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# BATTLE ACTS

*"...no more traditions chains shall bind us..."*

Childhood is love, imagination, discovery and freedom.  
 A child is all this and more,  
 if a child is free to be.  
 But a childhood stamped:

*"Made in USA"*

is not all this.  
 At home, in school, on the streets --  
 wherever they leave their stamp --  
 racism, war, chauvinism, exploitation  
 burrow deeper and deeper into the childhood  
 until it lies buried within.

A childhood dead can never be relived;  
 and so, we fight along side our children  
 for that love, imagination, discovery and freedom.  
 We fight against those who brandish the stamp:

*"Made in USA."*

For in the fight for freedom, childhood never dies;  
 and when We, the People, win,  
 that childhood will be Our revolutionary birthright.

*by Sue Davis and Emily Hanlon*



# Stolen: Millions of Childhoods

by NIKKI GREEN

materials to create a vast number of products that could be sold on the market by the capitalist. But the most striking feature of this new arrangement was that the workers just managed to exist while the capitalist lived splendidly, for the capitalist, in order to enrich himself and accumulate more wealth, actually paid the workers only enough for them to subsist on, keeping the rest for himself as profit to be reinvested in the business.

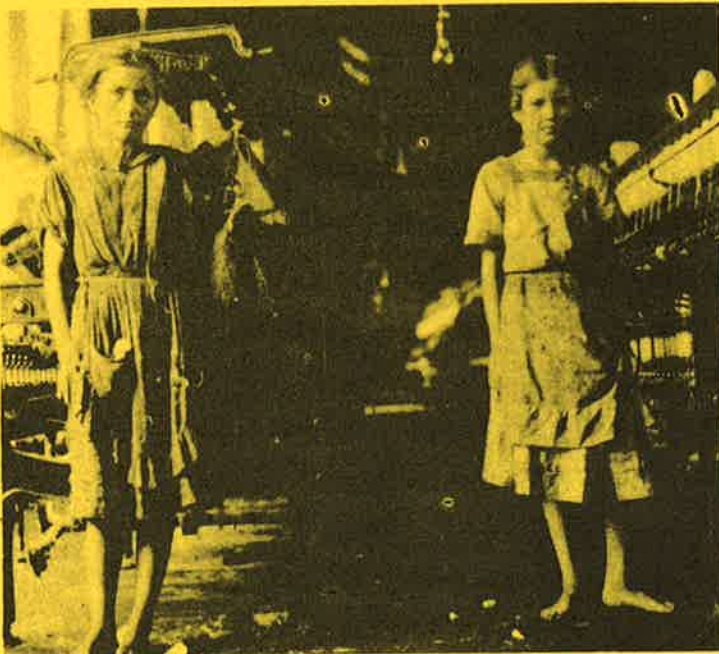
It is no wonder then that factory owners had no qualms, let alone moral principles, about hiring children; they wanted to make greater and greater profits to expand their factories, and children could be worked as hard and paid less than adults because it took less to feed, clothe and house them. Besides, their parents could be paid less, too, because they didn't have to provide for their children! Child labor had other advantages. As one boss commented, "Child labor is docile. It does not strike. There are no labor troubles."

But why would parents let their children work? Really it wasn't a matter of choice — the children of workers had to work in order to supplement their family's income. The wages of the parents were so miserably low that basic necessities could not be bought without their children's paychecks.

Child labor began in the New England mill towns. As early as 1831, in Rhode Island alone, there were 3,472 children under 12 who worked in mills. By 1912, the year of the famous strike at the textile mill in Lawrence, Massachusetts, half of all the workers were women between the ages of 14 and 18. Children died within the first two years after beginning work. No worker in this factory lived to be more than 25 years of age!

Just in the textile industry alone, 54,649 children under 16 were employed in 1920 — 21,875 in cotton and 10,023 in silk. The silk industry had the largest percentage of children working in factories that year than any other: 8 percent of the workers were children under 16. In 1926 in Pennsylvania, children 14 to 15 years old worked over 48 hours a week. Children worked in the clothing industries, in lumber and in textiles, and it was common for some children to work more than 52 hours a week. In Worcester, Massachusetts, a 16-year-old boy worked 70 hours a week and was paid \$2 for his labor; a girl in the same town worked 9 hours a day and earned \$1 for a full week's work! In the South, the conditions of child labor were even worse that year: white children under 16 worked in the mills for more than 60 hours a week. In 1930 in Mississippi, 25 percent of all white children between 10 and 15 worked in the factories.

The conditions under which the children worked



The story of child labor in this country is a cruel and horror-filled one. It is a story of one of the most hideous and vicious crimes committed by business, protected by government, against the people, a crime that ranks with the violence perpetrated against Black and Spanish-speaking children, women and men in this country. The story is of little children, ten years old and younger, who were forced to slave in sweatshops, under the most inhuman conditions, for 10 and more hours a day only to be paid a mere pittance for their labor. The story hasn't ended yet either. Another chapter is being written today in agriculture.

From the earliest times children have always worked in their homes and fields to help their parents produce enough to live on. In fact for centuries, children were valued as a fresh labor supply precisely because they were needed to do the chores necessary to maintain the family. But with the advent of capitalist production in the factories in the early 1800s in the U.S., children were hired to work long hours for meager wages outside the family, and the exploitation of child labor began.

Before explaining what this meant in children's lives, we have to understand the nature of this form of labor. What characterized the new relationship of labor under capitalism was that the worker actually sold his/her ability to work to the capitalist in exchange for wages. The worker ran the capitalist's machinery and used his raw



were intolerable. In 1900 well over a million and a half children under 16 worked in dangerous and unhealthy conditions in mines and mills, factories and fields. In the mines, boys inhaled the coal dust and crawled through poorly constructed tunnels. If they didn't die of black lung disease, they were frequently injured in cave-ins and faulty explosions.

A child working in a silk factory had to breathe stinking air, filthy with loose fibres. The bosses refused to open any windows because the threads of yarn were just too "fragile." In the winter the factories had no heat, but the workers suffocated because artificial humidifiers were used to maintain the necessary humidity for weaving. Buildings were frequently choked with steam and acid fumes.

Dye workers used poisonous substances, and inhalation of these fumes caused respiratory diseases. Dyestuff splattered into the workers' faces and caused eye injuries.

In 1925, in the canning industry in Pennsylvania, only 3 out of 50 canneries were found to have inside toilets. And a third of these had outside toilets that were not fit for human use!

What about the brutality directly inflicted on the children at the hands of the bosses? In a book entitled The Labor Movement in America, published in 1886, Richard T. Ely describes the physical violence used against children in the factories. Some bosses made women and children work harder by whipping them with cowhide; another boss beat an 11-year-old girl with a "billet of wood" until her leg broke. A deaf-and-dumb boy was whipped until he was "mangled from his neck to his feet." Children even committed suicide to escape this brutality — one 12-year-old boy drowned himself.

Mother Jones, a union organizer and one of the founding members of the Industrial Workers of the World, describes some of the horrors and vicious effects of child labor in her autobiography. In 1903, in the Kensington, Pennsylvania strike of 75,000 textile workers (of whom 10,000 were children), she tells of children who came into Union Headquarters "with their hands cut off, some with the thumb missing, some with their fingers off at the knuckle. They were stooped little things, round-shouldered and skinny. Many of them were not over 10 years of age, although the state law prohibited them from working before they were twelve years of age."

The physical, let alone the psychological, effects on these little children were monstrous — the ones who survived suffered terribly. Six-year old children looked 60 from working an 8-hour shift for 10 cents a day. Child workers never knew the joys of childhood — the running, laughing, playing games. How could a child have time for these things or go to school when he or she had to work a 10-hour day? How could a child smile when all he or she had to face every day of life were the filth and squalor of the tenement home, the poor diet, the long hours and the filth and humiliation at work?

Workers constantly struggled against the bosses to better their conditions, hours, and pay through



labor organizations and unionization; the struggle to end child labor was no different. States regulated child labor — but only so that it didn't really hurt the bosses — as early as 1874, Massachusetts limited the work of women and children to 10 hours daily! By 1916, 37 states had some sort of child regulatory laws, but when the companies owned the towns, there was nobody else to enforce those laws! What finally forced a federal law to be passed were the long, hard, bitter labor struggles for unionization during the thirties' depression years. The Federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 abolished child labor under 16. The law which also guaranteed a minimum wage, maximum hours, and collective bargaining is a testament to the workers' strength through struggle.

But these child labor laws never were meant to apply to farm labor. So even though "legally" abolished, child labor still exists in this country in agriculture. "Except that the work is outdoors, child labor abuse on farms in the nineteen-seventies is reminiscent of sweatshop conditions of the thirties . . ." The New York Times reported in an article on March 22, 1971, that the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization, investigated the use of child labor in Ohio, Maine, California, Oregon and Washington and "found children stooping and crawling in 100-degree heat for 10 hours a day to harvest crops." These are the children of the farm workers, mostly Black and Chicano, who make up an army of 800,000 children who pick one-quarter of all the fruits and vegetables grown in the United States. A fourth of all farm workers are under 16 and some are as young as six. The children work, as in the past, because they must. Farm workers get such low wages — an average of \$891 a year — that their children are forced to work to increase the family income. Pay for the children is \$.12 a crate for strawberries and \$1.12 an hour in California; 100,000 children

(continued to back cover)



**Democratic People's Republic  
of Korea**



**Tanzania**

photo credit/LNS



I got an application for the day camp that Aaron had gone to last year, and I asked him if he would like to go there again. "NO," he said, right away. When I asked why, he said, "They have the boys and the girls in two different groups there and they make it seem like there's a war between boys and girls, and I don't want to be in that war!"

do it!



# WHERE TV ADS ARE AT !

By a mother who is tired of telling her children, "No, I won't buy that junk for you!"

MOST CHILDREN -- AND GROWNUPS TOO -- LIKE TO WATCH TV. THERE IS PROBABLY A FAVORITE SHOW YOU HATE TO MISS-- BET YOU KNOW THE NAMES OF THAT SHOW'S STARS AND ITS THEME SONG TOO. BUT DID YOU EVER WONDER WHO PUTS THE SHOWS ON TV OR WHY? IS IT TO MAKE CHILDREN HAPPY? TO GIVE INTERESTING AND USEFUL FACTS ABOUT THE WORLD? TO TEACH IN A WAY THAT'S MORE FUN THAN SCHOOL?

THE SHOWS ARE ON TV BECAUSE EVERY PROGRAM HAS A SPONSOR. THE SPONSOR PUTS A PROGRAM ON TV SO THAT IT CAN BEST ADVERTISE THE PRODUCT IT WANTS TO SELL. THAT'S WHY CHILDREN'S SHOWS ARE SPONSORED BY BUSINESSES THAT SELL TOYS, GAMES, SODA, CANDY OR CEREAL FOR CHILDREN. THE ADS ALL SAY HOW GREAT THEIR PRODUCT IS AND TELL YOU TO TELL YOUR PARENTS TO BUY IT RIGHT AWAY. BUT ARE THEY TELLING THE TRUTH?

SOME PEOPLE WHO STUDIED DIFFERENT KINDS OF CEREALS FOUND OUT THAT MOST OF THEM ARE NOT VERY HEALTHY FOODS. SUGARY CEREALS MAY TASTE GOOD, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE THE VITAMINS OR PROTEINS CHILDREN NEED.

CANDY AND SODA MAY BE A DELICIOUS TREAT, BUT THE BUSINESSES THAT SELL THEM TRY--WITH ADS ON TV--TO GET YOU TO EAT THEM ALL THE TIME SO THEY CAN MAKE MORE MONEY.

WHEN GAMES AND TOYS ARE ADVERTISED IT IS TO GET YOU OR YOUR PARENTS TO SPEND MONEY ON THEM. THE COMPANIES DON'T CARE IF YOU HAVE FUN OR NOT. THEY TRY TO MAKE YOU BELIEVE THEIR TOYS AND GAMES ARE WONDERFUL EVEN IF IT IS NOT TRUE. OFTEN THE TOY IS JUST JUNK AND BREAKS THE SECOND OR THIRD TIME YOU PLAY WITH IT. THE COMPANY DOES NOT CARE IF YOU ARE DISAPPOINTED. WHEN THAT TOY BREAKS THEY JUST TRY TO SELL YOU ANOTHER ONE.

THERE ARE A FEW SHOWS THAT ARE NOT INTERRUPTED EVERY 5 OR 10 MINUTES FOR ADS BUT THESE SHOWS HAVE SPONSORS TOO. SOMETIMES THE SPONSOR IS THE GOVERNMENT OR A BIG CORPORATION. THEY PUT ON PROGRAMS WITHOUT REGULAR COMMERCIALS TO TRY TO MAKE PEOPLE THINK THEY ARE GENEROUS AND GOOD. BUT REALLY THEIR PROGRAMS ARE LIKE ONE BIG AD FOR THEMSELVES! THEY TRY TO MAKE US FORGET THAT THE SAME GOVERNMENT OR COMPANY THAT BRINGS US A NICE SHOW IS ALSO CARRYING ON ONE WAR IN INDOCHINA AND ANOTHER WAR AGAINST BLACK AND SPANISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE U.S.

SO WHEN YOU WATCH TV AND SEE ADS FOR ALL SORTS OF GREAT-LOOKING THINGS, REMEMBER THAT THEY ARE JUST TRYING TO SELL THEM TO MAKE MONEY, NOT BECAUSE THEIR TOYS OR FOOD OR GAMES ARE GOOD. DON'T LET THE ADS FOOL YOU!



Mrs. Lewis fights for her son Sharean at the Prisoners Solidarity Committee press conference.

# PRISONERS' FAMILIES ARE VICTIMS, TOO

by SUE HIGA

How does it feel to visit a prisoner, your husband, son, sister, or brother? The answer to this question is lived every day by the poor, Black, Puerto Rican and nonwhite people in this society. This is because the U.S. government, instead of building houses for the poor, instead of giving them jobs with decent wages, instead of giving them enough to live on, builds prisons to house the poor.

Women cry every day; some suffer in shame, in humiliation, worrying about their loved ones in prison. The congressmen and congresswomen, the senators, the mayors, governors, judges, the president don't hear . . . no, they're deaf to the cries and sufferings of prisoners and their families, just as they are deaf to the sufferings of all nonwhite people trying to exist in this society.

If anyone doubted it, this was made very clear when the government, faced with an economic crisis growing out of the Vietnam war, immediately chose to cut back on welfare, education, medicaid, community and youth projects and other programs for the poor rather than cutting back on the war in Indochina. When the poor cry out against this conspiracy being waged against them, when the poor rebel, or when individuals are forced out of desperation to steal or prostitute themselves to make up for their loss of welfare or their job—when objective conditions force poor people to "break the law" of this rich man's society, then they are sent to prisons like the one in Auburn, New York.

This conspiracy of the rich against the poor is but another side of the war in Indochina, the Mideast, Puerto Rico and wherever oppressed people are rising up for their liberation. There is a war here, too, and that is the war against Black America. All those who fall victim to this daily war are domestic

prisoners of war.

The inmates of Auburn Prison, mostly Black and Puerto Rican, are the victims of this war. When they made a peaceful stand for their dignity on Black Solidarity Day last year, in the form of a prisonwide strike and rally, the prison authorities (who had previously agreed to the actions) came down with heavy reprisals. A prison rebellion followed and out of the 1,700 men who rebelled, 80 were put in solitary confinement. Six have been indicted on criminal charges of assault, attempted assault and robbery. Youth Against War & Fascism responded to the requests from the prisoners for support by forming a Prisoners Solidarity Committee which has not only retained lawyers, but has organized demonstrations outside the court and the prison.

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee set up a Relatives Transportation Fund, so that relatives, who previously could not visit prisoners due to financial difficulties, would be able to see them. On April 18, 1971, 33 relatives of prisoners traveled by chartered bus to Auburn Prison. Many had not seen their loved ones for months and, for some of them, years.

Most of the relatives had to take off from work in order to make this trip, because Auburn is so far away: but then, that's what poor people are forced to do. It's no coincidence that prisons are so isolated, like Auburn. Missing a day's work means a smaller pay check. Until the Prisoners Solidarity Committee was formed, it cost at least \$30.00 round trip to Auburn. This, and one day's pay, could bring financial disaster. Furthermore, it takes more money to secure a babysitter—there are no daycare centers—and extensive arrangements for these relatives to be able to get away.

It's no wonder that many relatives had not visited



before -- not because they didn't care, but because they simply could never afford to go.

The following describes the story of two prisoners' families and their experiences April 18, while visiting at Auburn Concentration Camp.

\* \* \*

They stepped off the bus after a night-long 7-hour ride and walked to a restaurant for breakfast. Soon after, they walked over to the prison where the domestic prisoners of war are held. The walls are massive; they seem to extend for miles around and their heights almost touch the sky. The only break in these walls is a gate that is opened by a 1-foot key -- a gate that swings only one way for prisoners.

Virginia, 4-months pregnant, had not seen her brother, Sharean, for 3 years. She waited anxiously outside the gate with her sister, Deanie, along with 31 other relatives of prisoners. The Moody family, Claudette, Arnold, Elaine and her daughter, Kyrin, began to get impatient waiting. Claudette looked at her watch: 10 A.M., they had been standing for an hour now. The guard opened up the gate and let six relatives in. Virginia and Deanie were fingerprinted outside before they could even enter the building. When they entered, they were screened by an electronic device that detects any weapons a person may be carrying.

Sharean and five other inmates were brought down into the visiting room. Virginia, Deanie, and five other relatives were admitted into the room where there was a long table with a thick screen running across the middle of it. Behind it were the inmates.

"But why the screen visit?"... the relatives were puzzled, then angered. Being separated by a screen is like being separated by hundreds of miles. What words could express feelings of love the way a caress, or an embrace, or a kiss could do? Even a simple handshake was denied.

After an hour, the relatives were told that their visits were over. Sharean said to Virginia and Deanie, "It's not right . . . I haven't seen you in years. You've traveled so far in your condition, it's just not fair. I'll take my stand, you stay here."

Virginia replied that she would speak with the superintendent about extending the visit. She and Deanie walked out of the room as Sharean was taken out. Another relative heard a scuffle; the guards were answering Sharean's request for a longer visit with a beating and gassing. The visiting room was cleared out. Four hours passed till any more visitors were let in.

Virginia was still asking to see the superintendent without any results four hours later. She spoke with the captain but to no avail. Then she learned that Sharean had been beaten and teargassed. Now, she demanded to see her brother, just to see whether he was alive, but the prison guards told her "no!" She wouldn't accept that answer, and responded, "I won't leave this place until I see my brother. If you want me out of here, you'll have to carry me out!" But the guards would not bring Sharean back. Virginia waited all morning and all afternoon. She feared that the prison officials might punch her in the stomach since she was pregnant, but she decided to take her chances. All her life, she had to take chances, and that day was no different.

As Mrs. Hicks left the visiting room after her hour was over, she wept, "Now, they'll probably beat William" (her son). William had told them that he saw Sharean beaten unconscious. Because all visits are censored, guards knew what inmates informed the relatives about Sharean's beating and gassing.

Virginia never saw her brother again. After Sharean had been beaten for asking for extended visiting time, he refused to enter his cell. The guards, enraged over his defiance, threw him into the gallery to which his cell is adjoined, along with those of twenty-five other prisoners. Locking the gallery, the guards began rolling in cannisters of tear gas, attacking not only Sharean, but three others. These three, like Sharean, are part of the Auburn 6 -- the six most militant liberation fighters there who have been singled out by the prison officials as the "leaders."

The guards then told them that the attack would end when Sharean re-entered his cell. As gas filled the gallery, Sharean crawled into his cell, but the guards only intensified the attack. A total of ten cannisters were exploded, with gas also sent through the ventilators. Trapped in their cells, the prisoners had to endure the gas attack for 16 1/2 hours, from 8 P.M. Sunday night until 12:30 P.M. the next afternoon.

Left to die sprawled on the floor, Sharean was finally taken to the prison hospital on demands of a visiting YAWF organizer, Maryann Weissman. He was in an oxygen tent for three hours.

Dr. Larry Levy went to Auburn to examine the six men who had been so brutally teargassed, at the request of the Medical Committee for Human Rights. He reported that Sharean was suffering from pneumonia and bronchitis as a result of the gassing and was receiving only the most cursory treatment.

(continued to page 27)

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## **letters from behind the walls of auburn concentration camp prisoners call out: freedom**

*order pamphlet from:* **\$1.00**

**PRISONERS SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE  
of YAWF**

**58 West 25th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10010**

*contributions to  
the Relatives Transportation Fund  
may be sent to the same address*

The deafening sounds of bongos, small drums, and tambourines filled the Armed Forces "Gerardo Abreu Fontan" social club, where 200 delegates from the Federation of Cuban Women gathered to analyze the basic policies concerning women in the revolution.

It was an unique and surprising sight. A good many of the delegates present—representatives from the provinces and regions—wore their regular working clothes while others wore the slacks and straw hats of agricultural workers and still others were dressed in the pink uniforms of the children's daycare centres....

A group of women next to me improvised a "conga" and sang: "To work/to study/to defend our freedom/steady and decided by Fidel/we will come through...."

The meeting's central topic was the incorporation of women into the labor force and the training of female cadres. Both points were obviously closely related to the development of the Cuban economy.

The Federation of Cuban Women (an organization which has more than 1,300,000 members, or 54 percent of women above 14) is the channel through which women improve their education: in 1970 alone, 24,000 federation leaders and 84,000 housewives joined studygroups, while special courses were given to female agricultural workers.

The principal report to the plenary session pointed out that "there's a constant struggle to eliminate the negative factors affecting the promotion of cadres." In other words: "Family, personal ties, and other such problems women confront conspire against their getting ahead."

Why is such emphasis placed on raising the level of the "federadas?" Because, as Vilma Espin (President of the Federation—eds.) explained in her final report, the leadership of the revolution "is constantly asking us for more cadres to fill responsible positions." A recent example is the Ministry of Light Industry: "Fidel raised the point that such a ministry ought to be in the hands of the women's organization," said Vilma, "so the Federation thought of Nora Frometa (together with an advisory female team) for the job."

The promotion of women to positions of responsibility requires a careful political and cultural educational process. The hundreds of thousands of unprepared women, who are for the first time participating in political activities through the Federation, provide the base of cadres who will eventually be able to fill these jobs. The leadership of the revolution is aware of the fact that Cuban women, at the triumph of the rebellion, were handicapped in relation to men. Locked-up inside their homes, the feminine population had a much larger percentage of illiterates (56 percent of the total). It was also quite common for women to abandon school after the sixth grade or even earlier, and for only a very small percentage to go on to secondary school. In 1959, therefore, the revolution found a feminine population with a very low educational level.

The tasks prior to promoting women to jobs of responsibility (something which has only been

# CUBAN WOMEN — a stage of inventiveness and drive

by ANA RAMOS, SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT of  
PRENSA LATINA

partly accomplished during the last 12 years) was to educate women and later rigorously select the best and prepare them for executive tasks.

Among other things, the Federation of women is in charge of social work: it has 10,000 social workers who concentrate on fighting juvenile delinquency and act as school counselors. The public health brigades have 52,000 Federation members who cooperate with the clinics in carrying out massive vaccinations and so forth. At the base level, more than 211,000 lectures and discussions about health were held with more than two million people attending.

But the FMC's most important task at present is to incorporate women into the labor force—a second item which was thoroughly analyzed during the plenary session.

When, in 1959, Cuba initiated the process of economic expansion, it needed the country's entire productive force. However, it was not until 1964, when the large agricultural plans were started, that Cuban women integrated in large numbers into productive labor. It was estimated in 1968 that the feminine labor force had increased 34 percent since 1964. At present, more than 600,000 are actually working.

"There is still a large gap between the number of women working and the total number of women of working age," said the Minister of Labor, Jorge Risquet, in his television speech last July 30. And he insisted: "We see that there is still a great reserve force, a great difference between the number of women who work and the total number of women of working age." As it is, at the national level, out of each 100 workers, 77 are men and 33 are women.

It's an undeniable fact that the Federation of Cuban Women has made great efforts to incorporate the







"I ask no favors for my sex. I surrender not our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethern is that they will take their feet from off our necks, and permit us to stand upright on the ground which God has designed us to occupy."

Sarah Grimke wrote those words in 1837 in answer to a storm of denunciations that blew up over the public speaking that she and her sister, Angelina, were doing for the anti-slavery cause.

The Grimke sisters were daughters of a wealthy, slaveholding family in Charleston, South Carolina, where their father was a Supreme Court Judge. As young women they opposed the degradation and oppression of chattel slavery which they saw first hand in their home and on the plantation fields. Sarah took "an almost malicious satisfaction on teaching my little waiting-maid at night, when she was supposed to be occupied in combing and brushing my long locks. The light was out, the keyhole screened, and flat on our stomachs before the fire, with the spelling-book under our eyes, we defied the laws of South Carolina."

As soon as they were able, the sisters broke openly not only with the slave system but with their family. In 1819, at the age of 27, Sarah renounced what she described as the "butterfly life" of Charleston "society" and moved to Philadelphia. Angelina followed in 1829, when she was 24.

It was nearly unheard of then for women to pack up and go off to live their own lives. But Sarah and Angelina did not stop with that major step. A moral and personal opposition to slavery was not enough--they were determined to take a public stand, to take action in the Abolitionist struggle. That meant fighting for their rights as women, too.

In 1835, Angelina wrote a letter of support to the Boston Abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, which he published in his anti-slavery paper "The Liberator." Even the Quakers of Philadelphia's anti-slavery circle were scandalized by her step into public politics and demanded that she repudiate the letter. The sisters met this attack head-on, and the next year Angelina issued her first pamphlet, "Appeal to the Christian Women of the South," and Sarah published "Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States."

Angelina addressed the pamphlet to white women, asking if any would "refuse to obey the wicked laws which require woman to enslave, to degrade and to brutalize woman? Are there no Miriams, who would rejoice to lead out the captive daughters of the Southern States to liberty and life?" It is no wonder that Angelina's pamphlet was publicly burned by the Charleston postmaster and she was told she could not communicate in any way with any citizen of South Carolina. Should she dare set foot in Charleston, city rulers threatened she would be immediately jailed.

The sisters then requested that their share of the family estate be allotted to them. As soon as their mother complied, they freed the slaves.

At about the same time, Angelina was invited by a New York City anti-slavery organization to speak to a series of small "parlor" meetings of women. The Abolitionists thought it acceptable for women to attend and speak at political meetings as long as they were in the privacy of a friend's home. The response must have been a great shock -- more than 300 women showed up and the meeting had to be moved to a nearby church! Soon the sisters' eloquence about the horrors of slavery was attracting large crowds of both women and men in churches all across New England.

If their actions had previously aroused public outcry and condemnation, it was nothing in comparison with the massive blasts now directed at the women because of their public speeches denouncing slavery. The governing body of Congregational ministers of Massachusetts in a "Pastoral Letter" denounced the Grimkes as unwomanly and unchristian and forbade churches to allow them to speak any more from their pulpits. Although the sisters suffered deeply, Sarah countered the attack with "Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman" in 1838, in which she linked the issues of slavery and the inferior position of women.

Many Abolitionists recoiled at the sisters' bold actions. Some claimed that the question of women's rights would undermine the anti-slavery struggle. Angelina answered that it was impossible to separate the two issues: "We cannot push Abolitionism forward with all our might until we take up the stumbling block out of the road.... If we surrender the right to speak in public this year, we must surrender the right to petition next year, and the right to write the year after, and so on. What then can woman do for the

(continued to page 24)

**Sarah  
and  
Angelina  
Grimke**

# **Sisters Against Slavery**

by SHIRLEY JOLLS



## Marie Farrar, Infanticide

by Berthold Brecht

Marie Farrar, born in April,  
No marks, a minor, rachitic, both parents dead,  
Allegedly, up to now without police record,  
Committed infanticide, it is said,  
As follows: in her second month, she says,  
With the aid of a barmaid she did her best  
To get rid of her child with two douches,  
Allegedly painful but without success.  
But you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.

She then paid out, she says, what was agreed  
And continued to lace herself up tight.  
She also drank liquor with pepper mixed in it  
Which purged her but did not cure her plight.  
Her body distressed her as she washed the dishes,  
It was swollen now quite visibly.  
She herself says, for she was still a child,  
She prayed to Mary most earnestly.  
But you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.



Kathe Kollwitz

Her prayers, it seemed, helped her not at all.  
She longed for help. Her trouble made her falter  
And faint at early mass. Often drops of sweat  
Broke out in anguish as she knelt at the altar.  
Yet until her time had come upon her  
She still kept secret her condition.  
For no one believed such a thing had happened,  
That she, so unenticing, had yielded to temptation.  
But you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn.  
For man needs help from every creature born.

And on that day, she says, when it was dawn,  
As she washed the stairs it seemed a nail  
Was driven into her belly. She was wrung with pain.  
But still she secretly endured her travail.  
All day long while hanging out the laundry  
She racked her brains till she got it through her head  
She had to bear the child and her heart was heavy.  
It was very late when she went up to bed.  
But you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.

She was sent for again as soon as she lay down:  
Snow had fallen and she had to go downstairs.  
It went on till eleven. It was a long day.  
Only at night did she have time to bear.  
And so, she says, she gave birth to a son.  
The son she bore was just like all the others.  
She was unlike the others but for this  
There is no reason to despise this mother.  
You, too, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.

Accordingly I will go on with the story  
Of what happened to the son that came to be.  
(She says she will hide nothing that befell)  
So let it be a judgment upon both you and me.  
She says she had scarcely gone to bed when she  
Was overcome with sickness and she was alone,  
Not knowing what would happen, yet she still  
Contrived to stifle all her moans.  
And you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.  
With her last strength, she says, because  
Her room had now grown icy cold, she then  
Dragged herself to the latrine and there  
Gave birth as best she could (not knowing when)  
But toward morning. She says she was already  
Quite distracted and could barely hold  
The child for snow came into the latrine  
And her fingers were half numb with cold.  
You too, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.

Between the latrine and her room, she says,  
Not earlier, the child began to cry until  
It drove her mad so that she says  
She did not cease to beat it with her fists  
Blindly for some time till it was still.  
And then she took the body to her bed  
And kept it with her there all through the night:  
When morning came she hid it in the shed.  
But you, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.

Marie Farrar, born in April,  
An unmarried mother, convicted, died in  
The Meissen penitentiary,  
She brings home to you all men's sin.  
You who bear pleasantly between clean sheets  
And give the name "blessed" to your womb's weight  
Must not damn the weakness of the outcast,  
For her sin was black but her pain was great.  
Therefore, I beg you, check your wrath and scorn  
For man needs help from every creature born.



# Indochinese Women Inspire Their Anti-War Sisters

by EMILY HANLON

"American advisors very often gave instructions to the Vietnamese torturers. All the shackles they chained us with had the markings 'Made in USA.'" These are the words of Dinh Thi Huong, 46, a woman from South Vietnam who spent six long years in four different prisons, including Con Son prison of tiger-cage fame.

To look at Huong, one would never think that she had withstood the most brutal torture imaginable, surpassing the crimes of Nazi Germany. Her story left many of us who heard it in tears—tears of admiration for her fantastic courage—tears of utter hatred for her torturers.

At the different concentration camps where she had been she suffered from such tortures as having pins stuck in her fingertips and then moved around. She was strapped down and water mixed with salt was forced into her stomach until it was full, then U.S. - trained torturers would walk on her stomach until all the water was forced out. Other times her hands were tied behind her back and she was hung from the ceiling. Electrodes were attached to her ears, nipples and genitals. She was held in cells which were so crowded that people had to stand. Once she was not allowed to take a bath for nine months. But, as Huong emphasized, these tortures were commonplace—what was uncommon was that she survived.

"I didn't belong to any organization when they arrested me," she said. "But as soon as I got out of prison, paralyzed for many months, I joined the National Liberation Front....The prisons are schools for my people."

A delegation of YAWF Women met and heard Huong at the Anti-Imperialist Women's Conference in Toronto, Canada, April 9-13 where about 200 women from the Women's Liberation Movement and 100 Third World women met six heroic sisters from Indochina. Huong was one of the six women. They came from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and the Patriotic Front of Laos.

The conference was held as a demonstration of international solidarity of U.S. and Canadian women with Indochinese women against U.S. imperialism. The sisterly love and feelings of solidarity that the Indochinese women felt toward us was evident not only in their words but in their smiles and warm embraces.

The Women's Liberation and Third World women's conference began on Friday night with a

cultural event. For Women's Strike for Peace and the Canadian Voice of Women, the evening marked the end of a conference they held with the Indochinese women.

The evening was one of the high points of the conference, with an exchange of solidarity greetings between the Indochinese and Third World women, songs and presentation of gifts. This truly revolutionary exchange among oppressed people was distorted, however, by some of the racist elements present among the white women who felt "excluded" from the event, and who were upset because, as they saw it, no "women's" issues were raised. Because of their inability to identify with other oppressed peoples, these white women completely missed the revolutionary beauty of the evening.

However, it was predictable that such an undercurrent of hostility to Third World women would be present since the organizers of the conference from Women's Liberation in the U.S. had from the beginning done their best to exclude Third World women from the organizing. And these same organizers arbitrarily stated that only "autonomous women's groups" could attend the conference in an effort to keep out all militant anti-imperialist white women who belong to male-female organizations.

As the Indochinese women made very clear, the struggle for the liberation of women is an integral part of the liberation struggle of all people. Phan Minh Hien from the National Liberation Front said, "The only way for women to gain full equality is to fully participate in the revolution and to liberate all classes, both men and women."

Fortunately, the Friday night dispute was cut short and those women who were most hostile to the liberation struggles of Third World people were not able to take away from the revolutionary spirit and sisterhood imparted by the Indochinese women. As soon as the six Indochinese women walked into the first plenary session, feelings of excitement and solidarity swept most of the women, who were genuinely there to learn from their revolutionary sisters.

The conference was separated into plenary sessions and informal workshops. The first plenary began on Saturday morning with speeches from each of the Indochinese delegates.

Kampheng Boupha, 47, and Khemphet Pholsena, 29, both primary school teachers from Laos, addressed a plenary session of the conference. Both women, along with their interpreter, Mr. Soubanh



Srithirath, had walked 200 miles for three months to come to the conference! The main thrust of all the speeches was the fraud of Nixon's pacification programs and the brutality of the war. Over and over again the Indochinese women repeated the importance of the American people's resounding demand for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops.

In a movie shown on Sunday night, made in 1970, the 25th anniversary of Laos, Kampheng Boupha's words took on added dimension. The movie depicted how the society in the liberated zones functions and is developing a socialist society. Everything from textile factories to foundries and truck factories to nurseries and schools have moved into caves for protection from the merciless U.S. bomb-

the NLF is a woman. And in 1969, four women were representatives in the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

When Sister Hien finished, all the Indochinese delegations got up to sing "Liberate the South."

Vo Thi The, 50, a professor of literature, University of Hanoi, and Nguyen Thi Xiem, 40, Vice President of the Women's Union of Hanoi and an obstetrician-gynecologist, represented the Women's Union of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Mr. Nguyen Tri, 50, was their interpreter. There was a particularly poignant yet simple drama during a workshop when a pregnant Third World woman became ill and the Vietnamese physician, Sister Xiem, immediately got up to take care of her.

During the conference many women asked ques-



Democratic Republic of Vietnam delegates, Nguyen Thi Xiem and Vo Thi The, applaud the solidarity greeting of the Young Lords Party sisters who encircle them. photo credit/Palante

ing. Women are shown participating in every aspect of society. In fact, the Laotian women had brought with them, as gifts, rings made from the 1,000th U.S. plane shot down by the Laotian women!

Phan Minh Hien, 31, a teacher, and Dinh Huong, 46, who spent six years in prison, represented the Women's Union for the Liberation of South Vietnam. Mr. Trinh Van Anh, 33, was their interpreter. Sister Hien, an incredibly vivacious woman, opened her message by saying, "Coming from the battlefield, we bring you warmest greetings from the fighting women of South Vietnam.... From the mountains to the plains, women, irrespective of age, are taking part in the revolution" from making weapons to setting booby traps and fighting on the front lines. She said that there are all-woman battalions, women commanders—a chief of staff of

tions about the role of women in Vietnam and Laos. The North Vietnamese women explained that the Women's Union, with a membership of four million, is a major organ of the government with a system of organization from the central committee down to the villages. Through its contacts on the local level, the Women's Union is responsive to the needs of all the women. There are committees for the protection of mothers and babies, of women in factories, committees on welfare, education and research, on the self-determination of national minorities, committees to study the different problems of women and to raise them to the government. There is also a committee called Directives of Government set up to train women and promote them to take charge of society.

(continued to page 24)



There were green shoots growing out of the brown earth covering the miles and miles of fields along routes 62 and 75 traveling south from Buffalo. And though there was no sign of human life for miles on end, I could almost see the stooped and bent figures made real by vivid memories of so many years past. In just a few weeks, the peas would be ready to pick—and then in a regular cycle strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, cherries, beans, corn, tomatoes, beets and squash.

As summer drew closer in Western New York, and thoughts of those scorching days became more realistic, my memory flashed back some thirty years when, as a child of eight, I used to pick beans and berries in those very fields. In the depression years, “picking” was the last resort for countless families in the Italian neighborhood in which I grew up—but for women and children in particular.

As I drove along the country roads through Hamburg and Eden, New York, toward the North Collins-Brant area, how real those memories were. How can anyone ever forget getting up at 4 A.M. during summer vacation from school and often not returning home until 8 P.M.! No one had to tell us why we went “picking”—our mother’s purse always told the story.

Rushing about in what still seemed to be the middle of the night, we’d grab a lunch and still half asleep would run to the nearest corner and climb onto the waiting trucks. Our only seats (if we were lucky enough to get one) were planks of wood braced on orange crates or milk boxes. They served as a hard reminder that another long day was just beginning.

After a while, we got things down to a science. We’d get up a few minutes earlier, run to a truck stop a few blocks back, hoping to find a seat. Sometimes we’d get one, too—only to give it up when older women—our grandmothers, mothers, aunts or friends would get on at later stops—their faces and hands, their whole bodies reflecting the years of struggle and hard work—their long aprons a symbol of their strength.

It took an hour or two of bumping along back roads to get to the farms. Sometimes we’d sing just to make the hard ride somewhat pleasant. As dawn approached, we’d begin trudging through the wet fields either dragging our knees through the mud or assuming a stooping, bent-back position. In either case, by lunch time, we were tired and worn.

There were whole families who went “picking,” and those of us who went without our mothers, became children of the people’s farm community. We wore large brim hats to shelter us from the hot sun. But even then, many—especially older women and those in advanced stages of pregnancy—would have heat strokes. It wasn’t uncommon to see sick bodies stretched out beneath the shade of nearby trees.

There was no medical insurance or any benefits for us. The exploiter-farmers for whom we worked had a hey-day. We were a source of dirt cheap child and female labor. We were paid less as women and children but when it came to lugging our 75 to 100 pound sacks of beans or crates of berries, our

# SWEAT



Anna, seated first row, with her arms around her sisters, takes a break from “picking.”

“frailty” went unnoticed!

If you got sick on the job and couldn’t work all day, your lunch might cost more than the few pennies you brought home. To have a sack of beans or a crate (or even a quart) of berries stolen was the final blow! But this was an indication of the depth of the oppression!

The farmers had all sorts of angles to deprive us of our hard-earned pennies. They would let our berries sit in the sun so the berries would “sink” and we would have to refill the boxes without any further compensation. On pay day, they would claim lack of funds. I would never have gotten paid at the



# SWEATSHOPS

by JEANNETTE FUSCO MERRILL

## IN THE SUN

end of one summer if my father hadn't threatened the life of one farmer who tried not to pay me.

But we, too, devised ways to even out the score—like all exploited workers do. We padded the bottom of berry baskets with straw or leaves, or dropped a few stones into the bottom of our bean sacks before they were weighed.

I finally reached my aunt's house in a small farming community. We reminisced about so many things. She's 79 now—the mother of six grown children, and grandmother and great-grandmother many times over, but she's still working in a farm factory labeling and pasting. Her bent fingers and wrinkled but sturdy face emphasize her years of toil.

"You'd think I'd own the damn place after all those years," she said, recalling the last 30 to 40 years of her life as a farm worker. How well she remembered forty years ago, in her eighth or ninth month of pregnancy, traveling about 25 to 30 miles to Wilson, New York, to work in a farm factory. When she was about to deliver, her two young children worked in her place.

Talking with my aunt reminded me of another conversation I had had with a former neighbor—a very dear friend of many years. Anna told me how, as a child, she and her sisters were taken out of school in May and never returned until October. For six months out of the year, they lived with their mother in a small shack on the edge of the farm. "No wonder we were so dumb," she said. I reminded her that she and millions upon millions of youngsters are still denied education because they must work to help their families get by. Besides it's not our parents' fault that we had little schooling, but the farmers': we had to work to supplement our parents' wages while the farmers lived well on the profits they didn't pay us.

Anna and I talked for a long time: "...We were so darn poor—there were times when we ate peas for breakfast, peas for lunch and peas again for supper.... I did everything—picked peas, berries, and beans, hoed, tied vines and cut grapes.... My mother used to take her old cotton stockings and cover our arms so we wouldn't get scratched.... I had forgotten this scar on my arm—cut myself with a knife while picking grapes; I didn't even know how to hold the knife I was so young.... I used to like to pick peas most of all; it wasn't so back-breaking uprooting the whole plant.... And the rain on the tin roofs, I'll never forget that. To this day, whenever

it rains, I think back to those days.... There were some happy memories. That's how I want to remember everyone...."

She didn't have to explain—I knew exactly what she meant. Many of the older women and even some her own age (mid-fifties) had died, and for those who remained, the oppression and exploitation had left its deep scars: the swollen legs and ankles, hands twisted by arthritis, whole bodies made older by the harsh conditions of a lost childhood!

Times have changed some on the farms in Western New York. They have machines now to pick beans, till the soil, pick potatoes and even some berries and grapes. But throughout this country, so many Black, Chicano and poor white sisters and brothers and their children are still enslaved in these factories in the fields.

The most immediate necessity for the poverty-stricken farm laborers of today is the unionization of these sweatshops in the sun. This process has already begun, particularly on the West Coast where Chicano workers under the leadership of Cesar Chavez in the AFL-CIO are showing the way through courageous struggles which they have waged in the grape and lettuce strikes.

I didn't know then, but I do understand now what insight into the sufferings of my class—what love and respect for the working class—I got as a child in those fields of oppression. Today I know also that the only way to lift that oppression is, as other workers have done, through the unionization of the workers whose hands harvest this nation's food crops.



# nixon, we'll speak for ourselves

by LEE ROBINSON

On April 4 you made your position on abortion known to the American people. You stated that you were against abortions. You feel that abortions threaten the "sanctity of human life." You feel that your "religious and personal beliefs" cannot let you approve of the idea that abortion is the right of every woman. But, Mr. Nixon, have you forgotten for one moment the blood on your hands! Your history of murder does not allow you to speak about the sanctity of human life; and it is we, the women, who have the right to silence your lies and deceit.

Can you forget so easily the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese people that you have raped, bombed and napalmed? Can you forget about a land that you have totally devastated? Haven't you heard the reports from the ruins of Saigon where your puppet government reigns? The streets are filled with the diseased and maimed. Starvation has turned women into prostitutes. Aren't you concerned with these facts?

Don't speak of the sanctity of human life when you are responsible for the Mylai Massacre. Remember the defenseless women and children and babies who were shot through the head. Mr. Nixon, it was your officers who committed these atrocities. It is your officer Calley, who is a murderer and is guilty of these crimes; yet you ordered that he be released from the stockade. Can you explain this?

And what about the war at home? The war you daily conduct against the poor and oppressed people of this country. How many thousands of Black people have you ordered your police and troops to shoot down in the streets of New York City, Newark, Watts and Miami? Most often the peoples' "crimes" are no greater than a man or woman trying to get food.

And then there are women like Ericka Huggins, Angela Davis, and Afeni Shakur, and Joan Bird whom you consider criminals. What is the crime of Ericka Huggins? She saw hungry children go to school without eating breakfast and decided to help feed these children because the state you run does not care about the hungry and poor. She set up a free breakfast for schoolchildren program in New Haven with the Black Panther Party, and now she is in one of your concentration camps.

These women are not criminals. They are victims of your vicious, racist war against Black people. You have imprisoned these women because they are fighting for the liberation of their people. That is the only reason that they have been incarcerated on frameup charges and locked in your



concentration camps. No! These women are not criminals. By their dedication and love of the people, they have become a symbol and an inspiration to all women, Black and white, in our fight against our oppression.

Richard Nixon, you have worldwide fame for your mass murders abroad and at home. Your conscience is intentionally silent when Third World people are concerned. You are so vicious that you have now devised another plan for mass genocide. A plan with the power to sterilize Black women—sterilize women without their consent—sterilize women under coercion. Your conscience has always been silent as welfare mothers are forcibly sterilized. Welfare mothers are told by your government that they have to give up their rights of parenthood if they expect to receive their survival stipend. Your desire to crush the spirit of an oppressed people struggling for freedom takes precedence over any concern you pretend for women, let alone human life. You will commit any brutal act to limit the strength and numbers of a heroic people.

And now, with all your crimes against women, you dare to speak in the name of women? You and your ruling class partners run a country where women are exploited on every job. Women are paid less than men for the same work men do. Women are not given any considerations that are their right. Are women paid for maternity leave? Are jobs even held for women while on maternity leave? Are there day-care centers for children while mothers are at work? If there are, can working women afford them; or are they only for the wealthy?

No, Mr. Nixon, the list of unanswered demands that women have is as endless as your history of war and murder throughout the world; and

(continued to page 25)



# ERICKA IS FREE!

by SHARON EOLIS

Over the past two years YAWF Women have continuously supported the Black Panthers who were framed up in New Haven. Starting with the women's demonstration in the fall of 1969, we protested the Nazi concentration-camp tactics used against Ericka Huggins and two other Panther women who were pregnant, without medical care, and forced to give birth under armed guard. YAWF Women were in New Haven to show solidarity with Ericka and Bobby during the legal motions, the jury picking, and the trial, up through the deliberation and the

verdict. Each time, we held banners and flags with pictures of Bobby and Ericka and chanted "Free Bobby, Free Ericka, stop the war against Black America." When the majority of the jury was for acquittal, we thought it was a victory. So we were very surprised and joyous when the charges were dismissed and Ericka was set free (along with Bobby a few days later).

YAWF was invited to a party for Ericka the night of her release. When we arrived, we gave Ericka a banner which read: "Welcome out Ericka. Power to the People." Ericka seemed pleased with the gift as she held it up to show her friends and comrades. Several of the women jurors, old and young, Black and white, were at the party; they told of the hours they had spent struggling to win an acquittal on all charges. Even though this didn't happen, it was clear that the women on the jury had fought hard to free Ericka.

But those of us who have marched so long under banners of "Free Bobby, Free Ericka," and have carried that demand on countless demonstrations across the country know that the real struggle to free Bobby and Ericka took place in the streets.

Welcome out, Ericka and Bobby!  
We send you our revolutionary love!

~~~~~  
We waited in the New Haven courthouse day after day for the jury to bring in its verdict on which the lives of Ericka Huggins and Bobby Seale rested. On Friday, May 21, a little girl sat next to us who printed out in sure and steady letters the following message which was sent in by her mother to Bobby and Ericka:

FREE BOBBY  
FREE ANGELA  
FREE ERICKA

I am Michele Boissiere. I am 6 years old.

In solidarity with her, and all Black children, women and men to whom Bobby and Ericka have dedicated their lives, we sent Ericka the following statement with a copy of the April-May BattleActs:

Dear Ericka,

We are here to express our solidarity with you and Bobby in the struggle against this fascist frameup. We want you to have a copy of our magazine BattleActs with an article about Harriet Tubman. As Harriet Tubman inspired millions to flee the bonds of slavery and to fight for freedom for Black Americans over a century ago, you, by your leadership in the Black Panther Party and your courage and strength in the face of monumental repression, are inspiring women and men, Black and white, to struggle today to win the liberation of Black Americans once and for all.

We salute you and Bobby with clenched fists and raise banners of "Free Ericka" and "Free Bobby." As the struggle continues, we know the people's power will be victorious.

Power to the people,  
YAWF Women



photo credit/The Black Panther



# free the

by CATHERINE HOPPER

I have a recurring nightmare that has lasted for twenty-two years. This nightmare was caused by a reality - a reality that many children and young adults have experienced. I was eighteen years old and had no future to speak of; I was unemployed and not a student, with a few aspirations that were crushed by a lack of funds and confidence. Unable to cope with the situation, my mother filed a complaint against me in the Juvenile Court.

Not aware of the consequences of this action I innocently, at my mother's request, went to the 100th precinct stationhouse to talk to a social worker. It was a grave mistake. The all-too eager social worker and policeman told me I would spend the next two weeks in a Catholic youth house in New York City. After spending the next two weeks at the youth house, I was released, and told to report to the social worker within a week. Because I didn't report, I was taken back to the youth house by two policemen. After that they sent me to Bellevue Hospital, youth ward. The place was full of roaches and all kinds of vermin. There wasn't a sympathetic doctor in the house and the girls knew it. There were many different reasons why the girls were there, but we all had one thing in common: none of us were rich. It saddens me to think that we didn't realize being there didn't happen to rich girls. If we had, we could have discussed and questioned the whole system as well as ourselves.

I spent two weeks at Bellevue and then I was sent to court where my fate was to be decided. I walked into the courtroom and faced the judge. He told me that after reading all the reports from Bellevue and the youth house, he thought it necessary that I needed a little discipline. And since I was such a nice girl, he sentenced me to Villa Loretto, House of Good Shepherd for one to three years.

Suddenly the reality of everything hit me like an explosive. I was being robbed of my freedom and youth. I screamed with all my might, picked up the nearest chair and threw it at the judge. This same judge died recently; he got a write-up in The New York Times. They said people spoke of him as a kind and good judge. Well, the day I threw a chair at him he was a miserable coward. He ran out of the courtroom and sent me to the Women's House of Detention.

I got the full treatment; after the barbaric physical, I was slapped in a cell by myself because they found some vermin on me that I had picked up from Bellevue. I was shipped back to the court and to the same judge. I cried bitterly. I didn't know what I had done to deserve this punishment.

Before, when I had been free, I never received any help from the government. Now that I was taken prisoner I received so much attention and, with great efficiency. My two most precious gifts, youth and freedom, were stolen by the state.

The judge again sentenced me to Villa Loretto, House of Good Shepherd for one to three years.

That recurring nightmare always consists of me going back to the House of Good Shepherd. Somehow the burden of the nightmare decreases when I hear shouts of "Power to the people" and "Free all political prisoners." When I see clenched fists outside the bars of the Women's House of Detention I know the people are coming together.

There are thousands of boys and girls across the country in jails. They are not allowed lawyers and have no rights at all. They are beaten and treated horribly. The shouts of liberation will be loud enough for them to hear. It will give the children hope and strength and something to fight back with.

"FREE THE CHILDREN"

# C H I L D R E N



The Pentagon says: "As far as we're concerned the illegitimate children of American servicemen in Vietnam do not exist."

For the more than 200,000 mothers of these "nonexistent" children, their flesh and blood reality is a heartbreaking actuality. It is hard enough anywhere for a woman unaided to care for a young child, and at the same time earn the money to feed and clothe it. Where bombs and napalm add to the everyday hazards of life, and where raging inflation cuts deeper into a woman's meager earnings every week, her life is desperate, and her child's chances of survival -- to say nothing of happiness -- are bleak. It is no comfort to her to know that the Saigon government says her children are "not a problem."

She can only hope that her son will escape the fate of a boy named Son, who is 11 years old and lives in a home for shoeshine boys in Saigon. Son says, "My friends call me 'Mixed Blood' and make fun of me. I think of my father's country as a wonderful place and I wish to go there sometime." He cannot read or write, and would like to go to school but cannot earn enough money shining shoes to pay for it. Often his earnings are not enough to buy his supper.

The Vietnamese mother hopes desperately that she can stay alive to protect her daughter, for she knows how doubly cruel life can be for orphaned children of mixed races. But her desperate hopes, very often the best she can bequeath her daughter, can do little to alter a future of servitude or prostitution. She may have heard of a little girl whose name is Ly, who has been adopted by Vietnamese parents. Little Ly is teased by both children and grown-ups, who ask her, "Where is your father?" And she carries a picture of her Vietnamese step-father to prove that he is not a foreigner.

Ly's step-mother wants to have Ly's blond hair dyed black, but her step-father says, "It won't do any good, and it's a waste of money."

Every army in history has been faced with the problem of what policy to take towards the people who live and work but do no fight in a war. Pillage, rape, murder and illegitimacy are all concomi-

# children who do not exist

by ELIZABETH ROSS



tants of any war. Whether these crimes will be rewarded or punished tells everything about the leadership of an army, and what its goals are.

The Red Army of the Bolsheviks, the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese Revolutionary armies all punished rape with the firing squad. They all meted out the most severe penalties on soldiers who robbed or molested peasant and working class families. This was not merely a calculated policy. Revolutionary armies grow out of the anguish of oppressed people, and their whole reason for existence is to end the oppression. If they condone crimes against the people they are no longer revolutionary armies.

But armies of conquest -- whether composed of the legions of ancient Rome, the brigands of medieval or modern Europe, or the cold-eyed bombing squads of Yankee imperialism -- have all been promised that victory in battle would mean they could and should plunder the homes of the conquered, rape the conquered women, and desert the children of the conquered race. Those were and are the prizes offered to common soldiers by the officers in payment for their years of sacrifice and danger. Imperialist armies cannot function without those goals.

But no army has ever been so arrogant, so racist and so brazen as that of U.S. imperialism! And it's the generals who mastermind and the politicians and the businessmen who order the conquest who are so guilty of crimes against the Vietnamese people.

How eloquently the Defense Department exposes the attitude of the U.S. rulers when it stated in an official paper issued in 1970, "the care and welfare of these unfortunate children . . . has never been and is not now considered an area of Government responsibility." But you can be sure that when the National Liberation Front liberates territories in the South, these hapless children of American GIs are not only cared for, but are "considered an area of Government responsibility."

Only when all the South is liberated from U.S. imperialism

(continued to page 25)



# MAYDAY

*Washington, D.C.*

## Accounts from the lock-up

MayDay traditionally represents the militant struggles of the American workers for the 8-hour day. Born from that struggle, the demonstrations in Washington, D.C., carried on by thousands of militant youth this May 3 to 5 were definitely in keeping with the revolutionary spirit of that tradition.

About 50,000 youth descended on the capital of U.S. imperialism to demonstrate to the rulers of this country that the people can no longer tolerate the brutal war being waged against the Indochinese peoples.

We, as YAWF Women, along with our brothers in YAWF, went to Washington to participate, to show that struggle must be carried out in the most militant way possible, and to try and raise the necessity of struggling against all fronts of U.S. imperialism, be it Indochina, Black America, Palestine; the oppression of women; the oppression of working people. In spite of the pacifist character of the leadership of the MayDay Tribe, the prevalent mood of those who came to Washington was one of determination and struggle. This was sharpened further by the repressive action of the government in the attacks upon the demonstrators, the teargas and the massive arrest tactics—over 12,000 demonstrators were arrested and thrown into huge concentration camps set up in stadiums and parking lots where crowded conditions, no food, no toilets and brutality brought to mind the classical concentration camps utilized by the Nazis.

All this produced the opposite effect from what the government had expected. Instead of dissipating the demonstration, it only made us angrier and even more determined to struggle.

Monday marked a day of street fighting, setting up barricades in the street, returning teargas canisters to the lines of cops and militant resistance in all forms. The days that followed showed that the youth were determined to remain in Washington, and Tuesday brought thousands to the Department of Justice, a target chosen because of the repression it has brought down upon the Black people and anti-war demonstrators all across the country. Here thousands were arrested, including almost 40 people from YAWF. When the leadership told people to sit down and submit to arrest, we remained standing and urged others to do the same to resist this attack by the police.

The demonstration in Washington was indeed a victory for the struggle. The YAWF statement at the People's Press Conference on Wednesday at the Capital Mall said in part: "The fact that people came back, day after day, in the face of police gestapo tactics made this demonstration truly a success. Some people say that we didn't stop the war, but this was a step forward in the struggle against U.S. imperialism."

The following articles are eye-witness accounts of three YAWF women who describe how the struggle continued in jail.

by LAURIE FIERSTEIN

## 1. Buffalo

After a rally at the Justice Department, thousands of us were arrested and herded into Army and police buses and taken off to various precinct houses throughout Washington. After threats of "singing and chanting on the buses will get you gassed" from the bus drivers and guards, we continued to sing and chant loudly as we began our hours in jail together.

"Together." The word meant more as time passed. We all had the same motives for going to Washington—stopping and smashing this government and its policies and building a better society—this was unity and that was our strength.

Fourteen women were crowded into one 7-by-4-foot cell with a metal cot and a toilet that flushed every hour. The men shared the same fate in a nearby cell. There were so many metal bars and such a nice clangible metal roof that we couldn't resist pounding

the hell out of them to accompany our chants. (They made the mistake of letting us have metal soda cans which made good musical instruments.) "Hey, hey Madame Binh, the NLF is gonna win!" Six of us from Youth Against War & Fascism had been busted together and we hung up one of our YAWF orange flags and chanted "Big firms get rich—GIs die!" After we were fed, we found out that our brothers hadn't been. They tried to use such tactics to keep us apart and to build up resentment between the women and men by treating us like "ladies." Well, they didn't count on us changing our chants to "Feed the men, now!" or us throwing them half of our baloney sandwiches (which were our breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks)!

Many of the men were tired and discouraged from the heat and cramped quarters and their spirits were drooping. The guards really wished that we would tire out because our chants were driving them crazy. But the women were mad—mad because of the disgusting chauvinism that kept our brothers hungry, so we just kept chanting and screaming.

The second day was harder—the hours were long; many women had lost track of sisters and brothers



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## 2. New York City

When we were arrested and in the van we joined others chanting "Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh the NLF is gonna win! Remember the rebellion of '68!" As we went through the Washington streets we constantly received "V" signs and fists.

Once at the jail, the women and men were divided. When a group of us entered and told the other women that two of our brothers had escaped from the van, they cheered loudly. Soon we demanded a telephone call. "Too many prisoners," said the guard. We told them, "We have very little sympathy for your fascist mass arrests. We want our phone call." Our request was chanted by all the women. And finally they had to grant it—for every one of us!

The majority of the guards thought that women would be "easier to handle." But they didn't treat us that way. We had seen a pregnant woman kicked

in the stomach by the pigs and a one-year-old child torn from its mother as she was shoved into a van. We saw sixty women crowded into a cell made for ten. Women who refused to answer questions other than name, address and place of birth were threatened and insulted. Women who had menstrual cramps were given nothing for pain.

YAWF Women had gotten banners into the jail which we put up on the wall. We gave educational classes about Ericka and Bobby, the Soledad Brothers, Angela, the Auburn prisoners. We explained that even if the guards said they were for us, offered us food and met our demands, that their job, their function, their having the key, put them on the side of the police administration and government. We made a list of demands, all negotiable except for the first: freedom.

One example that particularly showed the women's spirit and understanding was in relation to the male prisoners. While everyone was crowded, uncomfortable, and hungry, the men were especially brutalized for more than 24 hours. They were crowded so tightly in a locked cell that no one could sit down, and some even slept standing. They were not even given water; there was no fan to cool their

(continued to page 27)

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## 3. Wilmington

Chants of "Jail the rich, free the poor" shook the 20 tiny cells where 10 to 20 women were cramped into spaces meant to hold one prisoner. Beating on the walls, banging on the bars, the women kept their voices angry and their spirits high.

Women who, when they arrived, had called the guards "brother" and criticized us for calling them "pigs" were chanting "Off the pigs, power to the people" when they left.

The change came because prison conditions almost immediately became intolerable, and when the reality of the situation sank in, the women became

angry. It was possible then to talk about the role of cops and jails, to explain how the state is based on violence, and to agitate for a militant response to counter that violence. At first demoralization set in, but the women soon saw that the chants made them strong.

The role of the guards became clear when in response to my jibes, one guard threw a soda at me and spit on me. The women became so angry at this attack on a sister that the police chief was forced to come to the cell to apologize—something we knew he would never do for a Black or Third World sister. He even promised he would remove that pig from the cellblock, but we unanimously rejected his apology!

As the anger and frustration grew over the

(continued to page 27)

whom they came down with because people were scattered all over. The pigs kept promising that we were going to be brought to court soon and they never brought us. All that did was make the time go slower.

But all we needed were a few people with spirit to keep us going. "Free Angela, free Ericka, stop the war against Black America!" "Hey, hey, ho, ho., Precinct 9 has got to go!" It took little to stop the demoralization because nobody wanted it to happen. The many long hours brought us closer together and when one felt down, it was the duty of the rest of us to bring her spirits back up.

In the beginning of our stay everybody was grabby about food, but later on there was a much better spirit of giving and sharing. It was the first time in prison for many of us, and since we were mostly white and middle class there had never been anything else but our common oppression as women to tie us together. We knew we didn't have it one-tenth as bad as our Third World sisters and brothers in

jails all across the country and that they weren't going to get out on \$10 bail like we were. But we were all women and all being persecuted for our beliefs.

The fact that the pigs were at a loss with what to do with a crowd of militant women had made us powerful! There was a victory in Washington. The government did use all of its jails and its gas and its cops to keep us down but it didn't work! Everybody said that they would go back! That they'd fight harder and face it all again!

When the same buses that brought us to prison brought us to the courthouse where we were to be bailed out, we noticed that the little stickers with pictures of Mahatma Gandhi, urging people to remain in Washington for the entire week and to use pacifist tactics, had had something added to them—in Gandhi's uplifted hand, people had drawn in tiny AK-47's!

Valerie Colangelo  
Buffalo YAWF Women



# **WOMEN SCORE touchdown against namath!**

by PAM MEYERS

"Don't cross the picket line -- the waitresses got fired" chanted 40 angry women as we tried to stop people from going into Joe Namath's bar, the Bachelors III, Wednesday night, May 26. And if that wasn't enough, we set up a skirmish line at the door and backed up our chants with some blocks (that is until the cops came).

This action really began a year and a half ago when women were hired as waitresses at low wages and even skimpier uniforms. With the long hours, and the long arms of the men who frequented Bachelor's III, the situation for these women, as for most cocktail waitresses, became unbearable. But when you have 2 kids and no husband, or have to help support your family and you've never had training, the unbearable situation must be endured, until . . . .

Wednesday morning when Women of Youth Against War & Fascism got a phone call from Claudia. She explained that six waitresses had been fired from the Bachelor's III and she and four of the other waitresses wanted to do something about it.

Claudia and Fran explained some of the conditions they worked under. Claudia had fallen down the stairs and had not received compensation for it. Another waitress had slipped on the cracked stairs and had gotten a concussion. She was promptly fired and had to face the hospital bills without money. They used Namath as the supreme example of what they had to go through: if his table wasn't served or cleaned immediately he would start yelling and screaming in order to humiliate the waitresses; often he would go into fits and start throwing chairs and whatever else he could get his hands on. Sylvia, the waitress with two kids, narrowly missed getting hit in the head with a chair.

After all this, the six waitresses were suddenly given five day's notice. Two had worked there a year and a half. They were told that they were attracting the wrong clientele. But "wise guys" (a term for gangsters) had been going there since Bachelors III opened. The real reason Namath had fired the women was that he wanted to hire men, to make the place look more exclusive.

Five out of the six waitresses planned to walk out of the bar and restaurant at the busiest time and leave the place without any "servants" for the rest of the night. We offered to make a banner and organize women to come and support them.

That night just happened to be the usual meeting time of the YAWF Women's caucus. We alerted everyone to dress up a little (just to get into the place) and about 30 of us left after the meeting with a banner and signs under our arms. We broke

down into groups of 3 and 4, trickled into the place and sat at different tables and at the bar. About 10 women from the Women's Bail Fund joined us.

Claudia gave the signal at about 11:00 and we all walked out holding the banner which read "Namath gets rich -- waitresses get fired" and chanted the same slogan. As we passed by the crowd of mostly men, their mouths dropped lower and lower. Outside we formed a picket line in front of the restaurant. The waitresses were ecstatic. Some of them burned their aprons!

We marched in front of the Bachelors III with signs such as "Namath is a Pigskin" and "We want more than a quarter back" and "\$20.00 a week is not enough." Namath's Bar is at 62nd and Lexington, which is where the so-called "beautiful" people live it up. They aren't used to having demonstrations there, much less a labor-oriented picket line. As we chanted for people to not cross the picket lines and physically stopped anyone pig-headed enough to try and get in, a crowd gathered. One of the problems anticipated was that Namath might call the waiter's union and ask for scabs to come and work the rest of the night. As long as our picket line was up, we're sure no scabs got in!

Someone called the cops. About 10 of them set up a aisle for people to get into the restaurant, but we continued to chant and despite the police escort, many would-be patrons were kept away.

After about an hour, a limousine pulled up and five people stepped out. They had probably been called by Namath to get in at all costs. As the picket line kept moving, some women tried to stop them. A cop grabbed one of the YAWF Women, Michelle Packman, and pushed her up against a car. He had his club around her neck and another cop twisted her arm. They arrested her on felonious assault, harrassment and other charges.

Claudia, immediately called for us to go to the precinct and demand our sister be released. We marched there, but the cops refused to let us into the precinct, so we got a doctor and lawyer there as soon as possible. Michelle was in good spirits and was released the next day on no bail.

The story was in most of the newspapers the next day and, of course, they tried to treat it like a joke. But it's no joke when cocktail waitresses start thinking of organized retaliation against all the conditions they have had to work under. Cocktail waitresses make better money than most other waitresses and are usually considered privileged. But they work because they have to work; and there is no security on a job where you can be fired for no other reason than you get "old" or where you're not even hired if you're Black or not pretty "enough." And for the same reason, you may not be able to get many tips from the "clientele" that goes to such places.

Women who work in every kind of job are daily becoming aware of the many forms of harassment and discrimination directed against them. And many are going to great lengths to fight back for their rights -- what better example than when cocktail waitresses walk out and leave Joe Namath tending his own bar!



at the pentagon

# women fly Flags

by MICHELE PACKMAN

Can you imagine the red, blue and yellow flag of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam flying over the Pentagon? Can you imagine a Vietnamese woman talking to 2,000 women on the steps of the Pentagon - women standing in solidarity and sisterhood with women around the world fighting for their liberation?

Well, that's what took place on April 10, when women marched from the "Justice" Department, through the heart of official Washington, and over the Arlington Memorial Bridge to the Pentagon, the symbol, the heart of US militarism. The march was long, but the women didn't tire easily.

The chant "Free Angela, Free Ericka, stop the war against Black America" was raised by squads of YAWF Women from New York City and Wilmington and enthusiastically picked up by the other marchers. The YAWF Women's contingent carried a bright yellow banner reading "Support sisters in struggle in Indochina, Palestine, S. Africa, & Ireland." Selling a record number of BattleActs, the women estimate that one out of every ten women on the march bought a copy!

Although the permit the police gave us was only for the sidewalk, the women at one point had to go around some repairs on the sidewalk and stayed in the street from then on. Women's symbols, slogans and rifles were spray-painted on buildings and sidewalks along the way; a few pig cars were redecorated in this fashion, too. A billboard announcing the D.C. Cherry Blossom Festival "Parade of Princesses" was covered with "This exploits women" in short order. In spite of their militancy, none of the women were arrested.

The spirit rose to an even greater height by the time the march reached the rally. Well, that's easy to understand -- with a speaker like Lin Tu from Vietnam, wouldn't your spirits escalate? "I wish my sisters in Vietnam could see the Vietnamese flag waving in front of the Pentagon," she said. Lin Tu reminded the women that the Pentagon means "strike-breaking, scab lettuce" to farm workers in this country and "repression and torture" in Greece. "We must defy this death machine and the structure of this society which maintains this death machine," she concluded as she raised a clenched fist into the air.

"Hey, hey Madame Binh, the NLF is going to win," responded the women as they jumped up like one, fists waving, and chanting.

photo credit/LNS



Vietnamese sister Lin Tu addresses rally on the Pentagon steps.

Several YAWF Women went over to Lin Tu after she spoke and presented her with copies of BattleActs. She gratefully accepted the magazines with a hug.

Lin Tu's speech was followed by statements from other sisters in the struggle who were unable to be there, physically, that is. In our hearts, we felt the pulse-rate of their militancy as greetings of solidarity came from Ericka Huggins, who has been imprisoned for more than a year on frameup murder charges, and from prisoners in the Women's House of Detention in New York City. The two most wanted women on the FBI's "top ten" list, Kathy Powers and Sue Saxe, also sent messages of support. A WAVE (Navy woman) in uniform denounced the Pentagon and its war to the cheers and encouragement of her sisters.

A number of large posters showing women who have led the struggle for liberation were held aloft and a few words were said about their lives. Posters of Angela Davis, Ericka Huggins, Afeni Shakur and Joan Bird, Bernadette Devlin, Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Bernadine Dorhn, Mme. Binh and Ida Braverman (a young garment worker murdered during a strike), as well as unknown Vietnamese and Palestinian women, were all there.

NLF flags were sent flying over the Pentagon, carried on helium balloons. The pigs, on the rooftops, so overwhelmed and frantic by this spectacle, went running after the flags. The pigs may not have believed this could have happened, but our sisters know that it did, indeed, happen.

Songs and guerrilla theater ended the rally. The women left feeling strong, with the knowledge that this rally and its message of international solidarity and sisterhood will not be forgotten for a long time.



# -toronto conference

(continued from page 15)

Before the revolution, women were totally dependent on their husbands. Through the custom of prearranged marriages, women of 21 were often married to boys of 13. As the wife grew older, the husband would take younger wives. The older wife became the workhorse and was often treated most harshly. If the husband died first, the wife had no right to remarry, and if she did, she lost all rights to property and children.

It has been the Women's Union along with the courts which have laid the groundwork for the liberation of women by enacting in 1960 a new marriage law based on monogamy, protection of children and free choice in marriage without parental

pressure. Divorce is easily obtainable, especially for women, as are abortions. By providing free medical care, day-care centers and job opportunities, women are freed to take an equal role in the work force and in politics, which has broken the old economic dependence on the family and has provided the groundwork for liberation and equality.

The revolutionary solidarity of these heroic women can be seen no more clearly than in a message that Vo Thi The read to Angela Davis. It read in part: "Dear Angela, we strongly support your struggle. We know your trial is only a farce to cover Nixon's scheme to sabotage the movement by divide and rule. Nixon must set you free! "Dear Angela, the people will set you free. We will give you our full protection and support."

The spirit and strength of our Indochinese sisters made it very clear why the U.S. is being beaten in Indochina. The people of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the women and the men, are winning their liberation through a long bitter struggle, moulded by a socialist revolution that is burying all remnants of the feudal, colonized culture that oppressed them as it is victoriously destroying the forces of U.S. imperialism.

# - sisters

(continued from page 10)

slave, when she herself is under the feet of man and shamed into silence?"

Angelina bound the two issues together herself most dramatically by being the first woman to address the Massachusetts legislature -- she took part in a three-day hearing on anti-slavery in February 1838. Some legislators, trying to prevent her from speaking the second day, warned that the enormous crowd attracted to hear her would break the visitors' gallery. A Salem representative dryly suggested that "a Committee be appointed to examine the foundations of the State House of Massachusetts to see whether it will bear another lecture from Miss Grimke."

After a week of nightly speeches at the Boston Opera House in May 1838, Angelina became ill and did not address another public meeting for many years. She then collaborated with her husband, Theodore Weld, in preparing one of the most important Abolitionist books, "American Slavery As It Is," published in 1839. During the Civil War years the Grimkes helped run a coeducational school for Black and white children in New Jersey.

The two struggles, for Black freedom and for women's rights, remained inseparable for the Grimke sisters. Angelina told a women's conference during the North-South war, "I want to be identified with the Negro; until he gets his rights, we shall never have ours." The sisters continued their political activities throughout their lives, and in 1870, when Sarah was nearly 80, they led an important demonstration for woman's suffrage by casting ballots in Hyde Park, Massachusetts.

Angelina said of the thousands of women who challenged all tradition to oppose slavery in their own right, "We Abolitionist women are turning the world upside down." And that meant to set the world right by rooting out every form of oppression and exploitation.

Sisters Grimke, we're still at it and we're going to see to it that the oppressors finally get their feet off all our necks!



## -children who do not exist

(continued from page 19)

will the fervent dreams of the South Vietnamese mothers become a reality. Only then will prostitution, shoe shine boys and servitude of all kind be wiped out, as it has been in the North; for then there will be a united, revolutionary Vietnam where human life is of highest value, where all the orphans of the genocidal war, where all children, will be the responsibility of the state and the people.

North Vietnamese daycare center:  
children grow under the love and care of all the people.



photo credit/LNS

## -nixon

(continued from page 16)

now you dare speak on the subject of abortions.

Can you speak for the 1,000,000 women who had illegal abortions last year? Illegal, because the laws you and your clique set and enforce do not serve the interests of women. Can you say you suffered for the 350,000 women who suffered from complications because they had to have quacks for doctors and could not be legally hospitalized? Can you realize that you and your quacks have murdered the desperate women who have had to have abortions in alleys, dark rooms and cellars?

No, Richard Nixon, don't ever pretend concern for the lives or women and the unborn again by mouthing the words "sanctity of human life." A butcher has no right to speak! Women know that free and legal abortion on demand and no forced sterilizations is our right; and we'll fight against you and all your henchmen to secure that right.



# LETTERS

## Sisters in the struggle:

I have been following Battle Acts since its first issue. I'm taking this opportunity to thank you for such an educational and inspiring magazine about women and their trials which promotes their revolutionary power.

I am especially pleased with the children's liberation section of the magazine. I am a Black woman who teaches Head-Start children in the Black community. I know all too well the difficulties in finding stories which do not feed these pre-schoolers racism, chauvinism and lessons of torment for their mistakes.

Although Head-Start is a government agency, they claim that a teacher has the freedom to use any material available to educate her children. It's unfortunate for them that they didn't know who they were talking to when they gave me those privileges.

Please send me two copies of the children's stories from People's China. I am enclosing a check for \$1.25 to cover the cost and postage.

Thank you.

In revolutionary strength,  
Linda Smith  
Ohio

—Our children have power, they carry on our progressive struggle.

Power to the People

Dear Sister,

I read the article in Battle Acts written by the Boston operators. I want to tell you about some of the things that I've been experiencing as an operator here in the city.

Operators who work here in the city only get a half hour for lunch, and the phone company runs a cafeteria for the women because it's kind of difficult to get out for lunch with only half an hour. The cafeteria really doesn't benefit the women because the prices are high (about \$1.25 for a complete lunch) and the meat that is bought is the poorest quality and cheapest meat the company can find. Last month, I had their veal parmigiana and got sick. I was lucky; last month they let me off the board to vomit out the rotten meat. While I was down there I met quite a few other women doing the same thing.

Last week they served us rotten meatballs which about 7 or 8 of us ate. When we got back on the board, about an hour later we all began feeling nauseous. But the board was busy and they wouldn't let us take care of business. One of the women who got sick was 5 1/2 months pregnant and they wouldn't let her off the board either—IT WAS TOO BUSY AND THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE A FEW DOLLARS. The sister finally got so sick that we couldn't stand it any more and we started making a stink. They finally took her off the board and rushed her to the hospital. That night she lost her baby.

Now the supervisors are talking about firing her—after all she's taking time off from work.

The operators only have a company union now with supervisors as shop stewards. We know that we aren't going to get any justice under those conditions. But we're going to fight for a real workers union and avenge our sister's miscarriage.

Ma Bell Go To Hell,  
An Operator  
New York City

## Sisters—

We were very pleased to receive your magazines, and would be interested in exchanging with you.

I personally, being the only woman in the collective at this point, especially am interested. While it is impossible for me at this point to be in Washington May 6, I will be working with my sisters and brothers here in Fayetteville and across Arkansas. I am on parole and find many things that I must now support in the spirit only.

An issue of our paper will be arriving shortly. It contains an article attempting to relate some of my experiences while I was an inmate at the Women's Reformatory here in Arkansas. After reading your magazines, I am embarrassed to find my own knowledge and analysis so lacking.

The Women's movement here in Fayetteville is just beginning, and we are all lacking in the knowledge and information that we need. Your magazine will fill some of the enormous void.

Power to the sisters!  
Sue / OMT

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## —New York

(continued from page 21)

sweating bodies. The men began a chant for salt — the women were enraged. We gathered at the end of a long hall where we could see the men and started a chant of "REV-O-LU-TION" interspersed with "free our brothers." The chant got louder and louder until soon all of us were banging on the walls, stamping our feet, shaking the bars. The return was "free our sisters."

The guards rushed to an office to confer because they were afraid of a rebellion in the jail. They came out and told the women that we were inciting the men! Then they used that old fascist trick: telling us that some of the women, those in the most crowded cell, would be put in lock-up if we didn't stop. They even tried to get a woman deputized. We did stop our chanting, only to expose this "divide and conquer" move by the guards.

As the time to go to court drew near we suggested that we break into regions so the women could assist each other in court and with bails. So we left organized and firm, with a newer and deeper understanding of our struggle and strength as women.

Veronica Golos  
New York City YAWF Women

## —Wilmington

(continued from page 21)

thirty-six hours spent in the packed quarters, the need to show our militancy and solidarity with the other prisoners became greater. Our cell copied chants and a message of solidarity on paper towels. When a woman was allowed out for a phone call, she slipped copies to the other cells on the first tier. This increased the feeling of solidarity and soon the chants literally shook the jail -- and even made the guards nervously pace the floor.

We learned a practical lesson in organized resistance when one woman in the next cell was forbidden a telephone call to her 5-year-old son on his birthday. All of us raised such an uproar that the guards were forced to relent. The telephone was just a few feet from our cells so we all joined in singing "Happy Birthday!"

Each incident could have led to either intimidation or anger, but soon the sisters began to realize that in anger there is strength. The day and a half in jail showed us that strength and deepened our understanding that "to rebel is justified."

Sara Flounders  
Wilmington YAWF Women

## -prisoners' families

(continued from page 7)

The Moody family never did see Aki, also one of the Auburn 6. The prison officials refused to allow Aki to visit his relatives. His family was at Auburn Prison from 9 A.M. to 6:30 P.M., waiting and waiting, wondering whether Aki had been beaten and gassed with Sharean. No explanation was given to them about why he was not allowed to visit. Later they found out that Aki had been denied his visit because he refused to shave his beard.

When could the Moody family visit again, especially Aki's mother who works 16 hours a day? Do the prison officials care how much time the Moody family spent traveling to Auburn, or how much they looked forward to seeing Aki? The prison guards don't care. The Commissioner of Corrections Oswald doesn't care. The governor doesn't care; and the U.S. ruling class doesn't care.

What these people do care about is whether their terror tactics have succeeded in intimidating the prisoners and their families. The answer is no! They have not succeeded! On April 22, in New York City, the enraged relatives, along with the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, held a press conference outside the office of the Department of Corrections to protest and expose the beatings and gassings of the prisoners.

The families want to return to Auburn. They know that their cries of help for their husbands, sons and brothers will go unheard until a militant struggle on the outside, a struggle in solidarity with that of the prisoners, tears down those awesome prison walls and frees all the prisoners.



photo credit/Diane Deitchman



# stolen: millions of childhoods



drawing by Tecla

(continued from page 3)

work in the fields in California.

In yet another Times article on child labor, on April 26, 1971, it was admitted that child labor laws are flagrantly violated in most states. Only last month, the Oregon State Senate passed legislation barring employment of children under 10 years of age in the fields. The bill had originally read, "children under 12 years of age," but when the Oregon Farm Bureau adamantly opposed the age limit, the Senate obligingly backtracked.

Howard T. Fuji, the bureau's director of re-

search and legislation, said that "if children were kept out of the fields they would lose this opportunity to earn." What he really meant was that the bosses wouldn't have the opportunity to pay a child a nickel a box for strawberries and then sell it for 40 cents!

In Aroostook County, Maine, children pick 35 percent of the potato crop. Said Maynard E. Dolloff, State Commissioner of Agriculture, "this teaches 'self reliance.'" But you can be sure that he would never think of sending his children or children of his rich friends to work in the fields to learn "self-reliance." Accordingly, in the same country where this smug, self-righteous, racist Commissioner lives in comfort, it was found that children were living in rat-infested shacks, with piles of human excrement 20 feet from the kitchen!

Children working long hours, medical experts say, can suffer disastrous effects. Children "become undernourished, undersized and chronically fatigued and susceptible to infections." But not so, say the "expert" farm growers. Why, children are "built closer to the ground and are more flexible," and so picking strawberries for practically nothing, 10 or more hours a day, isn't so bad, they answer.

And what about school for these child workers? They never go, inspite of the fact that the Fair Labor Standards Act prevents farmers from hiring children during school hours. But the big farmers work hand-in-hand with the officials in the Department of Labor and Education. They arrange it so that rural schools open at noon, and children, starting at dawn, can work as many as 6 hours before the school day begins. With work and school together, their labor lasts 12 hours a day. During the summer months there are no restrictions on work at all. No wonder nearly 90 percent of Texas migrants drop out of school -- probably from exhaustion.

"Once the farm workers get up on their feet and strike, they are not the same people. They begin to think differently about themselves," says Cesar Chavez who started organizing Chicano farm workers in California with the Delano grape strike that began in 1965. The strike spread in the five years before it won as far as Minnesota and the customer boycott of grapes went cross country. Although the IWW tried in 1913 and the CIO in 1937, farm workers have not been successfully unionizing until recently when their movement affiliated with AFL-CIO. The cry of Huelga! has also been heard in the lettuce fields, and now rings through the strawberry patches, but there are still thousands of farm workers who are ready to rise up and fight for a decent living -- that includes an end to child labor on the farms.

Child farm workers of today do not know of the joys of playing games, swimming, running, laughing, just as the child laborer in the past did not. All the youth of these children is being slowly ebbd out of them. But only through the unionization of all the farm workers -- such as the lettuce and grape workers -- will this heinous crime against the people, against our children, be stopped. Only then will these children begin to know what being a child really means.