semitic, anti-Black, anti-Catholic and antilabor philosophy with other hate groups such as the American Nazi Party, the John Birch Society and the Christian Patriotic Defense League. These groups are a threat to justice and freedom and need to be exposed for what they are."

#### **TACKLING PLANT CLOSINGS AND RUNAWAY SHOPS**

**T**he AFL-CIO began to seriously tackle the problem of plant closings and runaway shops at this convention. A challenge began to emerge on the right of private corporations to do as they please at the expense of their workers and communities. A resolution from the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers declared that "Public policy should not take management's judgement on the viability of a plant as either infallible or unchangeable." The point was made that not only workers, but whole communities have been devastated when companies close their plants.

However, proposals to meet this problem were mainly limited to the demand that companies be required to give advance notice before shutdowns or permanent layoffs. The purpose is to permit unions, workers and communities to attempt to find alternative solutions. Support was given to the Ford-Clay bill (HR 1616) requiring companies to give 90 days notice of plant closings. (This bill was later withdrawn for lack of support in Congress.) Most efforts to get such legislation passed state-by-state have resulted in failure. Prior notice is written into the laws of

virtually every other developed capitalist country. In all socialist countries, workers are guaranteed complete wage protection, retraining and a new job when a plant is closed or there is a radical shift in technology.

#### **UNPRECEDENTED OPPOSITION TO THE TRANSNATIONALS**

**T**he problems created by the U.S. transnational, or multinational, corporations were grappled with in a way not seen in previous AFL-CIO conventions. Some of the strongest resolutions on the question were submitted by central labor councils. For example, a Santa Clara Council resolution protested that: "An increasing number of United States trade unionists are losing their jobs due to the flight of U.S. capital to countries where the basic rights of labor are flagrantly violated."

The military dictatorship in South Korea, a friendly haven for scores of U.S. transnationals where only recently a number of strikes have been broken and trade unionists jailed, was singled out for particular censure. An end to U.S. military assistance to that country and consideration of a possible boycott of Korean imports was called for.

A resolution from the San Mateo Central Labor Council blamed U.S. corporations for "using the U.S. government to overthrow democracies and to establish such union destroyers as in Chile, the Philippines and Turkey. It is they [the U.S. transnationals] who close U.S. plants or fail to open new plants . . . because of their investments or subcontracting in countries where the destruction of unions [keeps wages] to 5-10 per cent of U.S. levels."

A resolution from the New York State AFL-CIO called for tax curbs on the U.S. transnationals. The Industrial Union Department singled out General Motors and other auto companies for "outsourcing" (contracting out) production of small cars and major components to "Japan, South Korea, Mexico and other low-wage developing countries."

In discussing the "import-export problem," the convention leaned toward protectionist measures as a solution. At the same time, the Officers' Report called for a foreign policy that would retain U.S. manufacturing, agriculture and maritime industries. "The export of capital [and] technology . . . that damage the U.S. economy should not be promoted."

A call was made for the reestablishment of the domestic electronics and television industries. There was a demand for the return of the shipbuilding and ship repair industry to the U.S.

Resolutions submitted by the Maritime Trade Department were sharply critical of the use of foreign "flags of convenience" by U.S. shipowners in order to avoid union wages, working and safety conditions, and the payment of U.S. taxes. There was a demand that the U.S. government "desist its opposition to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development efforts to phase out flags of convenience registries."

Several resolutions declared that government tax loopholes and incentives for transnational companies to move abroad should be ended. They also called for an end to the Overseas Private Guaranty Agency set up by the Reagan Administration to guarantee greater protection to U.S. transnational investments abroad.

A number of resolutions demanded that trade and/or U.S. military aid restrictions be levelled against countries which abuse the right of workers to organize and strike.

The apartheid government of South Africa came under heavy attack, as did the policies of the Reagan Administration toward the Botha regime, and the role of the U.S. transnationals there.

In a ringing speech, Richard Trumpka, United Mine Workers president, blistered the U.S. transnationals and the support they receive from the U.S. government. "It is time for us to fight for a foreign policy which is supportive of working people around the world . . . if we do not, we will continue to find ourselves under the guns of the corporate profiteers." In

his hard-hitting speech, Trumpka went after such outfits as the Shell Oil Company and Fleur Corporation. These companies, with large holdings in South Africa, are joint owners of the Massey Coal Co., with mines in Eastern Kentucky and West Virginia. This brutal outfit has forced U.S. miners out on a strike now going into its second year. Massey has resorted to armed thugs, police dogs and armored trucks in its attempt to smash the union.

Trumpka went on to declare that the government's foreign policy is to make the world "safe for corporate profiteering," and that it "backs any dictator of any stripe who will maintain a 'good business climate' by keeping down wages and keeping workers from organizing." This is the first time a representative of the unaffiliated UMW has spoken at an AFL-CIO convention.

Proclaiming that the unions "face protracted battles against these corporate Goliaths," he concluded that, "Labor's greatest challenge is to develop a mechanism to counter the economic and political power of the multinational corporations that dominate American industry." The rousing response to Trumpka's speech reflected the mood of the delegates.

## THE MEETING SIGNALLED A PROGRESSIVE TURN

**T**he 16th Convention of the AFL-CIO demonstrated that the beginnings of a progressive turn in the trade union movement are already under way. The consistent emphasis on moving labor at the grassroots—the local unions and the central labor bodies—is but one example. A new militancy, with class struggle positions, began coming to the fore as a positive response to growing rank-and-file pressure against such class partnership concepts as concession agreements.

But serious roadblocks remain in the way of a full turnaround in the trade union movement. We have union officials who tout "Saturn-type" contracts as some kind of new advance in com-

pany and union relations. It was first claimed that the Saturn agreement with General Motors was one of a kind. But similar agreements rapidly spread to Chrysler and are now beginning to penetrate company and union relations in steel. If not quickly quenched, they will spread like a prairie fire in a heavy wind, to all sections of the trade union movement.

What do these Saturn-type agreements have in common? First of all, they are negotiated by (in reality, forced upon) union officials with the company before a factory or mill even begins construction. They all include substantial wage cuts (usually at least 30 per cent) below industry scale; emasculation of the shop steward system; elimination of seniority rights. Actually, they go a long way in the direction of plain old-fashioned company unionism.

Concession agreements, failure to fight militantly against plant closures, acceptance of forced overtime while other workers are idle, do not provide the fighting image that workers, organized and unorganized, are looking for these days.

The Officers' Report to the convention represented an advance over the past in a number of areas. Unfortunately, the section dealing with international relations remained Jay Lovestone/Irving Brown undiluted cold war bilge. It was nothing more than an attempt to justify the activities of the International Department and its notorious dealings with the CIA. The same can be said of President Lane Kirkland's defense of AFL-CIO ties with the so-called Endowment for Democracy, created at the instigation of Ronald Reagan, and in which Kirkland and AFT President Albert Shanker share leadership with such Right-wing elements as Senator Orin Hatch.

The tens of millions of dollars funneled into the AFL-CIO's International Department by such CIA fronts as AID and Endowment for De-

mocracy are part of an unvarnished scheme by Big Business to exert outside influence on the political, social and economic policies of the trade union movement. In the name of "fighting Communism" an AFL-CIO body is being used to help make the world safe for the U.S. transnational corporations which, as the convention itself recognized, are bitter foes of workers both at home and abroad. It is an unhappy fact that the nefarious activities of the International Department have brought down scorn and distrust on the entire AFL-CIO from trade unionists around the globe.

While the enemies of honest international trade union relations continue to be deeply entrenched, the vote on Central America blunted efforts to make the AFL-CIO a stooge for the U.S. transnationals in their international machinations in that part of the world. This vote, and the vigorous, open debate that preceded it, have broad implications that go far beyond the immediate issue, and are already exerting a profound impact on organized labor.

The convention reflected many of the new trends earlier perceived by the Central Committee of the CPUSA, developed in its Draft Trade Union Program.

Many new avenues have been opened to struggle against the reactionary policies of the Reagan Administration; for a shift in the relationship of forces in the 1986 congressional elections; for the organization of the unorganized; against racism and discrimination. New opportunities are present for the building of broad, labor-based coalitions aimed at the monopoly corporations.

For Left and progressive trade unionists, there is both the opportunity and the responsibility to consolidate the Left, and to work with Center forces to build the coalitions that will advance the many positive policies adopted by the 16th biennial convention of the AFL-CIO. □

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#### CORRECTION

The next to last paragraph in John Pittman's article, "Restructuring the World Economy," (November 1985) should read:

An end to discrimination against Nicaragua and other countries fighting for independence and national liberation should also be demanded.

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# The Trade Unions and Peace New Developments

SCOTT MARSHALL

"One thing I've noticed about you Communists," said a friend when we worked together at Pullman Standard in Chicago, "you're always saying 'the working class this' and 'the workers that' and you always manage to get peace into the conversation."

In his own way, my friend was pointing out two central aspects of the Communist viewpoint. Peace, especially in the nuclear age, is the survival issue for humanity. And the working class is the revolutionary force which will lead humankind in abolishing exploitation, hunger and poverty, racism and all the other evils of capitalism and imperialism, including war.

Putting it another way, the Communist Party's Draft Trade Union Program says, "The trade union movement must be identified in the eyes of the nation as the leading force in the struggle not only for jobs and against racism and discrimination, but for peace."

Even in the few months since the Draft Program was published for discussion, tremendous developments have taken place in the unions on the question of peace.

**W**HILE the 16th Convention of the AFL-CIO showed important advances by the trade unions on a number of issues, the debate on Central America marked a turning point for the labor movement.

The resolution on foreign policy called for a negotiated settlement in El Salvador and Nicaragua, and condemned the Reagan Administration's drive for a military solution. Never in the history of the AFL nor of the merged AFL-CIO had the organization failed to officially support U.S. State Department foreign policy. It was a notable break with a policy of U.S. imperialism by the labor movement.

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Throughout the history of the U.S. labor movement, there have been important challenges to government foreign policy. Gene Debs and others opposed support for World War I. Large sections of labor, including both the rank and file and top union officials, opposed the war in Vietnam. At this convention, opposition to the State Department's line in Central America became the official position of the entire labor movement. As important as the resolution itself was the open debate and organizing which preceded it.

In the last year there have been several debates on peace issues in the Executive Board of the AFL-CIO. The most notable concerned a nuclear freeze. The Executive Board passed a resolution stating that while most union members support a freeze, others were indifferent. This resolution was discussed only quietly, behind the scenes.

By contrast, the resolution on Central America was heatedly debated on the convention floor after a compromise had been worked out by the Executive Board. Even some delegates who had participated in developing the compromise felt impelled to speak against it. Both sides of the debate, significantly, were later reported in the *AFL-CIO News*.

This convention debate was not a spontaneous occurrence. It resulted from a carefully organized campaign, months in the making, carried out by labor peace forces. It was largely the work of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador.

This committee is made up of top officers of 26 national unions—the Moulders, Operating Engineers, Food and Commercial Workers, Government Workers, United Electrical Workers and IUE, Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers, Service Employees and Furniture Workers, to name a few. It is cochaired by Douglas Fraser,

president emeritus of the United Auto Workers, Jack Sheinkman, secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, and William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists.

Preparations for the AFL-CIO convention included hundreds of mass meetings of trade unionists across the country. Many delegations of U.S. unionists were sent to El Salvador and Nicaragua. Their report-back trips became preparation sessions for the convention fight.

U.S. unions also have organized important speaking tours for trade unionists from El Salvador and Nicaragua. These have included large labor meetings for El Salvador teachers in New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit and Atlanta.

The debate in the labor movement on Central America was carried on in the labor press and at union meetings. Many national unions and central labor bodies defied the Kirkland-Irving Brown foreign policy directives on Central America—so much so that Kirkland and the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO felt compelled to field a road show to bolster sagging support for their cold war policies.

Kirkland personally toured the country, holding regional meetings to explain his position. Many of these sessions turned into interesting discussions and showed that in the top levels of the AFL-CIO there are differences on these questions. Several central labor bodies submitted peace resolutions after participating in these meetings.

Kirkland went so far as to send a letter to all affiliates instructing them not to receive union delegations from El Salvador or Nicaragua. It was a vicious red-baiting letter that said these delegates were "from unions affiliated with the WFTU (World Federation of Trade Unions) which is dominated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

The Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador and several central labor bodies rejected this position and sent out their own letters saying that no matter with whom the main unions of El Salvador and Nicaragua are affiliated, they represent the genuine

trade union movement in those countries.

There are several reasons why this challenge to the cold war, anti-Communist policies of Irving Brown and the International Department took place around Central America. This was a carefully conceived and coordinated initiative by the labor-peace forces. They felt that a challenge on Central America could gather the most support from middle-of-the-road forces, and therefore decided to make Central America their main focus.

While most of the unions involved in the Central America fight are also on record for the nuclear freeze, many were not yet prepared to deal favorably with the positive proposals of the Soviet Union. This is not very surprising given the "plague on both your houses" policy pursued previously by all but the Left in the U.S. peace movement. It should, however, be noted that already several unions, such as the IAM and the UAW, have responded favorably to the Gorbachev proposals.

There were some other very important developments in labor opposition to the arms race at the convention. The continuing pressure from the rank and file and the 22 national unions which have endorsed the freeze was reflected in the Officers' Report to the convention. It stated, "The AFL-CIO welcomes the resumption of the Geneva negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and endorses the objective of a balanced reduction of nuclear arms within a system of verification guaranteeing collective security."

The United Auto Workers, an important member of both the Central America coalition and the Freeze campaign, introduced several resolutions on the military budget and arms control. UAW resolutions called for ratification of SALT II, implementation of a nuclear freeze and conversion from production for military to production for domestic needs.

The hardest-hitting resolution on economic conversion was introduced by the UAW and the Industrial Union Department, which includes most of the industrial unions that came out of the CIO. The Officers' Report also called for a reduction in the military budget.



**T**HE unions represented on the Labor Committees on Central America are mainly the same national unions which have endorsed the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. They are also the unions which have been most active in the Free South Africa campaigns. This bloc represents a majority of the membership of the trade union movement and also is the largest section of the organized industrial working class.

These developments in the trade union movement create one of the most powerful and comprehensive peace forces in the U.S. While they have nowhere near reached their vast potential, the labor-peace forces will be decisive in halting the arms race and opposing the imperialist policies of the U.S. government. In fact, this combination of national unions in peace and anti-imperialist work places the labor-peace forces as a large and leading component of the mass peace movement.

The developments at the AFL-CIO convention and the 25 national labor organizations on record for the freeze are just the tip of peace sentiment in labor. Recent polls which report 73 per cent of the U.S. people in favor of a freeze and reduction of nuclear arms report 83 per cent of union members feel the same way.

The freeze resolutions that have been passed at union conventions are rooted in rank-and-file sentiment. And, in turn, many of the freeze-favoring unions are making great efforts to educate their members on peace issues. For example, the United Food and Commercial Workers has an extensive campaign aimed at local unions. Using materials developed by the Center for Defense Information in Washington, DC, the UFCW is providing a steady stream of materials to its members on issues from Star Wars to economic conversion.

William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), has become one of the most vocal opponents of Reagan's Star War madness, despite the fact that aerospace is the largest section of the IAM membership. Many of the corporate giants that Winpisinger sits across the table from in con-

tract negotiations are making out like bandits on Star Wars contracts. These corporations employ thousands of Machinists' members.

The IAM has campaigned long and hard on economic conversion among its members. It has also done much to point out the instability and insecurity of military production. Because of years of work on these and other peace issues, Winpisinger is able to maintain broad rank-and-file support for his crusade against Star Wars. Another factor has been the Department of Defense's heavy-handed unionbusting pressure on machinists' contracts with companies like General Dynamics and McDonnell-Douglas.

In all of the Machinists' materials and in President Winpisinger's speeches on peace, the key issues are jobs and the superprofits of the military/monopoly corporations. The IAM was one of the first to point out that the billions of profits to be made on Star Wars is one of the biggest obstacles to genuine disarmament.

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) have both been important components of the peace movement in labor. Representative Charles Hayes (D-Ill), a leading personality in CBTU and a former national vice president of the Food and Commercial Workers Union, has been one of the most outspoken leaders of the movement for disarmament. CBTU was an early supporter of the freeze movement and was instrumental in getting several national unions on board.

Congressman Hayes maintains important ties and influence in the labor movement. He has consistently campaigned on peace issues in the labor movement from a working-class point of view. For instance, his Income and Jobs Action Act for full employment and minimum income levels is clearly linked to cutting the military budget.

CLUW is not only a national supporter of the freeze, but has adopted many positions that have moved the labor movement forward on peace questions. A good example is the assistance of several CLUW chapters to the 12th World Festival of Youth in Moscow. CLUW played an important role opening doors to festi-

val organizers who were seeking the participation of young trade unionists.

While some of the most visible peace work in labor is in top leadership circles, there is tremendous grassroots movement in the ranks. Literally hundreds of locals have passed resolutions for the freeze, condemning Star Wars or on some other aspect of peace and military conversion. Throughout the country rank and file trade unionists are playing important roles in all kinds of peace initiatives.

At LTV Steel in South Chicago, United Steelworkers members have been circulating freeze petitions at plant gates, time clocks and in surrounding neighborhoods. Some of the steelworkers involved have become recognized area leaders of the movement.

Another good example comes from the recent Pratt and Whitney strike in East Hartford, Connecticut. Here, because of the close ties of the Machinists union and rank-and-file machinists to the Connecticut peace movement, peace activists and peace organizations helped turn out pickets and other support for the strikers.

In the civil disobedience actions in Utah, where activists are entering off-limits nuclear testing areas, there are many trade unionists participating. These actions are supported by the IAM and UFCW, but also have included rank and filers from dozens of local unions.

**T**HE labor movement has been one of the most dramatic participants in the Free South Africa and antiapartheid movements. The heroic actions of the West Coast longshoremen's union (ILWU) set the tone. When the longshore union refused to unload South African cargo, it had a farreaching impact in the labor movement. Earlier, scores of national labor leaders showed their anger at Reagan's policy of "constructive engagement" by being arrested while picketing the South African Embassy in Washington.

Perhaps more than any other activity, the labor fight against South Africa's racist apartheid system illustrates the anti-imperialist and class-based nature of the peace movement in the unions. In fact, labor is no Johnny-come-la-

tely to the anti-apartheid movement.

In the early 1970s the United Mine Workers members were demonstrating against the importation of South African coal. In these struggles and in the *United Mine Workers Journal* they clearly made the connection between the slave-labor conditions of South African Black miners and the threat to union mining jobs in the U.S. Many of their picket signs condemned the system of apartheid.

This direction was emphasized by Richard Trumka, President of the UMWA, in his speech to the AFL-CIO 16th Convention. Trumka blasted the transnational corporations as unionbusters at home and apartheid supporters in South Africa.

Many locals of the United Steelworkers helped organize speaking tours for members of the South African Congress of Trade Unions and the African National Congress in the early 70s. These tours raised money and support for the South African unions and protested the import of South African coke.

One key factor in producing the strong antiapartheid, antitransnational sentiment in the U.S. labor movement is the growing leadership of the Black South African unions in the liberation struggles. The depth of this feeling is evident in the UMWA's decision to hire Ms. Nomonde Ngubo, a young Black South African trade unionist, to help coordinate antiapartheid and antitransnational work of the union.

**M**ANY in the peace movement and many peace activists are aware of the importance of labor in the overall struggle for disarmament. The National Freeze campaign has a labor coordinator and in several areas has set up labor outreach committees. Other organizations, like the U.S. Peace Council, take special steps to involve labor and include labor representatives in their local chapters.

There are also organizations such as Jobs with Peace and, in California, Labor for Peace, which include unionists and make a strong pitch for linking the struggle for peace to the struggle for economic justice.

Yet, there are some important weaknesses

in the peace movement in regard to the participation of labor. Many still see unions as nice auxiliaries to tack on to the sponsors' list after actions have been planned and programs adopted. They fail to see the indispensable role of labor.

There is a strong need for more national labor forms around specific issues of peace—opposition to Star Wars, cutting the military budget and conversion to peacetime production. It is clear that these forms must and will develop within the labor movement. The climate is right and many doors are opening on these issues. Peace forms within the "house of labor" guarantee working-class and trade union leadership in peace. These forms will make it easier for labor leaders to step out front on controversial issues, such as reciprocating the Soviet initiative halting nuclear testing.

Trade union leaders prefer to move collectively on these issues. They like to have organized bases within their unions and solid groups of like-minded union leaders behind them when taking a stand. This can be seen in the slow and careful way the the Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in Central America was put together. It is led by the top national officers of the unions involved.

This careful approach by labor leaders is not a reflection of conservatism, but a recognition of the vast antiunion forces the unions face, especially when daring to speak out on foreign policy.

Perhaps the most promising approach within the labor movement on peace is the fight for economic conversion. Such a movement links the fight for peace most directly to the fight for jobs and justice for workers. Most trade union leaders recognize the need to cut the military budget in order to provide jobs at home. And as mentioned earlier, the work done by the Machinists Union on conversion has made it possible to move aerospace workers into opposition to military spending.

**O**RGANIZING the grassroots peace sentiment in the ranks of labor is the key to strengthening the movement. The possibilities for initia-

tives are limitless. Most freeze coalitions are open to the setting up of labor committees. This provides the opportunity for rank-and-file unionists to organize in their locals. These committees can become the mass base for labor participation. More than just outreach committees, they can become organizations of union peace activists.

Many unions directly administer or are involved in administering pension funds. Movements to divest pension money from firms doing business in South Africa can also be used against firms making war profits—an important way of organizing for economic conversion.

Local union peace and solidarity committees can be an important breakthrough. They can plan slide shows and other educational activities for their locals. They can organize plant gate collections for material aid projects like money to aid the new South African trade union federation. They can help their locals mobilize for peace and solidarity demonstrations and to support speaking tours for solidarity work.

The mass sentiment for peace is very developed in the labor movement. It is the role of Communists and the Left to further these trends and organize continuing mass pressure. We are the ones who can most clearly show the role of the class enemy, its state-monopoly-military complex, in promoting war and aggression. We are the clearest in countering anti-Soviet and anti-Communist myths and helping the trade union movement see through the lie of the "two superpowers" theory.

Communists have tremendous responsibility for developing working-class leadership in the broad peace movement, in guaranteeing trade union participation and leadership. We have many tools at our disposal. The *Daily World*, *People's World*, *Political Affairs* and the other Party journals, Party shop papers and club leaflets are direct ways of dealing with peace and justice from the Communist viewpoint.

My friend was right. We must build on these positive developments. Yes, "the working class this" and "the workers that" and "the arms race must be stopped"! □

# The Communists' Role in Auto

SAM WEBB

The continuing crisis in the auto industry and the corresponding upsurge among autoworkers places a weightier responsibility on the Communist Party and on each Communist.

To be more precise, we should do more than observe developments and record events. That can be done by students of history.

We should do more than predict the likely outcome of struggles. Conditions in the industry are too unstable, the struggle too spontaneous, thought patterns among workers too fluid to be compatible with any scenario that minimizes the potential for big working-class advances in the present period.

We should do more than expose shortcomings of the top leadership of the UAW. That is the stock-in-trade of the phony Left. More importantly, it lets the auto monopolies off the hook, diverts our focus from the grassroots, and can lead to inaction and pessimism.

We should do more than talk in broad generalities. Such talk is only useful to the degree that it leads to concrete projections and actions.

We should not talk about everything but the Party. Our experience confirms a simple, indisputable fact—a bigger Party in auto is the key to deepening, widening and uniting autoworkers' struggles against the Reagan/auto-corporation offensive.

Our task is to deepen our involvement, inject Communist essence, and build a bigger Party in auto.

To this end, the experience of Communists in the shops and communities is vital. The Party must know and draw conclusions from what is happening in shops, what we are doing to influence developments there, how the workers respond to the *Daily World* and our shop papers, on what issues the rank and file need greater clarity, how shop papers can be improved in

content and appearance, and how they can be used as vehicles to build shop clubs, how we can better coordinate our work, whether our arguments about nationalization are convincing and whether we give adequate attention to this question in our propaganda, and what successes and problems we have had in recruiting and consolidating new members.

If we seriously examine these and other questions, build upon the many positive experiences that we have had, decide on appropriate actions, and fix responsibility for carrying decisions out, we can measure up to the great challenge before us.

## *Some Lessons from The Chrysler Strike*

The strike by 65,000 Chrysler workers, the first national auto strike in almost a decade, provides a rich backdrop to this examination. It allows us to draw some conclusions that can be generalized for the entire industry.

Early on it was apparent that Chrysler workers were prepared to fight. In January the UAW-Chrysler Council, a leadership body of local union officers and committeemen, rejected reopening the contract early without a strike deadline. Bitter fights over local work rules and job classifications were commonplace in Chrysler plants in the spring and summer. The response to our press and shop papers was overwhelmingly positive. Three major plants went out a few hours before the contractual deadline of midnight, October 15, thereby preventing any extension of the old agreement. Striking workers opted for mass, round-the-clock picketlines rather than small picketlines in daylight hours only.

Thus, the thirteen-day Chrysler strike and the events that preceded it signal the emer-

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gence of a broad, fighting, grassroots current among autoworkers. It is propelled by the structural crisis as well as the Reagan-corporate offensive. It is an extension of the strike wave sweeping the country.

Furthermore, this new rank-and-file based current is of sufficient scope and strength to squeeze concessions from the auto transnationals. This, too, is new after five years of unprecedented concessions and retreat.

Striking Chrysler workers won some gains and blunted the most far-reaching of Chrysler's concession demands, which included reducing job classifications from about 80 to 5 in a typical auto plant, and substituting profit-sharing and lump sum bonus payments for traditional annual wage increases. Of course, all is not rosy in the new agreement. The new language on outsourcing and job classification opens up some dangers to living standards and conditions on the shop floor, and consequently threatens the future of the union.

While it is too early to say that the balance of forces has tipped decisively in favor of the fightback current, two things can be said without qualification: The period of concessions and accommodation in the name of job security and "saving the company" is over, and the superiority of class-struggle trade unionism over class partnership policies is obvious to a growing number of autoworkers. This was noted by the Big Business media, who lamented the return to "adversarial" bargaining.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the Chrysler negotiations and strike is the great advantage inherent in a companywide fight. Though successful struggles can be fought and won on a local level, the prospects for staying the company's hand and making advances increase geometrically to the degree that the struggle can be widened. The Chrysler workers, for example, were able to prevent the reduction in job classifications which Chrysler so desperately wanted to achieve.

The significance of this elementary truth of class-struggle trade unionism should be repeated over and over again as all the auto monopolies step up their campaign at the local un-

ion level—demanding the reopening of local agreements covering work rules, bidding rights, job classifications, etc. At every step, Party and Left forces should fight for a united, industry-wide front against company efforts to Saturnize the industry. Short of that, support and solidarity of even a few locals in the company chain can sometimes determine victory or defeat.

Still another conclusion that can be gleaned from the recent strike struggle is that higher levels of militancy, understanding and unity in autoworkers' ranks are necessary to curb outsourcing and other company prerogatives. Chrysler was readier to make concessions on bonuses and hourly wages than to cede any of its rights to determine where its cars and trucks are produced. This right, Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca and his Ford and GM counterparts argue, is sacred and untouchable.

This position evolves from the dynamics of capitalist development and the specific features of capitalism at its current stage. As Karl Marx pointed out, capitalism respects no national boundaries. It is a system characterized by constant expansion and movement of capital to areas where the profit yield is greatest. This is especially so at the present stage of capitalist development. The level of internationalization and interlocking of capital is unprecedented.

Moreover, there is every reason to believe that this trend will accelerate in the coming period, in auto and other industries, as capitalism tries to overcome its built-in difficulties and contradictions at the workers' expense.

Thus, clarity of purpose, unity in the ranks, greater international cooperation, and initiatives in the political as well as collective bargaining arena are essential to stopping the flight of capital, loss of jobs, and the all-out assault on wages and conditions.

A final conclusion to be drawn from the recent strike struggle is that the Party has a vital role to play—ideologically, politically and organizationally. Many Chrysler workers took note of what we said, followed our lead on certain questions, and some joined the Party.

We put out shop papers in thousands of copies at three Chrysler plants. Tens of thou-

sands of copies of the *Daily World*, including three special auto issues, were passed out at plant gates and in neighborhoods where Chrysler workers live. Our shop comrades helped put together rank-and-file material and pass out special issues of *Labor Today* and *Economic Notes*. Resolutions in support of the Chrysler workers were introduced in many organizations on our initiative.

The results show in the increased prestige and size of the Party among Chrysler workers which, after all is said and done, is the real yardstick to measure the value of our work.

Of course, there were shortcomings. But they can be overcome if we build a bigger Party in auto and better focus the neighborhood clubs on industrial concentration.

### ***The Political Basis For Developing Projections***

The sharpening of the class struggle and the growing influence of our Party in auto are the political basis for developing our projections for the coming year. They are welcome developments. In the early 80s, the layoffs of hundreds of thousands of autoworkers, the closing of scores of plants, left many of our members out in the cold. That period is behind us.

We are now building upon connections that we have established in the past few years, new struggles in which we have participated and, in some cases, led, a new attitude among autoworkers towards our Party, and a new feeling of confidence in the Party and its program.

Just as we zeroed in on the Chrysler negotiations as the key issue in 1985, we must single out the key questions before autoworkers in 1986. At the top of the agenda is the fight against Saturnization. It was the cutting edge of the contractual struggle at Chrysler and prompted the strike at Fenton. It is uppermost in the minds of autoworkers.

The auto companies want to substitute salary schemes and bonus payments for annual wage increases and cost-of-living payments; to

eliminate work rules and the existing job classification and seniority structures; to replace the union on the shop floor by "quality of work life teams" made up of management and workers. These teams are designed to use the workers' practical knowledge of the production process to intensify exploitation on the one hand, and to inculcate a corporate mentality among the workers on the other hand.

Thus, the fight against Saturnization is the combustible material propelling autoworkers into struggle. Any idea that we can bypass this issue and its expressions on the shop floor would be mistaken, to say the least.

Furthermore, the prospects for mounting a winning fight are better than many think. There is a broad base of opposition to Saturnization at different levels of the UAW. Not only the recent rank-and-file struggles and strikes are evidence of this, but the quiet concern of many local union officers, the setting up of an independent auto union in Canada and the speeches over the past few months by Victor Reuther, former UAW Executive Board member and brother of the late Walter Reuther, testify to a differentiation taking place among the union's leadership over Saturnization.

To tap this potentially broad and powerful movement requires astute tactics. We must find the ways and forms to stimulate a wide front of struggle, to bring together Left and Center forces (which doesn't include the phony Left in its various shades) on this issue. Of immediate importance is the strike of 3,200 workers at the Chrysler plant in Fenton, Missouri. These workers are on the front line of the struggle against the auto companies' plans to Saturnize the industry. This local strike is of national significance and deserves the support of every auto worker and trade unionist.

Another issue that will stir autoworkers into struggle is the fight against plant closings and for jobs. Chrysler, which has gutted its operations in Detroit, has announced plans to close Jefferson Assembly on the city's Eastside and Belvedere Assembly in Illinois; Ford has said that it will shut down the Dearborn Assembly plant; and General Motors announced two

years ago that the Cadillac and Fleetwood plants in Detroit are scheduled for closing. These closings, plus other layoffs in the industry, will have a devastating impact on auto-workers and their communities.

Our task is to help stimulate all the diverse forces who have a stake in keeping these plants open. The time to do it is before the plants are closed. It is very difficult to force the company to reopen a plant or to take it over under the right of eminent domain.

The 1986 elections should also figure prominently in our work. They offer an opportunity to make a qualitative turn in the fight against Reaganism. That would have great significance for the entire country and the world.

Our job is to activate the membership around the issues that will emerge in these elections, support candidates ready to fight Reaganism, encourage the running of candidates from the labor and people's movement and move the UAW in the direction of greater independence.

The fight for equality demands the immediate concern of all those who want to preserve the unity and strength of the UAW, who want to launch a working-class counteroffensive in auto. Though the consequences of the structural crisis have been felt throughout the industry, Black workers have been hardest hit.

Moreover, conditions could worsen as a new cyclical crisis takes hold. Most of the scheduled plant closings, for instance, are of plants where Black workers make up a substantial percentage of the workforce. New plants are often located in areas where few Black workers live. The new GM Saturn plant, for example, is to be built in a rural community in Tennessee.

Hence, we need to find ways to mount a struggle around this and other manifestations of the racist and discriminatory impact of the auto crisis and the Reagan Administration's assault on affirmative action. It will take some ideological work, new approaches and concrete steps in our overall work to elevate the struggle for equality and working-class unity.

The struggle for peace and against Star Wars continues to be the overriding issue of the day. How it is resolved will affect the outcome

of all struggles on other fronts. The summit meeting of President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev broke the downward spiral in relations between the two countries and creates an improved climate to fight for peace in the trade union movement.

A simple starting point would be to introduce resolutions at the local level hailing the summit as a first step in breaking out of the cold war deep freeze in which the Reagan Administration had placed U.S.-Soviet relations.

Furthermore, resolutions ought to support a moratorium on nuclear testing until the conclusion of the summer summit of 1986 and for continued observance of the ABM and SALT II treaties. After all, why build weapons at a feverish pace on earth and in space just before a major meeting, particularly since the Soviet side is ready to extend its own unilateral suspension of nuclear testing.

Another task in the coming year is to stimulate this new fighting current that is taking shape in the industry. In many ways it has a purely spontaneous character. Nobody, for example, knew beforehand that the issue of job classifications would strike such a raw nerve among the Chrysler workers.

We must help give this current a more organized character. To do that will require flexibility. This movement should not be forced into a permanent mold, particularly at the national level and probably at the local level also. It is too diverse and broad in scope.

The main thing now is to focus on the grassroots, organize around the issues, fight for breadth and be ready to join with others on the shop floor, in the union hall—with whoever is leading a fight on this or that issue. The forms will be varied, ad hoc in most cases, though this could change rapidly. From these struggles a basis will be laid for a more-organized Left and Center in the industry.

The fight for international trade union cooperation is still another question deserving more day-to-day attention. Such a view flows from the fact that it's hard to scratch an overseas auto firm these days and not find some measure of U.S. ownership, control, or tie-in.

Not surprisingly, U.S. auto executives are taking advantage of this phenomenon to pit U.S. workers against their class brothers in other countries, particularly Japan. We must propagandize about this issue and take practical steps to join hands with our sister unions abroad—just as the auto companies of different nations are joining forces.

***The Press Is the Political  
Barometer of  
Struggle***

Central to our work is the fight for the press. It is the political barometer of our struggle for Communist essence, for higher levels of class and socialist consciousness. It will take on added significance in view of the decision to launch a new national newspaper.

We need to fight for weekly regularity at the plant gates and working-class communities where the paper is now being passed out. That is not easy, but wherever we do it, the political level of the workers in the plant rises. Of course, it won't happen spontaneously. It means mobilizing the entire Party to help out, and putting someone in charge of the work. Even where we have dedicated teams that go out weekly to plant gates or working-class neighborhoods, it still calls for regular checkup.

We also should begin distributions at some new plants which are strategic to the industry. Each district should take up this question. In Michigan, a number of plants might be considered. Perhaps, a starting point would be to pass out the special auto issue at the new plants selected for distribution.

A related task is the stabilization and expansion of our shop papers. Everyone connected with the circulation of our shop papers knows that they have proven invaluable. Other than a mass election campaign, there are few better ways to bring the presence and ideas of the Party to workers and to influence their thought patterns. Every time we distribute the *Jefferson Worker*, the workers' reactions and comments

show that the shop paper is well worth the effort. While it is difficult to say precisely to what degree the shop papers shaped the attitudes and actions of Chrysler workers in their struggles, it is safe to argue that the shop papers deepened the thinking of workers as to the stakes in these negotiations and the requirements for a victory. We don't fully appreciate the impact shop papers have in raising the level of class consciousness and elevating the prestige of the Party among autoworkers.

For these reasons, new efforts have to be made to regularize the issuance of shop papers and to branch out to additional plants.

A number of programmatic questions deserve greater elaboration. Nationalization, exports/imports, affirmative action, Saturnization, come to mind. The publication of an updated program in the coming year would be welcomed by the rank and file and many at leadership levels. It would stimulate a much-needed discussion about the future of the industry. It would raise the sights of autoworkers.

Finally, the sharpening struggle in auto mandates the building of shop clubs. We are now just too small to keep up with the scope of the movement. Shop clubs would change that. They would increase and improve our mass involvement, propaganda and connections to workers. In the recent Chrysler struggle, we recruited some auto workers into the Party and a new shop club is forming. Though many things influenced their decision to join, the new recruits say our shop papers, were decisive. We should note this experience and consider creative ways the shop papers can bring workers to and into the Party.

Of course, other forms are necessary. Public meetings, small house gatherings with workers from a particular shop, home visits to prospective recruits are some ways to speak to autoworkers about the Party.

We should plan to organize a full discussion of our recent recruiting experiences at the national auto conference in the spring. Such a discussion would stimulate each of us to more consciously bring workers into the Party. □



# Ferment in the Labor Movement

JOHN TALMADGE

Today the ranks of American labor are stirring. Ferment is challenging the lethargy and decline that gripped American labor after the cold war began. This ferment is a product of the general crisis of capitalism, structural crises in basic industry and the direct assault on labor led by President Reagan and his corporate allies.

## *The Serious Crisis Facing Labor Today*

Today, labor faces a serious crisis. The two most obvious dimensions of this crisis are the decline of union membership relative to the work force and the decline of workers' living standards due to takeaways and concessions in collective bargaining. Plant shutdowns, high levels of unemployment and cutbacks in social programs have aggravated these developments.

Within the past year, the AFL-CIO has begun to face up to the gravity of the situation. In February 1985, the AFL-CIO Executive Council issued a report, *The Changing Situation of the Workers and Their Unions*, which concluded, "Despite their accomplishments, unions find themselves behind the pace of change." Defining how unions are behind, the report notes that labor's membership is eroding both in absolute numbers and in terms of labor's percentage of the workforce.

As a percentage of the entire workforce, union membership declined from a peak of 35 per cent in 1954 to under 19 per cent in 1985. Moreover, the absolute number of union members has dropped steadily in the 1980s. The stark fact is that, because of plant closings and layoffs, unions need to organize 465,000 workers a year just to stay even. If unions continue to lose ground at the same rate as in recent years, they will represent only 10 per cent of the work-

force by 1990.

What are the reasons for this decline? The report cites two reasons: changes in the workforce and failure of current labor law to protect workers who attempt to unionize. Unquestionably these reasons have validity.

Changes in the economy have been shifting employment from sectors with traditionally high rates of unionization towards sectors with low rates of unionization. There has been a shift in employment from the goods producing sectors of manufacturing, construction and mining toward the service sector. During the 1970s, about 90 per cent of all new jobs created were in the service sector, less than 10 per cent of which is organized. Related to this is the shift in employment from the relatively highly unionized states of the Great Lakes and Northeast toward the less unionized "Sun Belt" states.

This shift in employment has contributed to labor's membership problems, but it is hardly the whole story.

Figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics show a clear shift within the goods producing sector from union to non-union employment in the period 1980 to 1984. The number of union miners decreased by 127,000 while the number of miners increased 58,000. Unionized construction workers decreased 513,000, while the number of construction workers outside of unions increased by 467,000. Similarly in manufacturing industries, the number of workers in unions fell 1,521,000, while the number of workers outside of unions increased by 517,000. These figures show that the causes of declining union membership include more than the shift in employment toward the service sector.

Exclusive reliance on this structural reason would beg the question of why labor has not been more successful in organizing service industries, new goods-producing sectors and the South. In fact there are growing numbers of non-union workers in precisely the types of industries and sectors of the economy where labor

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has traditionally been strong.

It is worth noting that similar shifts in employment in Western Europe and Canada have not resulted in a similar net decline in union membership.

The second reason for the decline in union membership pointed to by the AFL-CIO report is the failure of the law to protect workers' right to organize. There is certainly truth here. In 1984 the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations of the Committee on Education and Labor of the U.S. House of Representatives held extensive hearings on the operation of the National Labor Relations Act. After noting how Reagan has politicized the NLRB by appointing antilabor people to high positions; how NLRB decisions in unfair labor practice cases now take over a year and consistently favor business; how the law has not protected workers from firings; how the law has not deterred illegal employer activity against unions, the subcommittee bluntly concludes, "Labor law has failed."

The subcommittee report, however, makes clear that the decline in union membership is due to more than just the failure of law. It demonstrates an increase in employer resistance to unions and an increased willingness on the part of employers to spend large sums of money and to stop at nothing, including violations of the law, to keep workers from organizing. The most "startling statistic" the subcommittee uncovered is that at least one of every twenty workers who vote for a union is illegally fired. It also found that employers commonly resort to illegal tactics to prevent workers from organizing and that penalties for violating the law are too slight to deter lawbreakers.

Moreover, the committee found that American industry is now spending over half a billion dollars (\$500,000,000) a year on antiunion consultants, who specialize in techniques to prevent workers from organizing. The AFL-CIO testified that managements are hiring antiunion consultants in two-thirds of all union organizing drives. In the end, the Congressional report may go further than the AFL-CIO report in acknowledging how large a part in the decline in union membership is played by employers who

have declared open class war on the American labor movement.

Another, most important, reason exists for the decline of union membership—namely the unions' failure over a long period of time to devote enough money, time and attention to organizing the unorganized. Hand and hand with this has gone a failure to develop strategies and show the determination necessary to deal successfully with the broad offensive being waged by the unionbusting employers. The omissions of the AFL-CIO report in these respects are all the more striking because two of its academic contributors, professors Richard B. Freeman and James L. Medoff, point directly to these questions in their book, *What Do Unions Do?* Freeman and Medoff indicate that union expenditures per potential union member have declined 30 per cent since 1953 and that "the decline in union organizing effort contributed substantially to the drop over the past quarter century in the percentage of nonagricultural workers newly organized through NLRB elections." (P. 229.)

This point was demonstrated by Marshall Ganz, a former organizer with the United Farm Workers, and Scott Washburn in a report entitled, "Organizing and Unions, A Challenge of the 80s." Ganz and Washburn state that unions in California have an income of \$903,000,000. Yet, of the 7,500 fulltime people employed by unions only 180 (2.4 per cent) are organizers. For 6,750,000 unorganized workers in the private sector in California, there are 96 organizers. For 2,000,000 unorganized clerical workers in the state, there are 4 fulltime organizers. The writers conclude that "organizing is seen as the least important activity in most unions."

At the national level, the lack of attention to organizing is all the more obvious because of the inordinate attention given to international affairs. Through the four institutes connected with its International Affairs Department, the AFL-CIO spends \$43 million a year abroad, an amount nearly equal to its entire \$45 million domestic budget, of which organizing is only a small part. While the fortunes of unions sag at home, the International Affairs Department

continues to lavish money on such small, disruptive and unrepresentative unions abroad as the anti-Sandinista CUS in Nicaragua, the pro-Marcos TUCP in the Philippines, and a tiny group of pro-Duarte unions in El Salvador. (*Business Week*, November 4, 1985.)

These causes of labor's troubles must be faced up to. To do otherwise invites defeatism and the belief that nothing can be done until external circumstances magically change. Facing up squarely to past and present weaknesses can lead unions to do much that it is well within their power to do.

### ***The Erosion of Workers' Living Conditions***

Erosion of living standards and working conditions is another major dimension of the challenge facing labor. According to the U.S. Labor Department, real hourly wages of workers in U.S. manufacturing fell 5.5 per cent from 1978 to 1984. Part of the decline is due to the loss of hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs through plant closings, introduction of new technology and transfer of production abroad. Part is due to the over 7 per cent unemployment rate after four years of feeble recovery from the most severe economic depression since the 1930s. Part is due to Reagan's cutbacks in social programs and lack of enforcement of legislation on wages, hours and safety. A direct factor for unionized workers has been the many contracts containing wage freezes and reductions, reduced benefits and weakened work rules.

Faced with employer threats to close down, sell-out, subcontract or relocate, unions across a broad range of industries have been agreeing to cutbacks. Typically, concession bargaining results in the freezing or reduction of wages and benefits. Sometimes wage increases are won, but in the form of lump sum payments. They may or may not be linked to productivity or profits, but in any case they are not added to base wages and thus do not serve as a base for further increases. Some employers are also in-

sisting on relaxation of work rules and reduction or elimination of job classifications. One of the most insidious and divisive forms of concessions demanded by employers is the "two-tier" wage system.

In extreme cases, employers are demanding a whole package of concessions in what amounts to a wholesale attempt to impose "class partnership" models of unionism. This is the meaning of the new Saturn contract concluded by the United Automobile Workers and General Motors. The Saturn agreement is based on a "philosophy of total cooperation" and "a cooperative problem-solving relationship between Management and the Union." Among other things, it reduces the base wage to 80 per cent of that of other auto workers; it holds out the other 20 per cent as a "reward" contingent on productivity. It reduces all unskilled classifications to one and skilled classifications to between three and five. It eliminates seniority except as a "tie-breaker in those unusual circumstances where competing members are equal in all respects." It creates a system in which the top 80 per cent of workers are protected against layoffs except in unusual circumstances, whereas the bottom 20 per cent enjoy no such protection. It eliminates the traditional steward and grievance system and makes the union a partner in the Saturn Consultation Procedure, designed to brainwash and discipline workers whose behavior does not conform to Saturn philosophy. These concessions, so at odds with the militant traditions of the autoworkers, have led the UAW-Canada to reject all such innovations and Victor Reuther to call the Saturn agreement "company unionism."

Concessions contribute to labor's organizing difficulties by making unions less appealing to unorganized workers. When, as has been true in recent years, the wage gains of unionized workers are less than those of non-unionized workers, there is little incentive for unorganized workers to undertake the sacrifices and risks necessary to organize. The AFL-CIO report is ambiguous on what attitude to take toward such contracts, reflecting disagreement among labor leaders. One sentence endorses "a

cooperative approach to solving shared present and future problems," language that could have come right from the Saturn agreement, while the bulk of the report opens the door for new and aggressive tactics that harken back to the militant organizing of the CIO.

### ***The New Trends in The Labor Movement***

These developments are stimulating some new trends, particularly in the area of organizing. As the Communist Party's *Draft Trade-Union Program* notes,

Fresh winds are sweeping through the ranks of labor. Ferment and revitalization are beginning to replace the stagnation and decline that set in with the cold war days of the 1950s. Powerful grassroots pressures are fueling a rising spirit of militancy.

To be sure, many of the old leaders, and much of the usual complacency, remain. Nevertheless, many new faces have appeared on all levels of union leadership, mainly at the local level and on union staffs. These new activists and leaders, some young and some middle aged, are locked into neither the ideas of the cold war nor the practice of business-as-usual. They question the assumptions and practices of business unionism and are open to new ideas and to some neglected "old" ideas.

One of the most important aspects of the AFL-CIO report is its stress on the need for drives to organize the unorganized and its call for a number of approaches to organizing with which Communists can agree. First, the report argues that organizing drives should not just rely on professional organizers but should actively involve the rank and file. It was just such an approach that marked the CIO organizing drives of the 1930s and gave these drives the energy and enthusiasm of a social movement. This is the approach advocated by the *Draft Trade Union Program*, when it declares:

Every experience of the past proves that grassroots organization is the key to success. There must be in-

plant organizing committees among the unorganized; organizing committees in every local union and central labor council; organizing committees in communities.

Secondly, the report calls for experimental organizing committees composed of people from different unions, aiming to organize workers within a given geographical area. This is entirely consistent with the proposition in the *Draft Program* that successful organizing demands labor unity: "Fragmented organization with a variety of unions competing among themselves regardless of jurisdiction is both self-defeating and a disgraceful waste of resources."

Third, the report advocates the use of "corporate campaigns." Corporate campaigns use tactics other than strikes (though sometimes in conjunction with strikes) to pressure an employer either to recognize and bargain with a newly organized union or to bargain fairly with an established union. Such campaigns as J.P. Stevens and Phelps Dodge have used boycotts, the threat to withdraw union pension funds from banks linked to a target company, and the mobilization of political and moral pressure against a target company and against banks and other institutions that are linked to a target company by loans, purchases, sales or interlocking boards of directors.

However useful, corporate campaigns have occasionally led to trouble when organizers have substituted a corporate campaign for the militancy and organization of the workers themselves. At times, hired outside consultants running a corporate campaign have promoted themselves as the leaders of the struggle in order to gain publicity for their consulting enterprises, and this has undercut the real leaders of the workers and harmed their struggle. Still, when a target company flagrantly violates the law or threatens the welfare of an entire community by threats to close down, a well-run corporate campaign can mobilize the entire labor movement and the larger community to support a group of workers.

Fourth, the AFL-CIO report calls upon la-

bor to find ways to bring into the labor movement prounion workers who are no longer in a recognized bargaining unit. The AFL-CIO estimates that there are 27 million such former union members. Some have lost union jobs through layoffs or plant closings and had to accept non-union jobs. Others are jobless. Still others were involved in unsuccessful efforts to organize their places of work. Many of these workers remain prounion. Their involvement in the labor movement would augment labor's political clout and organizing capacities.

Fifth, the report calls upon labor to strive to improve its public image. In particular, it urges more use of electronic media and local newspapers and teaching the purposes and history of the labor movement in public schools. This represents a long-term strategy to change public attitudes toward unions that undermine organizing efforts.

### ***New Methods and Forms For Organizing the Unorganized***

In recent years, there have been a number of examples of a new determination to organize the unorganized. Some unions have targeted particular locations, types of industries or workers. The AFL-CIO has experimented with intensified organizing efforts by a number of unions in particular locations, including Los Angeles, Cincinnati and Houston. In this last case, the AFL-CIO has spent more than one million dollars on educational efforts, including television and radio advertising. In less than four years, the campaign has enrolled about 10,000 new members. Though some in labor have faulted the campaign for overstating its gains, relying too much on a top-down approach, and spending too much on media and not enough on organizers, it nonetheless remains a first step toward cooperative union organizing.

Some unions have tried to focus on small manufacturing firms. Most unorganized workers in manufacturing are employed by firms with less than 50 workers. Moreover, unions

have had more success in recent years in organizing small employers, probably because they have less money to spend trying to prevent organization. From 1979 to 1981, unions have won 52 per cent of elections in units with fewer than 50 employees, compared to 28 per cent in units larger than 500 employees. However, organization of an industry certainly requires, as its basis, organization of the large companies.

A number of unions have focused on industries with a large concentration of women and minority workers and have stressed issues of concern to these workers. Some unions, for example, have targeted health care and university clerical and technical workers and have stressed such issues as pay equity, day care and maternity leaves. This approach played a major role in a successful drive to organize 2,600 clerical and technical workers at Yale University and another to organize 1,000 clerical workers at Columbia University.

Unions are also experimenting with joint organizing ventures. One of the most successful occurred between the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) against Beverly Enterprises, the nation's largest chain of nursing homes. This reflects a larger trend toward greater solidarity. In a number of recent strikes, including Greyhound, Phelps Dodge and Wheeling Pitt, unions have raised money, demonstrated and picketed in solidarity.

Unions are forming alliances with community groups. The struggle at Yale was a model in this respect. (See, "Yale Workers Win!", *Political Affairs*, July 1985.) The successful contract included large wage increases, job security provisions, a dental plan and reductions in wage inequality between men and women and between Blacks and whites.

Some unions have realized that if they expect to call upon the larger community for support, they must take a greater interest in community issues. Unions have noticeably increased their participation in the peace movement, in the antiapartheid movement, in the movement for democracy and human rights in Central America and in the movements to

achieve pay equity and to preserve affirmative action.

Another new trend is the effort to make effective use of the mass media. This has ranged from efforts to improve the quality of union newspapers and the accessibility of union leaders to reporters to sophisticated and expensive radio and television advertisements, programs and films. In 1981 the AFL-CIO established the Labor Institute of Public Affairs, whose purpose is production of television programs for and about labor. LIPA now operates on a budget of over \$3 million a year. In 1983 and 1984, it produced 18 half-hour programs on such issues as pay equity, jobs for teenagers and the quality of worklife. The LIPA has also produced 18 30-second spot advertisements (four in Spanish) on such topics as trade, taxes and jobs.

The UFCW, Teamsters and SEIU have produced videos that explain the advantages of unions to prospective members. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers (AFSCME) currently spends between \$1 million and \$2 million every year on advertising and public affairs shows.

### ***A New Debate on Policies and Issues***

At the latest convention of the AFL-CIO the unions associated with the Labor Committee for Democratic and Human Rights in El Salvador forced a compromise on the Central America resolution. The final resolution calls for a "negotiated settlement, rather than military victory in Nicaragua." This represented a rebuff to those forces who favor aid to the "contras." The debate over this resolution produced some of the sharpest criticism ever heard at an AFL-CIO convention. Jerry Brown of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees said, "we have to give a different image to the American people and to American workers" than always being "the shock troops of the cold war." Ed Asner of the Screen Actors Guild said:

it does not make me proud . . . that the AFL-CIO is

spending almost as much on . . . misguided and ill-conceived foreign programs as we spend on domestic programs . . . It does not make me proud to see us bolstering the foreign policies of those whose stated goals include the destruction of our own labor movement like Orin Hatch and Ronald Reagan.

Communists in the labor movement are extremely encouraged by these new ideas and trends and are in the thick of many of these struggles. Communists see the possibility of real unity with Center forces on the basis of many of these constructive positions.

Communists' own views are advanced in the *Draft Trade Union Program*. They insist that the union movement only makes real progress when it follows a course of aggressive, class struggle policies. They contend that for labor to progress it must champion the needs of the whole people, including the issues of full employment and peace. Progress for labor must rest on unity of the workers and unity must be forged in struggles against racism, for affirmative action and for increased leadership opportunities in the labor movement for Afro-Americans, Hispanic Americans and other minorities and women. Communists insist that working-class unity must include rejection of redbaiting and extension of unity across national boundaries. Progress for labor demands independent political action against Big Business.

The trends discussed here are evidence of fresh winds blowing through the trade union movement in the United States. Without a doubt there is a greater openness to new ideas, those of Communists, than at any time since the cold war. There is greater willingness to experiment with new tactics, to try bold and aggressive techniques of organizing and bargaining, and to build alliances and solidarity within the labor movement and between the labor movement and the community. It is still too early to say that these new trends have shaken off the dead hand of the past. One thing, however, is clear—the American labor movement has entered an era, and both the need and the opportunity for class conscious workers is as great as it has ever been. □

# The Meese-Trap Target: Democracy

JIM WEST

The growing influence of the military-monopoly complex in the economic and political life of our country and its affinity with the ultra-Right within the Reagan Administration are creating grave new threats to democracy.

This is the real meaning of the drive by Attorney General Edwin Meese 3rd against "judicial activism" and for a "jurisprudence of original intent." This lofty-sounding doctrine calls, allegedly, for interpretation of the Constitution according to the intentions of its framers, but it serves in fact as an instrument with which excitation assaults the rights of the working class, the Afro-American and other oppressed minorities, women, the aged, the disabled and the poor.

Debate over interpretation of the Constitution and separation of powers among branches of government involves, in the last analysis, class and economic interests. It is a facet of the military-monopoly drive for complete control over economic and political decision-making and of the people's struggle to stop it.

When the Supreme Court moves in the direction of giving the Executive Branch power to deny passports to citizens who are critical of U.S. policy and overrides limits placed by Congress on campaign spending—a decision favoring corporate wealth and its candidates—there is no outcry from the Meeseketeers about "lack of judicial restraint."

The ultra-Right is loud in its protestations that the Bill of Rights should not apply to the states. But when the High Court scuttles safety regulations imposed by the states on the nuclear power industry, they conveniently forget to raise their voices in defense of states' rights.

When the Supreme Court gives agribusiness access to federally subsidized irrigation, overturning limitations on this federal largesse set by Congress, Meese and the extreme conser-

vatives are mute about judicial activism, separation of powers, and ending government entanglement with business.

It would seem that this is not the kind of judicial activism Meese & Co. are trying to shoot down. Nor are the monopolies and the far Right unhappy with these rulings.

However, Supreme Court decisions upholding the constitutionality of affirmative action against racial discrimination, reiterating women's right to terminate unwanted pregnancies and requiring police to inform suspects of their legal rights (the Miranda decision) are denounced by Meese as "activism."

ONE might think, since Meese demands the courts interpret the Constitution according to the original intent of its framers, that he has a hot line direct to their thoughts. Can that be why, in opposing the Miranda decision, Meese told *U.S. News and World Report*, "If a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect"? Repeat: If you are a suspect, you are guilty. Forget about being innocent until proven guilty. Surely Paine and Jefferson, Franklin and Mason, must be turning over in their graves at the thought that such a mentality presides over the Department of Justice.

The *Wall Street Journal* interprets "judicial restraint" to mean taking the Constitutional separation of powers "more seriously," charging that the judiciary has taken over executive and legislative functions.

Undoubtedly, there is a push and pull, a tug of war, a struggle over the powers of enactment and enforcement among the three branches of government.

But, as is evident from the above-cited examples, the bottom line in these struggles is not loose or strict, liberal or dogmatic interpretation of the separation of powers doctrine. Rather, it is about class interests—about democracy for the few and democracy for the many. Democ-

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racy for the few means advancing profit interests and covering up corruption, fraud and outright robbery in the highest echelons. Democracy for the many means equality of rights and better living standards—wider freedoms and better health, housing and education for the working class and the people in general.

The spearhead of the ultra-Right attack on the democratic rights is the racist drive against affirmative action, against the civil and voting rights acts of 1964 and 1965 and , aimed at dividing Black and white and destroying the unity of the democratic opposition to the Meese marauders. Meese has revealed how he regards separation of powers: "Power granted to Congress should be properly understood as power granted to the Executive." (*New York Times*, November 6, 1985.) Thus, according to Meese, when Congress establishes an independent agency, such as the Civil Rights Commission, the President may destroy its independence by firing half its members because he opposes their stand for civil rights. So much for Meese's cant about the separation of powers.

**I**NDEED, where has the *Wall Street Journal* been, where have the Big Business-controlled mass media been, while Constitutional liberties have been subverted by the Reagan White House by these acts:

- Executive Order 12291 gives the President far-reaching powers sanctioned neither by the Constitution nor by Congress. Under it, the President can decide what to keep secret from the public. It sets a yardstick of "cost-benefit" principles as the basis on which to decide the fate of any government publication or program. Scores of useful government publications dealing with child care, occupational health and safety, workplace hazards, warnings concerning toxic wastes, assessments of the effectiveness of social programs, etc., have been killed under this presidential order.

- Executive Order 12498 goes still further, giving the President formal authority to transform acts of Congress into window-dressing for secret White House legislation. These two executive orders facilitate the coverup of fraud, cor-

ruption involving the military-monopoly complex or, for that matter, any other wrongdoing in the government.

- In the spirit of these edicts, various federal agencies have adopted their own innovations, such as Budget Office Circular A-122 ("Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations") which, among other things, forbids any private organization from speaking out on public affairs if it receives federal grants.

- Yet another executive order authorizes the CIA to spy on U.S. citizens anywhere and everywhere in the United States, in violation of the legislative charter of the CIA, which expressly prohibits it from engaging in domestic intelligence operations.

These and more than 30 similar measures during the Reagan years clearly show the direction: toward cloaking government activity in secrecy; toward steadily encroaching on the right of the people to know and take part in decision making. (This process is comprehensively surveyed by Walter Karp in "Liberty Under Siege—The Reagan Administration's Taste for Autocracy," *Harper's*, November 1985.)

- The Administration's attempt to "improve" the Freedom of Information Act led Kurt Vonnegut to observe that "the American people would have been treated as spies for a foreign government."

- The American Association for the Advancement of Science angrily denounced the Administration's effort to impose censorship on the dissemination of scientific information as "clearly more compatible with dictatorship than a democracy." Nonetheless, 100 optical engineers were forced to withdraw their research papers when federal agents warned them that presentation of the papers might violate export control regulations! And the Pentagon ordered a technical magazine, *Spectrum*, to shred a certain article "immediately."

- Another executive order expands the number of documents to be withheld from the public—already 16 million in 1982—by directing that all doubts as to whether an item is appropriate for public release are to be resolved in favor of secrecy.



- Acting under this cloak of Reagan secrecy, the Nuclear Regulatory Agency suspended regulations on safe operation of nuclear power plants, unbeknownst to millions of people who live near them. Likewise, the Environmental Protection Agency has been transformed into a conspiracy to undermine environmental protection laws, and a similar threat transformation hangs over the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and other agencies.

- A field report on dioxin contamination by a Reaganized "regulatory agency" was doctored by the deletion of these words: "Dow's discharge represents the major source, if not the only source, of TCDD contamination" in the Saginaw, Michigan, area. The report was not made public until Dow had reviewed and endorsed it.

- We are asked to believe that Reagan is only carrying out the original intent of the Founding Fathers when he tells Congress that "the Constitutional doctrine of separation of powers" requires him to withhold from Congress documentary evidence of the EPA's efforts to "give America cost-effective toxic waste dumps"! To the workers of 577 companies handling 403 toxic chemicals, this Presidential defense of the Constitution must be most reassuring.

"Cost effectiveness," like "cost benefit," is a code word for scuttling any legislation or court ruling that might, perchance, step on the toes of Big Business. So the Department of Health and Human Services has decided that changes in rules affecting the aged, the poor, the young and the disabled can, henceforth, be made without public notice *because cost benefit analysis shows that the time lost by public participation in the rulemaking process outweighs the benefits of getting the opinions of the people!* In the painful choice between thrift and democracy, democracy must go, and with it go the needs of the elderly, the young, the poor and the disabled.

- As this is written, the Office of Management and Budget warns the Department of Labor that it will hold up enforcement of regulations requiring medical examinations of 100,000

textile workers for Brown Lung disease on the grounds that it would be a financial burden to the industry. What are the lives of 100,000 workers when weighed against profits?

- "National security" has likewise been used as a codeword for the suppression of democratic rights, independent judgement and uncomfortable truths. Thus the FBI warns two former National Security Agency officers that their research into the ill-fated flight of Korean Air Liner 007 violates the Espionage Act! (Isn't this an inadvertent admission that the Korean jet was on a spying mission, as charged by the Soviet Union?)

- Two Air Force investigators warn Professor Jeffrey Richelson of American University—an hour before he is to deliver a technical paper on arms control verification—that he could be prosecuted under the 1917 Espionage Act if he delivers it.

- The entire realm of national defense more and more tends to be withdrawn even from popular expression of opinion. On such grounds the people of New York City were denied the right to vote against the stationing of nuclear-armed warships of the U.S. Navy in New York harbor.

- Under National Security Directive 84, all government employees having access to "sensitive information" must sign contracts which put them under lifetime censorship. Any book, article or even letter to the editor must first be approved by the government. This affects no less than 128,000 people.

- The Justice Department has issued guidelines subjecting U.S. citizens who are "political in character" to police surveillance, permitting FBI agents to infiltrate political organizations and "collect publicly available information" on any person they choose to monitor for any reason whatsoever. A prize-winning Canadian film on the horrors of nuclear war was labeled "political propaganda" and placed under the restrictions of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938.

- The State Department refused a visa to the widow of Salvador Allende, on the grounds that her visit would be "prejudicial to United

States interests"—more accurately, she might speak of the complicity of the U.S. government in the murder of her husband and the establishment and maintenance in power of a brutal dictatorship in Chile.

- Under a Department of Energy ruling, a library can be fined \$100,000 for allowing certain unclassified nuclear information to become known.

- A Defense Department directive requires Pentagon officials to withhold from the public "technical data" dealing with "contractor performance evaluation" and "evaluation of . . . military hardware." This, clearly, is license for covering up fraud, profiteering, waste and corruption in the military-monopoly complex. The penalty for violations is ten years imprisonment and a \$100,000 fine.

But the Reagan Administration uses secrecy selectively. Thus, the "success" of an underground test of a nuclear-driven laser was leaked to the press as proof of the feasibility of the Star Wars scheme which the Pentagon wanted advertised. What was kept secret was that a flawed measuring device gave a distorted picture of the test results, and the X-ray laser weapon remains a figment of militarists' fevered imagination. All this would have remained secret but for the investigative reporting of Robert Sheer of the *Los Angeles Times*.

- The Federal Communications Commission rules it is a punishable offense for a broadcaster to "treat the executive branch unfairly." This adds honest broadcasters to the list of endangered species.

**T**HE foregoing brief survey indicates the extreme reactionary direction of the Reagan Administration. Its antidemocratic drive is proceeding on many fronts and in many forms. The Attorney General's attack on those judges who stand by the Bill of Rights is but a part of the overall game plan of the ultra-Right, military-monopoly complex.

The picture that emerges is of a vastly stepped up drive by the ultra-Right and the military-monopoly complex to gain greater freedom to plunder the public treasury (Star

Wars is the biggest racket ever devised for this purpose), while erecting barriers to the people learning what is going on or doing anything about it. It is an attempt to divest the Constitution of the Bill of Rights and the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments, to stifle mass popular opposition to U.S. policies of intervention abroad, to prevent the peace majority from asserting itself. The growing trend to secrecy in government, grounded in the concept that you can't trust the people, makes a principle out of nonaccountability. In a word, democracy for the few, lack of democracy for the many.

As Reagan said in a press conference on October 19, 1983: "You can't let your people know" what the government is doing "without letting the wrong people know, those who are in opposition to what you are doing."

Thus, the struggle over class and economic issues and over interpretation of the Constitution takes place also within the government, among its three branches.

In this struggle, the ultra-Right employs extreme demagoguery and secrecy, intimidation of opposition from any quarter and government by presidential edict. It rides roughshod over the democratic rights enshrined in the Constitution and the separation of powers doctrine.

**W**HY does the struggle over basically economic interests take the form, also, of a struggle over Constitutional issues? The answer goes to the heart of what the U.S. Constitution is all about.

The eminent historian Charles A. Beard wrote: "The propertyless masses under the prevailing suffrage qualifications were excluded at the outset from participating in the work of framing the Constitution." (*An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*, Introduction.)

When Meese-trap verbiage about "original intent" is cleared away, what remains is a design to exclude the people from representation in government and a voice in policy-making, just as they were excluded from the Constitutional Convention.

Beard says further: "The Constitution was

essentially an economic document based on the concept that the fundamental rights of private property are anterior to government and morally beyond the reach of popular majorities."

This is what the transnational monopolies and the ultra-Right are out for. This is the "original intent" they are fighting for.

The Constitution was framed to "endure for ages" (John Marshall). It laid down broad general principles of government structures and powers to protect the fundamental rights of private property and profit and left to future generations application of those principles to new times and requirements. The framers did not include the rights of the people of their time or of the future. That is why nearly a third of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention refused to sign the Constitution. Only as a result of mass struggles were the amendments protecting democratic liberties added. The Constitution was framed as a flexible document. Being flexible, it was bound to become an arena of struggle between contending classes and economic interest groups.

Reagan and Meese notwithstanding, the issue is not whether to return to the eighteenth century. The issue is what it takes to preserve life and make it better on the eve of the twenty-first century. The issue is how to prevent the ultra-Right, the military-monopoly atomaniacs, from bringing the world to the brink of a final disaster through escalation of the arms race into space. The issue is the right of the people to speak, organize and bring their will to bear on government policy for peace and social progress.

This defense of democracy is crucial to all forces who soberly estimate the need to adapt to the realities of today's world, and who reject the drive for absolute power of the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital. Speaking of Meese's "jurisprudence of original intent" doctrine, Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan said,

It is a view that feigns self-effacing deference to the specific judgments of those who forged our original social compact.

But in truth it is little more than arrogance cloaked in humility . . .

Those who would restrict claims of right to the values of 1789 specifically articulated in the Constitution turn a blind eye to social progress and eschew adaptation of overarching principles to changes of social circumstance.

Today, the fight for peace, to save the world from nuclear annihilation, is indissolubly entwined with the fight to defend and extend democracy, and this can not be done without resisting the influence of anti-Communism and racism, the chief ideological instruments of extreme reaction.

**I**N THIS vital struggle, Communists are reliable frontline fighters. As the Program of the CPUSA states, "The Communist Party has always fought to maintain and extend democracy so that the working class and the people might more effectively influence the nation's economic and political life."

The role of the Communists in the armed struggles against Franco fascism in Spain and against Hitler and Mussolini fascism in World War II, their unflinching stand against McCarthyism and thought control in the period after World War II, attests to the truth of these words.

The struggle for democracy is fundamental to the theory and practice of Communism. As V.I. Lenin wrote, "there is no other road to socialism save the road through democracy, through political liberty." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 9, page 442.) Further, "democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 25, page 419.)

Democracy is inherent in the outlook of the Communist Party and the working class, whose cause it expresses, for as Lenin observed, "The very position the proletariat holds as a class compels it to be consistently democratic." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 9, page 51.)

The key word is *consistently*. For there is  
(continued on page 39)

# The CPSU and Internationalism

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, CPSU

*The following continues the excerpts (begun in the December 1985 Political Affairs) from a new edition of the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, now in preparation. This document will be a major aspect of the work of the upcoming 27th Congress of the CPSU (February 1986).*

—Editors

## TASKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS

**T**he international policy of the CPSU proceeds from the humane nature of socialist society, which is free from exploitation and oppression and has no classes or social groups with a vested interest in unleashing wars. It is inseparably linked with the basic, strategic tasks of the Party inside our country, and expresses the common aspiration of the Soviet people to engage in constructive work and live in peace with all other peoples.

The main goals and directions of the international policy of the CPSU are as follows:

- providing auspicious external conditions for the refinement of socialist society and for the advance to communism in the USSR; elimination of the threat of world war and achievement of universal security and disarmament;
- steady development and expansion of cooperation between the USSR and the fraternal socialist countries and all-around support for consolidation and progress in the world socialist system;
- development of relations of equality and friendship with newly free countries
- maintenance and further development of relations between the USSR and capitalist states on a basis of peaceful coexistence and business-like, mutually beneficial cooperation;
- internationalist solidarity with communist

and revolutionary-democratic parties, with the international working-class movement and with the national liberation struggle of the peoples.

The approach of the CPSU to foreign policy matters consists in firm protection of the interests of the Soviet people and resolute opposition to the aggressive policy of imperialism, combined with a readiness for dialogue and for the constructive settlement of international problems through negotiations.

The foreign-policy course of peace formulated by the Party and consistently pursued by the Soviet state in combination with strengthening the defense capability of the country has ensured for the Soviet people and for most of the world's population the longest period of life without war in the 20th century. The CPSU will continue to do everything within its powers to preserve peaceful conditions for the constructive endeavors of the Soviet people, to improve international relations, and to avert the danger of nuclear war looming over all peoples.

There is no loftier or more responsible mission than that of safeguarding and strengthening peace and curbing the forces of aggression and militarism in the interests of survival for the present and future generations. A world without wars, without weapons, is socialism's ideal.

## RELATIONS WITH CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

**T**he CPSU proceeds from the assumption that the historic contest between the two opposite social systems, into which the world is divided today, can and must be settled by peaceful means. Socialism is proving its superiority not by force of arms but by force of example in every area of societal life—by the dynamic development of its economy, science and culture, improvements in the living standards of the

working people, and the extension of socialist-democracy.

Soviet Communists are convinced the future belongs to socialism. Every people deserves to live in a society free from social and national oppression, in a society of genuine equality and genuine democracy. It is the sovereign right of an oppressed and exploited people to free itself from exploitation and injustice. Revolutions are a natural result of social development, of class struggle in any given country. The CPSU has always believed and still does, that the "export" of revolution—the imposition of it on anyone from outside, is fundamentally unacceptable. But the "export" of counterrevolution in any form, too, constitutes a gross encroachment on the free expression of the peoples' will, on their right independently to choose their own roads of development.

The Soviet Union is strongly opposed to any attempts forcibly to check and reverse the march of history.

The interests of the peoples demand that state-to-state relations be directed onto tracks of peaceful competition and equal cooperation.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union firmly and consistently upholds the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. The policy of peaceful coexistence as understood by the CPSU presupposes: renunciation of war and of the use or threats of force as a means of settling controversial questions, and their settlement through negotiations; nonintervention in other countries' internal affairs and respect for the one another's lawful interests; the right of the peoples independently to decide their own destinies; strict respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and the inviolability of their borders; cooperation on a basis of complete equality and mutual benefit; fulfillment in good faith of commitments arising from commonly recognized principles and norms of international law and from international treaties once they are concluded. These are the foundations on which the Soviet Union is building its relations with the capitalist states. They have been written into the Constitution of the USSR.

The CPSU will continue to contribute as purposefully and effectively as it can to the universal assertion in international relations of the principle of peaceful coexistence as a commonly recognized and respected norm of state-to-state relations. It considers inadmissible that ideological differences between the two systems should be extended to the sphere of these relations.

The Party will also seek development of the process of international detente, which it sees as a natural and essential stage on the road to the establishment of a comprehensible and dependable security system. All the available experience of cooperation confirms the feasibility of this prospect. The CPSU stands for the establishment and use of international mechanisms and institutions which would make it possible to find optimal combinations of national, that is, state interests with the common interests of mankind. It stands for enhancing the role of the United Nations in strengthening peace and developing international cooperation.

The nuclear powers bear a special responsibility for the world situation. The states possessing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction must renounce the use or threat of use thereof and refrain from steps that would lead to an aggravation of the international situation.

The CPSU stands for normal and stable relations between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., presupposing nonintervention in internal affairs, respect for one another's legitimate interests, recognition and practical observance of the principle of equal security, and establishment on this basis of the greatest possible mutual trust. Differences between social systems and ideologies are no reason for any strain in relations. There are objective preconditions for the establishment of fruitful and mutually beneficial Soviet-American cooperation in various fields. It is the conviction of the CPSU that the policies of both powers should be orientated to mutual understanding rather than hostility, which is fraught with the threat of catastrophic consequences for the Soviet and the American peoples and other nations as well.

The CPSU is convinced that all states, large and small, regardless of their potentials, geographic situation or social systems, can and must participate in the search for solutions to today's acute problems, in the settlement of conflict situations and in possible measures to lessen tensions and to bridle the arms race.

The CPSU attaches great importance to the further development of peaceful, good neighborliness and cooperation among European states. An inherent precondition for the stability of positive processes in this area, as in all others, is respect for the territorial and political realities which resulted from World War II. The CPSU is strongly opposed to attempts to revise them under any pretext whatsoever and will combat any manifestation of revanchism.

The Party will consistently seek to ensure that the process of strengthening security, trust and peaceful cooperation in Europe, started on the initiative and with the active participation of the Soviet Union, is developing and expanding, embracing the whole world. The CPSU stands for pooling the efforts of all interested states for ensuring security in Asia and for their jointly searching for a constructive solution to this problem. Asia, Africa and Latin America, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean can and must become zones of peace and good neighborliness.

The CPSU stands for the development of extensive, long-term and stable contacts between states in the economic field, science and technology on a basis of complete equality and mutual benefit. Interstate economic cooperation has great political importance, inasmuch as it contributes toward more reliable peace and relations of peaceful coexistence among states with different social systems. The Soviet Union rejects all discrimination and the use of trade, economic, scientific and technical contacts as a means of pressure, and will make every effort to ensure the economic security of states.

The CPSU stands for broad mutual exchanges of genuine cultural values among all countries. These exchanges are to serve humanitarian goals, such as cultural and intellectual enrichment of the peoples and promotion of peace and good neighbor relations.

The Party and the Soviet state will cooperate with other countries in tackling global problems which have grown especially serious in the second half of the 20th century and which are vital to the whole of mankind, such as environmental protection, energy, raw materials, food and demographic problems, peaceful exploration of outer space and of the resources of the world ocean, the overcoming of the economic backwardness of many newly free countries, and eradication of dangerous diseases. The solution of these problems calls for joint efforts by all states. It will be made substantially easier if the squandering of efforts and resources on the arms race is stopped.

In the interests of all mankind and for the sake of the future—and the survival—of both the present and the unborn generations, the CPSU and the Soviet state advocate an extensive and constructive program of measures aimed at ending the arms race, achieving disarmament and ensuring peace and security for the peoples.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which considers universal and complete disarmament under strict and all-embracing international control a historic task, one it is already making every effort to achieve, will work consistently for:

- restriction and narrowing of the sphere of war preparations, especially those involving weapons of mass destruction. First and foremost, outer space should be totally excluded from this sphere so that it does not become a scene of military rivalry and a source of death and destruction. Exploration and development of outer space must be carried out only for peaceful purposes, such as the development of science and production, so as to meet the needs of all nations. The USSR stands for collective efforts in the resolution of this problem and will continue to participate as effectively as possible in international cooperation to this end. The Soviet Union will also continue to advocate the adoption of measures contributing to the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and the establishment of zones free from these and other weapons of mass destruction;

- implementation of steps leading to the complete elimination of nuclear armaments, and including an end to the testing and production of all types thereof, the renunciation of first use of nuclear weapons by all the nuclear powers, and the freezing, reduction and elimination of all arsenals of these weapons;

- an end to the production of other types of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, their elimination, and a ban on the development of new types of such weapons;

- reduction in the armed forces of states, primarily those permanent members of the Security Council and states linked with them by military agreements; limitations on conventional armaments; an end to the development of new types of these armaments which in their effects are comparable to weapons of mass destruction; and reductions in the military expenditures of states;

- a freeze on, and reductions in, troops and armaments in the more explosive parts of the world, the dismantling of military bases on foreign territory, and measures to build up mutual trust and to lessen the risk of armed conflicts, including accidental ones.

The stand of the CPSU is to seek to overcome the division of the world into political-military groupings. The CPSU advocates simultaneous dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, or, as a first step, the disbanding of their military organizations. The Soviet Union advocates as a measure to lower confrontation between the military blocs, the conclusion between them of a treaty on the mutual non-use of force and on maintaining relations of peace, a treaty which would also be open to all other states.

The CPSU will seek to ensure that questions of arms limitation and elimination of the war threat are resolved through honest and strictly observed agreements on a basis of equality and equal security of both sides, so that any attempt to conduct talks from "positions of strength" and to use them as a cover for an arms buildup might be precluded.

The Soviet state and its allies do not seek military superiority, but neither will they allow

the military-strategic parity currently existing on the world scene to be tipped (against them.) At the same time they consistently work to ensure that the level of this parity be systematically lowered, so that the quantity of armaments on both sides can be reduced and the security of all peoples be guaranteed.

The CPSU solemnly declares: there are no weapons that the Soviet Union would not be prepared to limit or ban on a reciprocal basis and with effective verification.

The USSR makes no attempts on the security of any country, West or East. It threatens no one, nor does it seek confrontation with any state, and it wishes to live in peace with all countries. The Soviet socialist state has been carrying aloft the banner of peace and friendship among peoples ever since the Great October Revolution. The CPSU will remain loyal to that Leninist banner.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS AND COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

**T**he CPSU is an integral part of the international communist movement. It sees its efforts to refine socialist society and to advance to communism as a major internationalist task, the accomplishment of which meets the interests of the world socialist system, the interests of the international working class and of mankind as a whole.

Communists, who have always been the most consistent fighters against social and national oppression, are now also in the forefront of the struggle for the preservation of peace on Earth and for the right of all people to stay alive. They are fully aware of the causes of the war threat, they expose the true culprits of the aggravation of international tensions and the arms race, and in this they seek cooperation with all those capable of making a contribution to the drive against war.

The CPSU realizes that the Communist and Workers' parties in the non-socialist world are functioning in a complex and controversial situ-

ation. The range of circumstances and forms of their struggle is indeed broad. But this only serves to expand rather than narrow the opportunities available to the movement. The diverse forms of activity practiced by Communists enables them to take better account of specific national conditions and concrete historical circumstances, and of the interests of different social groups and strata of the population.

The CPSU proceeds from the assumption that the Communists of each country independently analyze and evaluate each situation, formulate their own strategic course and policies, and choose what they consider to be the best ways of struggling for the immediate and ultimate goals and for the communist ideals. The experience accumulated by the Communist parties is a valuable internationalist asset.

The CPSU closely studies the problems and experience of other Communist parties. It can well understand their desire to upgrade their strategy and tactics, to seek broader class alliances on a platform of antimonopolistic, anti-war actions, and to uphold the economic interests and political rights of the working people, proceeding from the assumption that the struggle for democracy is a component of the struggle for socialism.

The imperialist circles of different countries have been coordinating their efforts against socialism and all democratic forces and seeking to set some Communist parties in opposition to others. Under such circumstances, the importance of proletarian internationalism and of comradely solidarity among the Communists is greater than ever.

The CPSU believes that differences over individual issues should not hinder international cooperation among Communist parties and get in the way of united action by them.

In the instances where divergences of views on individual problems arise between fraternal parties, the CPSU considers it useful to hold comradely discussions to gain a better understanding of one another's views and reach mutually acceptable appraisals. But when the point at hand is the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism, the substance and role of

real socialism, the CPSU will continue to rebuff, from positions of principle, opportunism and reformism, dogmatism and sectarianism. This also defines the CPSU's attitude to all attempts to emasculate the class essence of the work of Communists or to distort the revolutionary character of the aims and means of struggle for attaining them. Experience shows that deviation from the fundamental teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin weakens the potentialities of the communist movement.

In its relations with the fraternal parties, the CPSU firmly adheres to the principle of proletarian internationalism, which organically combines revolutionary solidarity with recognition of the full independence and equality of each Party. On the basis of this principle, the CPSU is actively developing its ties with the Communist and Workers' parties, exchanging information and participating in various bilateral and multilateral meetings and regional and broader international conferences when the need arises.

Soviet communists always side with their class comrades in the capitalist world. The CPSU will use its international prestige to defend Communists who are victims of the arbitrary rule of reaction. It sets high store on the solidarity of the fraternal parties and for their struggle against anti-Sovietism. Mutual support among the Communist and Workers' parties of the socialist and nonsocialist countries is an important factor for social progress.

The CPSU will continue its policy of developing ties with Socialist, Social-Democratic and Labor parties. Cooperation with them can play a considerable role, above all in the effort to prevent nuclear war. However deep the divergencies between various trends of the workers' movement, they are no obstacle to fruitful and systematic exchange of views, to parallel and even joint actions against the danger of war, and to improving the international situation, eliminating the vestiges of colonialism, and championing the interests and rights of the working people.

The CPSU attaches great significance to encouraging and strengthening cooperation a-



mong all contingents of the international working class movement and deepening interaction between trade unions of diverse trends and between youth, women's, peasant and other democratic organizations in various countries.

Deeply aware of its historic responsibility to the world working class and its communist vanguard, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union pledges to continue to:

- uphold the revolutionary ideals and Marxist-Leninist fundamentals of the world communist movement, creatively develop the theory of scientific socialism, and fight consistently against dogmatism and revisionism, and

all influences of bourgeois ideology on the working class movement;

- do its utmost to promote cohesion and cooperation among the fraternal parties as well as international solidarity among all Communists, and to work for upping the contribution of the Communist movement to the cause of preventing world war;

- pursue a consistent policy of action within the international working class movement, and of backing all working people in their struggle for their common interests, for lasting peace and the security of peoples, for national independence, democracy and socialism. □

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WEST (continued from page 33)

democracy and democracy—bourgeois democracy and people's democracy.

As for socialist democracy, it lays no claim to producing timeless documents. Socialist society regards constitutions as living documents dealing with real problems of contemporary generations. The Soviet Union, in its close to 70 years of existence, has had three constitutions. Each has spelled out the rights of the people and the responsibilities of the individual to society. Each succeeding one has been more democratic, keeping pace with the development of labor productivity, science, education, culture and the maturity of socialist social relations.

While the trend of U.S. state monopoly capitalism is to replace political liberty with government secrecy and tighter restrictions on the people's rights, developments in the Soviet Union are just the opposite, as witness:

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union believes that at the present stage the strategic avenue of development of society's political system lies through advancing socialist democracy and increasingly promoting the people's socialist self-government on the basis of day-to-day, active and effective participation of the working people, their collectives and organizations, in decision-making on the affairs of state and society. (*Draft New Edition of the Program of the CPSU.*)

Attorney General Meese has launched a campaign against constitutional liberties which he and the ultra-Right hope will bring about a

reactionary, even fascist-like, structure of government in the coming decades. For that purpose, some on the extreme Right are promoting the idea of a constitutional convention on the two-hundredth anniversary of the Constitution.

This campaign will be successfully countered only if grassroots people's forces, from the workbench to the communities, enter it with full force. No extreme reactionary attack on democratic rights, oral or written, must be allowed to go unanswered.

The Reagan Administration actively, and often by stealth, encroaches upon democratic rights. The Reaganites are out to capture the judiciary as well as both houses of Congress.

The time to wage the fight against incipient fascism is whenever it raises its ugly head, not waiting until it has snatched power away. The time to prepare for the 1986 elections is now. The establishment of the broadest anti-Reagan front can help elect to Congress consistent fighters for democracy and peace, spearheaded by trade unionists and allies of the working class, Black, white and Latino.

Consistent democracy today means anti-monopoly, antiwar democracy. Such is the meaning of people's democracy in the USA today. Let the watchword in every trade union local, in every community and social organization be, "Advance peace, social progress and equality! Defend and extend democracy! Elect champions of peace and people's rights!" □

## 'The Labor History Reader'

JIM WILLIAMS

*The Labor History Reader*, Edited by Daniel J. Leab, University of Illinois Press, 1985, 496 pp., \$29.95 (cloth), \$12.50 (paperback).

The present collection, published on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of *Labor History Quarterly*, is designed to shed light on current debates within the profession as well as upon historical events that shaped the labor movement.

An introduction by David Brody discusses some of the differences between the "old" and "new" labor history. The "old" labor history was pioneered by John R. Commons and his school, and focused on labor as an aggregation of institutions and leaders. Needless to say, the Commons' school was especially free of any "taint" of Marxism.

The "new" labor history, according to Brody, believes that "the proper study of labor history ought to be the worker and not only his institutions." This would include the culture and the everyday life of workers, their communities and their jobs, as much as union activity or protest actions. Senior and prominent among the "new" historians featured in this collection are Brody himself, Edward Pessen, David Montgomery and the late Herbert Gutman.

Actually, by this definition, Philip S. Foner would be categorized as an "old" historian. The "new" historians are as likely to be influenced by Fernand Braudel and his *Annals* school as by Marx. Nonetheless, the "new" history provides more promise for the Marxists and those influenced by Marxism because it deals with the working class as a whole. The

"new" historians who are less influenced by Marxism tend to get bogged down in minutia and lack direction.

This discussion in itself would probably not be enough to recommend this collection to the general reader. Fortunately, a number of the articles by both "old" and "new" contribute to our knowledge in important ways, and this is the sign of a good collection. Pessen's article on Andrew Jackson gives new perspective on how he was perceived by workers, and the article on workers' control of production in the 19th century is one of David Montgomery's best.

Important contributions have been made by some "new" historians less well known.

Paul Worthman's article on Black-white labor unity in Birmingham at the turn of the century is a valuable documentation of labor resistance to Jim Crow. Daniel Nelson's piece on the sit-down movement in the rubber industry documents the successful use of militancy during the 1930s. Nancy Gabin's article on women workers in the UAW in the post-WWII period gives insights into the efforts of rank-and-file women to retain gains made during the war, while revealing the ineffectuality of the Reuther leadership on the question of women's equality.

I found Joshua Freeman's article, "Delivering the Goods: Industrial Unionism During World War II," of special interest and merit. Freeman, in my view, effectively demolishes Trotskyist and New Left myths about so-called "wildcat" strikes during World War II, which portray an insurgent rank-and-file thwarted

and crushed by the Left's (and Communist Party's) leadership.

By closely analyzing these strikes, Freeman argues that many such strikes were, in fact, tacitly supported by union leaders, whose hands were officially bound by the realities of the wartime situation. Freeman deals at length with an aspect of some of these strikes ignored by some—that many such "militant" strikes were, in fact, racist strikes against the hiring of Black workers. Here, Freeman raises the question of whether such "militancy" is to be applauded or condemned. His discussion of class-conscious content versus mindless spontaneity is a thoughtful one.

Significantly, the least satisfactory article in the collection is by *Labor History's* present editor, Daniel Leab, "United We Eat: The Creation and Organization of the Unemployed Councils in 1930." Not only does Leab establish himself firmly in the camp of the "old" historians, but also in the camp of the red baiters and anti-Sovieteers. Leab says nothing that has not already been said by such luminaries as Theodore Draper and Harvey Klehr, seeing only the "hand of Moscow" in the efforts of the unemployed. Whatever useful lessons might be found in his article lie too far beneath a heap of falsehood and misrepresentation to shed any light.

Certainly more valuable work could be found in several articles by Roy Rosenzweig on unemployed organization which also appeared in *Labor History*.

Yet, given these faults, the collection does accomplish what it sets out to do, and that is give us some sense of what labor historians are thinking and writing about these days. Happily this process has yielded some thought-provoking articles of use and interest to the general reader. □



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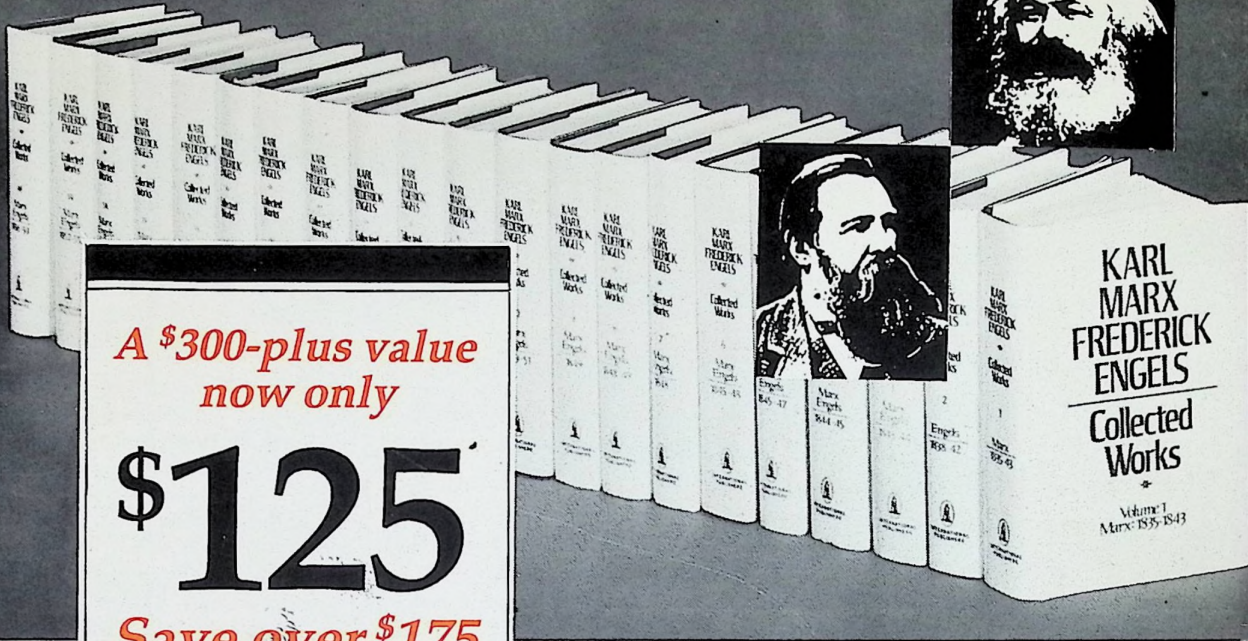
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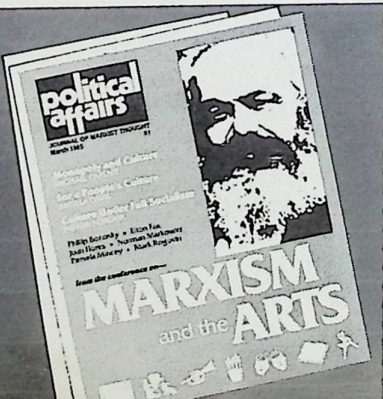
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