



# workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Noticias en español vea página 12

## PHILIPPINES

U.S. military aid to the Aquino regime is double what it was under Marcos. It's all part of another secret war by the Pentagon.

6

## BORK

The senators couldn't resist the popular opposition to Judge Bork. But the appointment of a Supreme Court justice continues to be the opposite of the democratic process.

3

## TIBET

Sam Marcy explores the history of Washington's two-sided policy regarding China's sovereignty over Tibet.

9

# AIDS rights bill in D.C. attacked by Senate

## Capital City's budget held hostage

By Brian Becker  
Washington

Following is a brief quiz on U.S. constitutional law.

Q. When is a law (i.e., a constitutionally valid law passed by duly elected legislators) not a law?

A. When it is progressive, designed as a protection against anti-gay bigotry, and adopted by the District of Columbia City Council.

Why is such a law not a law? Because the District of Columbia and its 800,000 residents (85% of whom are Black and Latino) exist in a state of neocolonial bondage to a racist,

sexist, anti-gay U.S. Congress made up of millionaires and millionaires-to-be.

Case in point. The U.S. Senate voted on Oct. 1 to freeze all D.C. city funds by Dec. 12 — bringing all city services, including fire protection, public hospitals and garbage collection, to a halt — unless the D.C. Council rescinds a recently passed law prohibiting insurance companies from requiring an HIV antibody test for new insurance applicants. The presence of HIV antibodies may indicate exposure to the AIDS infection.

The D.C. law was passed after an intense organizing and lobbying ef-

*Continued on page 7*

## After Oct. 11

### The struggle for lesbian and gay liberation

Years of struggle from the days of Stonewall and before have enabled thousands to come together in Washington Oct. 11. United as one voice, this demonstration will say to Reagan, Congress, the courts, and to the world that nothing will stop the drive to win equality and justice for lesbians and gay men.

No right-wing mobilizations, no inquisitorial Supreme Court rulings, no gay bashing fascist-style gangs, no amount of suffering and grief from AIDS can stop the drive to push ahead

*Continued on page 8*

**SPECIAL 4-PAGE SUPPLEMENT: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN FIGHT BACK**  
▷ Oppression and liberation  
▷ Fight racism, build unity  
▷ Star Wars and AIDS  
▷ Lesbian and gay workers

## RELAX

after the March at a

## RECEPTION given by

## WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Sunday, October 11 3:30-7:30 p.m.

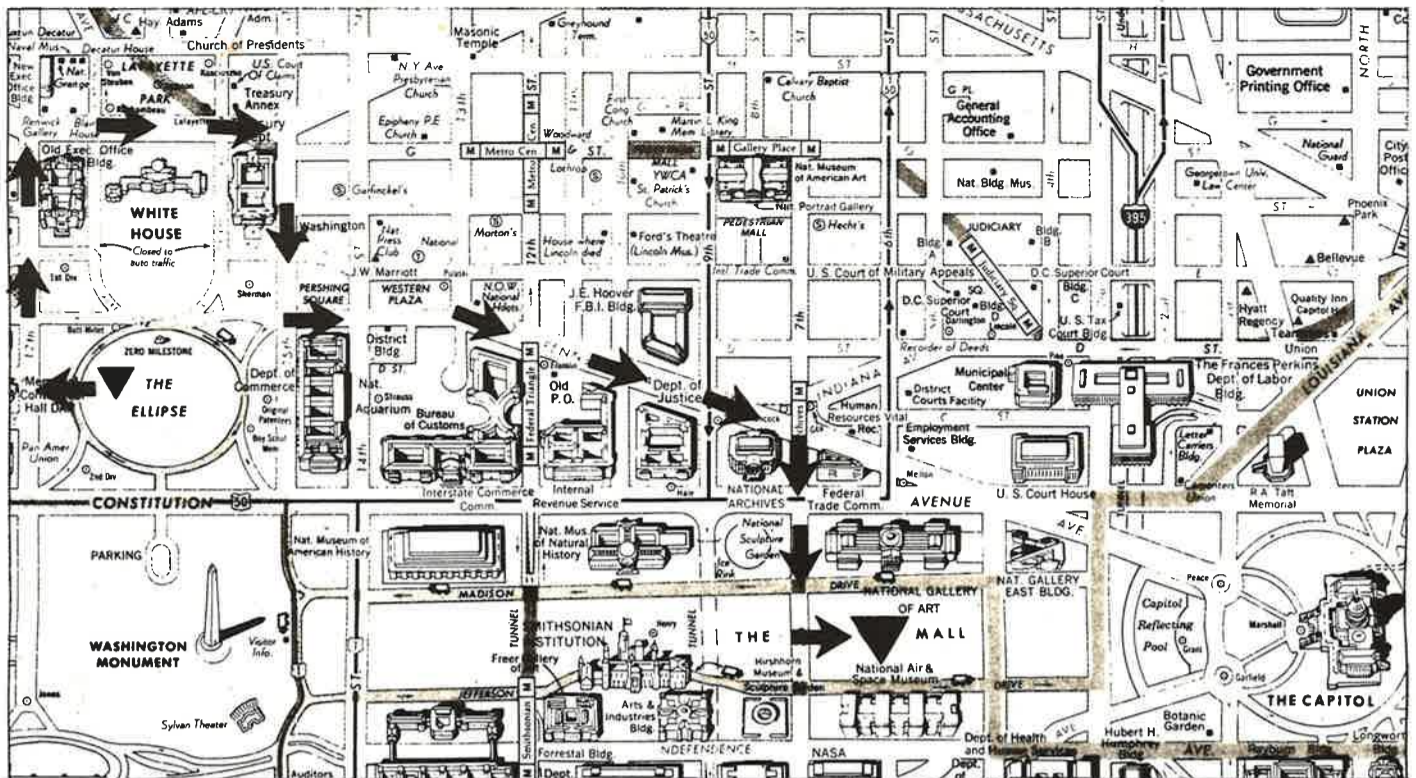
PLACE: Capitol Quality Inn 415 New Jersey Ave. NW  
(go north on 1st St. NW to D St. and New Jersey Ave.)

**FOR OCT. 11 MARCH INFORMATION, see page 2**

# Oct. 11 March Information



**Sunday, Oct. 11**  
**7:15 a.m. — AIDS Memorial-Names Project**  
 Between Constitution and Independence Avenues on the Mall between 7th and 9th Streets  
 All morning  
 For the main march, gather at the Ellipse  
**9 a.m. — Rally begins at Ellipse**  
**12 noon — March starts**  
 March north on 17th St. to Pennsylvania Ave.  
 Around White House  
 East on Pennsylvania Ave. to 7th Street  
 Onto 7th St. to the Mall  
**1 p.m. — Rally starts at Mall**  
**4 p.m. — Rally ends**  
**Tuesday, Oct. 13**  
**Civil Disobedience at Supreme Court**  
**8:00 a.m. — gather at 1st and Maryland Ave., N.E. (The East Lawn of the Capitol)**



Housing hotline (202) 783-3407  
 National Association of PWAs 24-hour medical and information hotline: (202) 347-1317  
 CD information hotline: (201) 393-1929

Medical, Transportation and Housing information available around the stage at 3rd St. and the Mall.  
 Medical information also available at Ellipse and at the Mall.

## 'For Love and Life' — a gripping play promotes gay rights

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
 Atlanta

A fascinating play which documents the joys and difficulties of lesbian and gay life, and points to the upcoming Oct. 11 march in Washington, D.C., as the way to affirm and defend lesbian and gay rights has been produced in Atlanta.

"For Love and Life" by Rebecca Ransom is a gripping drama with humor, music, and dance. It illustrates

the strength and determination of the lesbian and gay community to overcome bigotry and oppression.

### Thunderous applause

The dialogue was largely written by the cast, all of whom are activists. Some have professional theater experience but others haven't been on stage since grade school. The audience responded to the often searingly honest and familiarly humorous scenes

with tears, smiles and thunderous applause.

The play draws from the life experiences of the cast to raise issues of racism, drug and alcohol abuse, the AIDS crisis and other serious questions. It's all done in the framework of giving tribute to the heroes and heroines of the lesbian and gay community — the risk takers and groundbreakers.

The original music is a highlight of the show. It opens with a song "History Is Now" which invites listeners to

recognize that each person is a maker of history.

The Oct. 11 National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Washington gives direction for the play's call to take action to shape history.

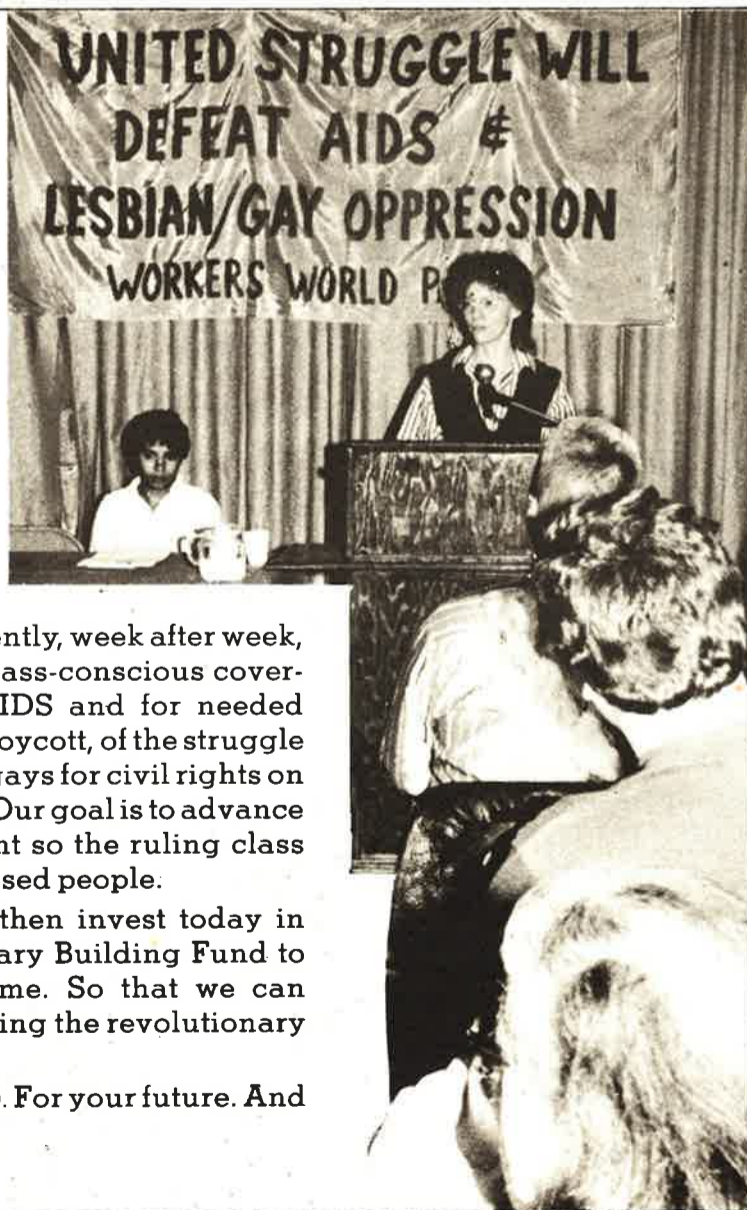
The play has been performed to large and enthusiastic audiences, with proceeds going to benefit the national march. "For Love and Life" has generated a growing excitement in Atlanta to participate in this historic liberation event.

## WE'RE UNIQUE

There are many ways that WORKERS WORLD is unique. Our support for and participation in the lesbian and gay struggle is one of them. Consistently, week after week, we carry the most up-to-date, class-conscious coverage of the struggle against AIDS and for needed health care for all, of the Coors boycott, of the struggle for recognition of lesbians and gays for civil rights on the job and generally in society. Our goal is to advance the class struggle on every front so the ruling class can't divide working and oppressed people.

If you value WORKERS WORLD then invest today in WORKERS WORLD 30th Anniversary Building Fund to help us buy a permanent home. So that we can concentrate our efforts on building the revolutionary press in the U.S.

Invest today in WORKERS WORLD. For your future. And the future of humanity.



### In this issue...

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| <u>INTERNATIONAL</u>                         |       |
| South Africa — support ANC .....             | 5     |
| Philippines — U.S. secret war .....          | 6     |
| Mideast — racism hides issues .....          | 6     |
| Tibet — by Sam Marcy .....                   | 9     |
| El Salvador people rally for FMLN .....      | 11    |
| Guatemala unionists interviewed .....        | 11    |
| <u>NATIONAL</u>                              |       |
| DC AIDS law attacked by Congress .....       | 1     |
| 'For Love and Life' a review .....           | 2     |
| Bork attack beaten back .....                | 3     |
| Los Angeles earthquake .....                 | 3     |
| Women and childcare .....                    | 3     |
| Football strike get support .....            | 4     |
| Baltimore steel struggle .....               | 4     |
| NYC bike messengers .....                    | 4     |
| Herman's racism .....                        | 5     |
| U. of Rochester anti-apartheid fight .....   | 5     |
| Oct. 11 .....                                | 7     |
| Mich. gay struggle .....                     | 7     |
| Homeless conference .....                    | 10    |
| <u>FEATURES AND EDITORIALS</u>               |       |
| Special section lesbian/gay liberation ..... | S1-S4 |
| And after Oct. 11 .....                      | 1     |
| The mouse that squeaked .....                | 8     |
| <u>NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL</u>                   |       |
| Lesbianas y gays .....                       | 12    |
| Imperialismo norteamericano .....            | 12    |

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30th  
 ANNIVERSARY  
 BUILDING FUND

# People's strength beats back the Bork attack

## Struggle unites labor, women, Black and gay groups

By John Catalinotto

On Oct. 6, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 9-5 to recommend rejection of Judge Robert Bork for the Supreme Court. This rejection was unexpected just weeks ago and as late as Oct. 5 Reagan said it would happen "over my dead body."

While perhaps not yet marking the demise of Reaganism, this setback shows the breadth of popular resistance to the ultra-right judge and the growing difficulty of the Reaganites to push through their overall reactionary program.

Reagan had asked on Oct. 2 for his "public" to resist "special interests" and show their support for Bork. By special interests, Reagan means Black people, women, gay and lesbian people, and workers in and out of unions, who have all found some way of speaking out against Bork and who together make up the vast majority of the population.

Contrary to Reagan's wail, the selection process this time has been much more representative than others in recent history. The nomination of a Supreme Court justice is the opposite of the democratic process.

Picked by the president, the candidate is almost always a long-time judge steeped in property rights. He

gets a perfunctory hearing in the Senate, then is confirmed for life to the court. There's no way to remove the justice, whatever anti-popular decisions he or she may hand down.

There's also no way for the people to elect a candidate who is a trade unionist or a community organizer to pass on laws so vital to daily life. In the session opening in November, for example, the court is scheduled to hear cases involving abortion, religion, free speech, the death penalty, executive power, job bias, and gay and lesbian rights.

Earlier in his administration, besides appointing rightist Sandra Day O'Connor, Reagan had gotten away with his appointments of ultra-rightist Antonin Scalia to the court and William Rehnquist to chief justice. The Democratic Senators and so-called moderate Republicans put up little to no resistance.

### Bork arouses mass resistance

But Bork has been another story. Bork had been so outspoken against legal decisions favoring civil rights for Black people and women, so vicious against gay and lesbian rights, so threatening to abortion rights, and so pro-boss and anti-union that his nomination aroused an immediate fight-back spirit. This came not from

the Democratic senators so much as from organizations representing those threatened by Bork's reactionary ideas.

Last July, 15,000 delegates at the NAACP national convention unanimously passed an emergency resolution opposing Bork. The National Organization for Women (NOW) also announced its determination to stop his nomination.

### United fightback

On Sept. 15, the day the Senate confirmation hearings began, demonstrations were held in Washington, New York and other cities uniting not only the NAACP and NOW against Bork, but also the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights, the National Abortion Rights Action League, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Asian-Americans for Equality, a number of unions and other organizations.

Essentially, Bork's nomination sparked a united fightback by all progressive movements in the U.S. Finally the Democratic senators got the message that they'd better battle Bork. Even then they pulled their punches, preventing anti-Bork testimony from the NAACP and the AFL-CIO.

But Bork ran even more scared. In

his testimony, he tried to disguise his racist and anti-women pronouncements as judicial moderation. The disguise failed.

### Character of court unchanged

While this committee's rejection of Bork marks a setback for reactionary Reaganism, it changes little regarding the character of the Supreme Court itself. Even a full rejection of Bork leaves Reagan able to appoint a less outspoken but equally reactionary judge. And even without any appointment, the court has been making decisions already reversing some of the gains made in the 1960s and 1970s.

Just on Oct. 5, for example, the Supreme Court refused to hear the case of Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. On the same day they refused to hear the case of women firefighters demanding a fair test for their jobs. And last year the court made numerous decisions strengthening the power of police and courts to intimidate and arrest prisoners, plus the notorious decision upholding the anti-gay law in Georgia.

The setback for Bork is a breath of fresh air for the progressive movement in this country. But the de facto coalition that brought it about will have to save that breath for the next battle ahead.

# Profiteers cause biggest aftershock in LA quake

By J. Marquardt  
San Francisco

The destructive earthquake that hit near Los Angeles on Oct. 1 left several people dead, scores injured, at least \$100 million in damage and 10,000 people homeless in southern California.

In the wake of all this loss, greed for profits immediately raised its ugly head. The Oct. 2 Los Angeles Times carried a prominent advertisement for a major department store, The Broadway, offering deferred pay-

ments for customers who need to immediately replace personal and household goods.

How nice. How opportunistic.

Certainly the thousands made homeless by the scores of damaged apartment buildings and houses won't be rushing out to "charge it." What they need is a place to live! Many people are camping out in yards, parks and at emergency shelters. They join the thousands who were homeless before the earthquakes.

Jose Ramos and his family, recent immigrants from El Salvador, said at

their campsite in Los Angeles' MacArthur Park, "We don't want to die. Our building is very tall and very old. The next one that comes, who knows?"

Leticia Dominguez, who survived the 1986 earthquake in Mexico that killed over 6,000 people, added that many people died in Mexico City because they had gone back into their damaged homes and then the aftershocks hit.

Red Cross spokesman Ralph Wright stated that the older apartment buildings in Hollywood, Whittier and East Los Angeles, where the residents are mostly low-income, were the hardest hit. He said that after the immediate crisis is over and emergency shelters are closed, "We really have no place to put the folks. Los Angeles is short of what you would call low-income housing."

And finally there was the word from the state's major property insurance carriers that they wouldn't be paying for very much of the damage. Due to residential property deductibles of between 10% and 25% of the total prop-

erty value for earthquake claims, few homeowners will receive any benefits. The same is true of commercial property policies that have earthquake deductibles as high as \$20 million.

Since 1985, California has required insurers to offer earthquake insurance. But many homeowners' policies were canceled when they applied for added earthquake benefits: "High risk area," say the insurers. So today fewer than one in every six California homeowners even have earthquake insurance.

Meanwhile the insurance companies continue to profit from earthquakes and similar disasters. The California Department of Insurance reported that insurers took in \$662.5 million in earthquake insurance premiums between 1978 and 1986 in the state, paying out only \$28.6 million in claims. In 1986 alone they took in \$180 million in earthquake premiums, paying out only \$16 million. During the first half of this year nationwide property and casualty insurers had a net income of \$7.5 billion, a 30% increase over last year's first half figures.

# What's a mother to do?

## Women's wages less than cost of childcare

By Sharon Shelton

Millions of women are not working because they can't afford to pay for expenses such as childcare with the low wages they would receive.

This is the finding of a recent Bureau of Labor Statistics study, which reports there are a startling 10-20 million people in the U.S. who have been forced to live outside the job market.

Many, if not most, of these workers are women. In fact, of the six million who want to work but aren't looking, 67% are women. These women aren't looking for jobs because they literally can't afford to work.

Donna Van Name, a former clerk at a Boston insurance company, is one such worker. Interviewed in the Sept. 27 New York Times, Van Name said childcare costs for her three small children would almost evenly match the \$248 a week in wages she would earn at her old job or another like it. So, for her and millions of others, there is little difference in working or not working.

The publicly funded daycare of the 1960s and 1970s, itself inadequate to meet the growing numbers of women in the workforce, was deeply slashed first under the Carter administration

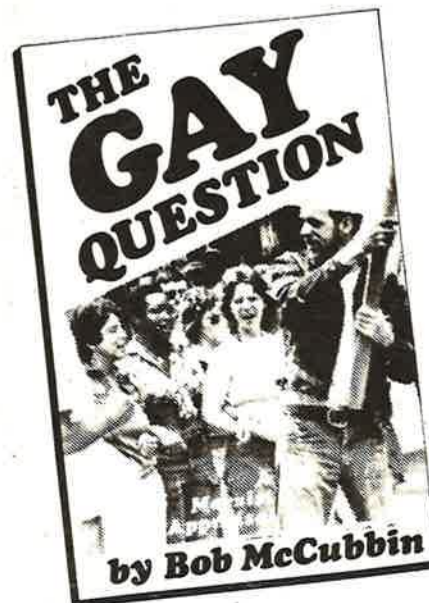
and later under Reagan. The cuts in daycare, along with other vital social services, were made to accommodate a sharply rising military budget.

Today, there are 50 million women working in the U.S. and 24 million children under 13 who need daycare. By 1990, this number will grow to 30 million children. But, at present there are slots for only six million children, and what's left of public daycare centers are threatened by Gramm-Rudman.

Between 1970 and 1980, 86% of new jobs were created in the service sector, while higher paying industrial jobs were disappearing due to shut-downs and automation. These service jobs — in fast food restaurants, in the public sector, in offices — are the jobs that await women entering the workforce. Pay is low, often only minimum wage.

Hardest hit by this crisis are women who head households. According to the Census Bureau, in 1985 the median income for families with women heads-of-households was only \$13,660 — hardly enough to cover food and shelter, much less childcare.

But quality daycare is a vital necessity as much as food, clothing, and shelter and should be publicly funded, accessible and free to all who need it.



### THE GAY QUESTION: A Marxist Appraisal By Bob McCubbin

This pioneering materialist analysis of gay oppression traces the history of lesbians and gay men from ancient society to the present day.

Order from: World View Forum, 46 W. 21 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10010. Add 75¢ postage.

# Labor, community join the line with NFL strikers

By Richard Becker

The owners' drive to bust the National Football League Players Association ran into heavy resistance on Oct. 4. Fans stayed away in record numbers from games played by scab ("replacement") teams from Los Angeles to New York.

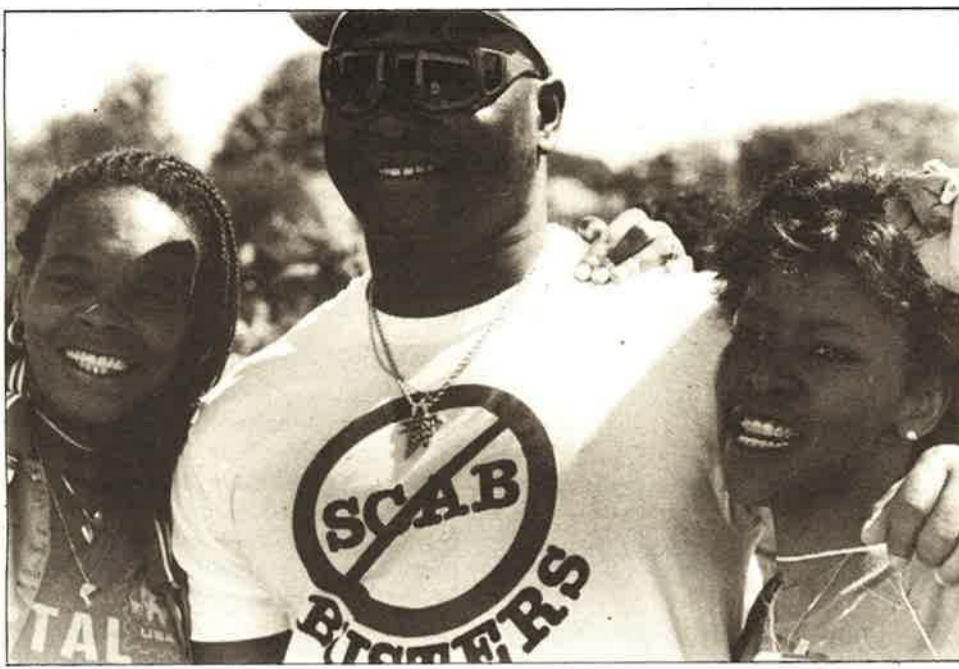
Angry demonstrations showing labor solidarity confronted police and scabs crossing the picket lines in several cities. In Washington, 5,000 workers skirmished with police outside RFK Stadium.

In Philadelphia, a picket line of about 4,000 was set up by the Teamsters and AFL-CIO unions. Eighty Teamster-driven tractor trailers snarled traffic around Veterans Stadium before the game. Seven demonstrators out of a picket line of several hundred were arrested at the Silverdome in Pontiac, Mich..

The strong show of support for the strike put a major dent in the NFL owners' well-oiled propaganda machine. This machine, which includes the big media, has two related objectives: 1) Persuade people that the players are overpaid, spoiled, greedy, etc.; and 2) Split in order to smash the NFLPA.

## Issues of the strike

Free agency, the right of a player to sign with the team that offers him the best deal, has been portrayed in the media as the one and only issue in the



Atlanta Falcon's Ron Middleton with supporters. More than a thousand turned out at the Georgia stadium to join the picket.

strike. It is an important question, and certainly a justified demand by the players, but only one of many. The owners, all vehement advocates of "free enterprise," have set up a system which allows the players to bargain only with the team that drafts them when they leave college or signs them first if they are not drafted.

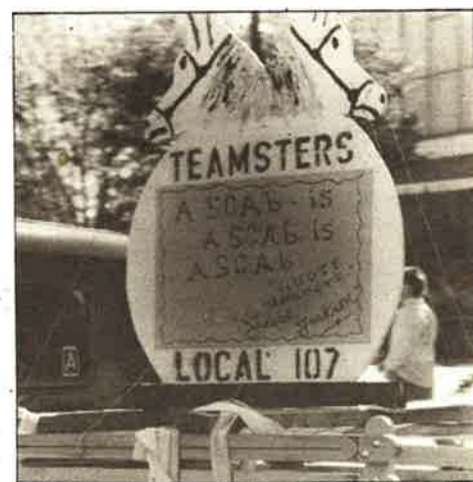
At least as crucial as free agency to the majority of NFL players are is-

ssues like pensions, guaranteed contracts, medical compensation and other health issues, and severance pay.

What makes these issues so pressing is the nature of the profession. In the last 7 years, the average career duration of an NFL player has declined from 4.3 years to 3.2 years. Why, despite advances in sports medicine during the same period, is this so?

The owners and the national networks, which televise the pro games, promote, glorify and reward football brutality. Disabling a quarterback, running back, wide receiver or any other star player on the other team is glamorized. The owners and sportscasters, of course, are not the ones who suffer the torn ligaments, dislocations, concussions and often permanent disabilities that go with them.

Players are encouraged to use drugs to enhance play. Steroids help build muscles and bulk fast, so fast that steroid users and their opponents are subject to increased danger of serious injury. Steroid use also has psycho-



Over 3,000 from a hundred unions blocked the scabs in Philadelphia.

logical effects: it sharply increases aggressiveness. Long term side-effects include liver cancer and psychosis.

Injured players, Joel Williams, a striking Atlanta Falcons tailback told supporters on the picket line this weekend, are frequently encouraged to play anyway. Often they are shot up with painkillers, an extremely dangerous practice in a sport with such heavy contact. Countless NFL careers have ended in this way. According to Williams, "Grievances for injuries take 5 years to settle."

Players are also calling for a study of the role played by artificial turf in increasing the number and severity of injuries.

The average NFL player, whose career ends at age 25, must look forward to one degree or another of permanent disability. Large numbers of former players end up applying for Permanent and Total Disability Benefits. Two-thirds of these applications are denied out of hand. According to ABC's Nightline on Oct. 5, only Darryl Stingley, former New England Patriots wide receiver paralyzed from the neck down in a 1979 game, is receiving full disability benefits.

Presently a 10-year veteran of the NFL qualifies for a monthly pension of \$1,300 at age 55. This compares to \$3,000 monthly for a 10-year veteran of baseball, of whom there are far more. Players with less than 4 years (the majority) get no benefits. Qualified veterans who apply for early retirement at age 45 receive less than half the age 55 benefit, yet 88% do so, reflecting their financial situation. If a player dies, his dependent children get a benefit payment of \$55 per month!

## Racism in the NFL

The majority of NFL players are Black, as are the top leaders of the union. All the owners, general managers, head coaches and virtually all the quarterbacks (the highest paying positions) are white. Gene Upshaw, Executive Director of the NFLPA, accused the owners of trying to use racism to split the union by attacking Upshaw's leadership.

The NFLPA and the owners agree that the average salary for the players is \$230,000 per year. But, as the players' leadership points out, this is highly misleading. If the salaries paid to a small number of quarterbacks and a few others are taken out, the real average salary is more like \$70-90,000. Moreover, only about 3% of NFL players have contracts guaranteed for the year they are playing. The other 97% can be fired at any time with no notice or benefits. This frequently happens to player representatives (shop stewards), who are routinely waived or cut as punishment for union activity.

## Profits

The owners count their returns in the millions. Pro football is a monop-

Continued on page 10

## Baltimore steel workers fed up with gross contract violations

By D. Kermit Leibensperger  
member USWA Local 2610  
Baltimore

Steelworkers from the four USWA locals at Bethlehem Steel picketed for the third time in less than a month to angrily oppose plant manager Raybuck's cut-throat policies. After the last protest blocked the doors to the main office, Raybuck told union leaders that anyone demonstrating in front of the main office would be arrested and that the Oct. 4 protest would have to take place in a softball field several blocks away.

The workers met at the ballfield, then marched down North Point Boulevard to the main office of Bethlehem Steel, defying Raybuck's arbitrary order. Police arrested Local 2609 President Don Kellner and told the crowd to leave, but this did not deter anyone. Chants of "We want Kellner!" got all the louder. At one point the 500 militant steelworkers' picket line ringed the entire building.

Union leaders have called these picket lines due to the total breakdown of the grievance procedure as a method to resolve even the most clear-cut contract violations by Raybuck and his lieutenants. The most recent management attacks have been to eliminate most summer vacations in violation of signed departmental agreements, closing the electrical repair shop and contracting out their work after signing an agreement not to a year ago, and suspending five millwrights for refusing to work overtime doing another department's work.

This year production and quality records have been set in half the mills on Sparrows Point. Rather than reward the steelworkers for their efforts, Raybuck has announced that he will lay off hundreds more by Christmas week, adding to the thousands of jobs already gone and the tens of thousands suffering as a result.

Thirty thousand used to work at this plant. By the end of the year there will be less than 8,000. But these 8,000 produce several times as much steel due to intense automation. The contradictions of overproduction and increasing exploitation of those still "lucky to have a job," as our bosses constantly remind us, are fast bringing tempers at Sparrows Point to the boiling point.

## NYC bike messengers fight City Council restrictions

By Mary Owen  
New York

On the heels of their recent victory over the city's attempt to ban them from some midtown streets on weekdays, New York City's bicycle messengers are now fighting a repressive City Council bill that was drafted with no advance consultation with them.

On Sept. 28 the City Council's Consumer Affairs Committee chaired by Council Member Carol Greitzer held a hearing on the bill, Intro 801. If enacted, it would require all messengers (bike, moped, foot, etc.) to have a license — similar to a cab driver's "hack" license — in order to work, all bikes to have bells, lights or reflectors, rear-view mirrors and tire fenders.

The bill also calls for penalties of \$50 per violation of 801 (over and above traffic tickets) and would add Social Security numbers to ID cards that must be surrendered to cops, and other officials on demand.

Angered by the lack of consultation and the bill's repressive character, bicycle messengers, bike commuters and supporters, including a representative of the All-Peoples Congress and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1202 (Greyhound), took time off

work to speak out at the hearing.

Greitzer made her position clear from the outset by lecturing police and transportation department representatives for not bringing enough witnesses, while at the same time trying to limit messengers' testimony, calling it "redundant." But the messengers fought her on this and insisted on being heard.

"The way the bill reads and coming as it does in the aftermath of stepped-up police activity against messengers, we can only see this as an attack on our jobs and an effort to make it impossible for us to work," said the messengers' written handout. One after another, Black, Latino and other minority and white messengers, many speaking for the first time at such a forum, condemned the bill as racist, insensitive to working youth, and loaded with fines and fees that would make it virtually impossible to work as a messenger and earn an honest living.

"You're messing with our jobs and we won't stand for it," said one messenger. "We'll fight this just like we fought the ban."

The messengers called on the city to stop legislating against them and instead to meet with them to discuss reasonable solutions.

# In defense of the African National Congress

## The connection between capitalism and apartheid

By Monica Moorehead

It has been a year since Congress passed its only sanctions bill against South Africa. Though limited in its impact, the passing of this congressional bill reflected the tremendous mass anti-apartheid sentiment in the U.S. during the recent period.

President Reagan has already said that these sanctions, prohibiting the import of South African coal, steel and agricultural products, have "harmed" South African Black workers. Therefore, he says he is against harsher sanctions.

Since when did Reagan become the champion of the rights of South African workers or any other worker, especially in light of his union-busting role during the 1981 PATCO strike?

There is, however, a significant aspect of the bill that is seldom raised. The bill contains a clause targeting the African National Congress (ANC), calling for the CIA to monitor its activities, particularly in relationship to its long-time ally, the South African Communist Party.

This raises the broader political issue of why it is important for all supporters of the liberation fight in South Africa, especially those in the U.S., to view the struggle as revolutionary in scope and the ANC as the leading organization in this struggle.

It must be remembered that the U.S. ruling class, that is, big business and the banks as well as the capitalist politicians who serve them, would like nothing better than to see the ANC discredited in the eyes of the masses in South Africa and around the world. To discredit the ANC goes hand-in-hand with discrediting the South African struggle.

### Capitalism at root of apartheid economy

The apartheid economy is based on the capitalist mode of production, promoting the exploitation of the labor of millions of oppressed workers for the sole purpose of extracting super-profits. There is no fundamental difference between the South African economy and its counterparts in the U.S., Western Europe or Japan. The social and political fabric of society flows from this system of putting profits before people's needs. The interests of the exploited working class are in direct conflict with the bosses' greed.

While the form of the capitalist state in the U.S. and elsewhere is that of bourgeois democracy, in South Africa it is an outright fascist state. The apartheid military and police occupy the Black townships daily with sheer, naked violence. Whether under a bourgeois democracy or fascism, however, the state apparatus stands ready

to use brutal force whenever the oppressed are willing to fight back against their oppressors, such as the Attica and Stonewall rebellions in the U.S. during the 1970s.

### ANC — symbol of resistance

The birth of the ANC on Jan. 8, 1912, flowed out of the consolidation of white colonial rule by the British first, followed eventually by the Dutch (or Boers). These racist colonizers were able to conquer South Africa and the majority of the African continent through technology, principally guns. This domination allowed the rape and plunder of the abundant resources and land to go on unabated as the native population was transformed into a source of cheap labor. This colonial process helped South Africa to emerge as the most industrialized country on the continent. It ranks 17th in the capitalist world.

The ANC was the first organized resistance movement against apartheid, a motor force in uniting all nationalities from all backgrounds against a common oppressor. The early ANC campaigns included those against the hated pass laws and for union recognition, especially for the unskilled slave laborers.

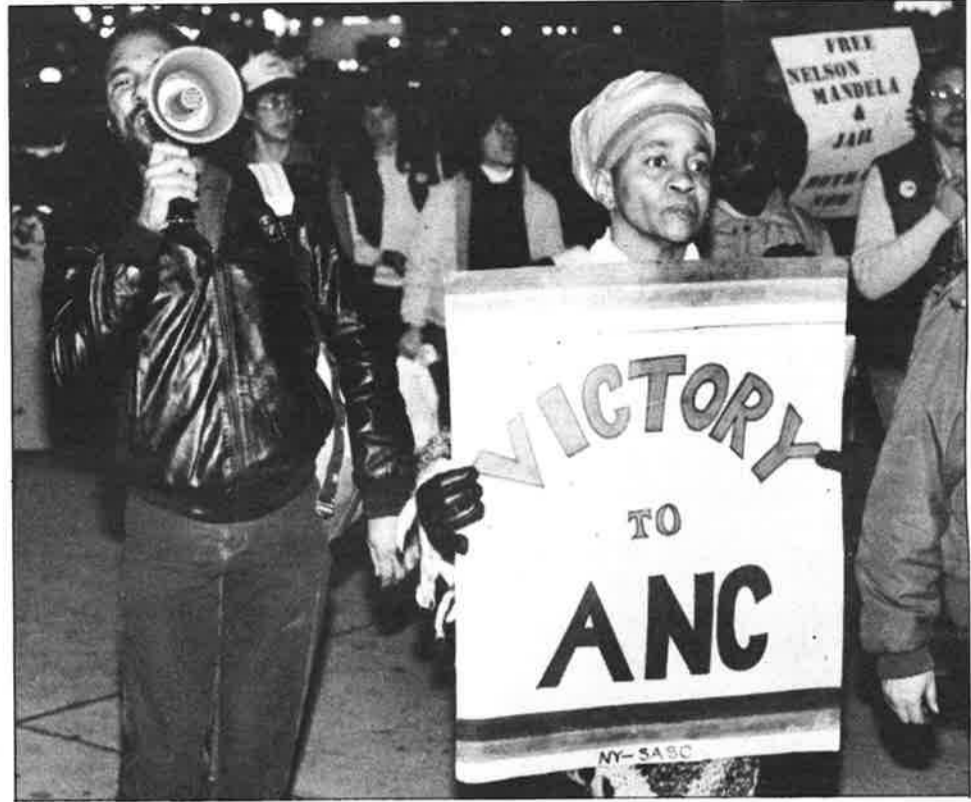
The ANC was initially a civil rights organization taking a nonviolent approach in hopes of winning concessions from the Pretoria government. It was not to be. Instead of softening and giving in to some moderate reforms, the regime hardened its stance against the ANC by harassing its leaders, like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, along with detaining, torturing and murdering thousands of other opponents of apartheid.

What was the response of the other capitalist countries like the U.S. to this campaign of terror against the just cause of the South African people? They continued to pour millions of dollars into loans and other forms of investment into an already bolstered apartheid economy.

### Sharpeville — turning point in struggle

On March 21, 1960, the Sharpeville massacre proved to be the turning point in the South African struggle. Those bullets not only killed and wounded unarmed protesters but killed forever the notion that the apartheid state could be peacefully bargained or reasoned with. The ANC at that point felt compelled to change its tactics and take up the armed struggle to achieve its goals for a truly free South Africa.

The Sharpeville massacre also shattered a myth for the imperialist bourgeoisie who felt that South Africa was a sea of stability and a safe haven to make a dollar. They temporarily dis-



WW PHOTO: NEVILLE EDWARDS

Supporting the ANC is part of the anti-apartheid struggle.

invested their capital at an alarming rate. This was not from any sympathy for the victims but because they feared a much broader mass insurrection.

The same scenario occurred following the 1976 Soweto student massacre. Both events were dress rehearsals for what has and will come.

The revolutionary upsurge in South Africa has propelled the entire international community to unequivocally condemn and isolate the apartheid regime. Corporate giants like General Motors, IBM and Kodak have been forced to partially divest their holdings. This struggle has forced even the most rabid right-wing politicians from George Shultz to Robert Dole to break their silence on this issue.

The question is, will they take their protestations beyond condemning apartheid? Does it serve their interests to do so? The answer is no.

It is one thing to oppose apartheid as a legal form of discrimination and injustice; it is an entirely different matter to oppose apartheid as part and parcel of the worldwide capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

This is where the capitalist bourgeoisie draws the line. The ANC does not seek to put Band-Aids on this diseased system, but to strike at the heart

of the cancer, which is the capitalist property relations. It is an important reason why the ANC has consciously maintained its independence from any South African ruling class faction, even the so-called liberal elements, a lesson that the workers and oppressed in the U.S. should heed.

The South African struggle has reached a very critical juncture. The progressive movement in the U.S. can play a strategic role in showing solidarity with their sisters and brothers who stand on the threshold of national liberation. The struggle for divestment and even for global sanctions, despite their limitations, can help to keep the anti-apartheid movement alive worldwide. Demanding that the U.S. get out of South Africa and the entire region exposes the imperialist collusion between Washington and Pretoria.

More than anything else, a decisive factor is mobilizing popular support for the ANC and the revolutionary struggle it leads for a non-racial, democratic South Africa. Popularizing this view until apartheid finally falls will no doubt help to usher in a new phase of the struggle as the workers and oppressed will launch an offensive against the bosses right here at home.

## Students fight Univ. of Rochester return to investing in South Africa

By Chris Becker  
Rochester, N.Y.

The University of Rochester recently announced they had reversed the course of their investment portfolio and had purchased over \$25 million of stock in companies doing business in South Africa since last May. The response to this treacherous act has been swift and strong.

Led by the Black Student Union (BSU) at the university and with support from both the students and community, university President Dennis O'Brian, and the entire board of trustees have been given an unequivocal message: Get the blood money out now!

The BSU quickly organized a rally to call for immediate divestment of this money. On Sept. 25 over 300 people attended this militant event.

The day before, President O'Brian, already feeling the mounting pressure, had called for a moratorium on future South African investments. This move did not succeed in quelling

the outrage. Speaker after speaker denounced the moratorium and instead called for an emergency meeting of the trustees to immediately sell off the stocks in question.

The Black students, already affected by the racist attitude of the administration, felt slapped in the face by the school's decision. The U of R is one of the first colleges to try to reverse the momentum of the divestment movement that over 130 colleges and universities have adopted.

The BSU has planned a month-long series of events to continue the struggle, and plans to keep fighting until the board of trustees and their big business sponsors get out of South Africa. Picket lines have been set up two times a week in front of the administration building, a shantytown was set up Oct. 3 and other strategies are being formulated. As Shelley Clements, president of BSU says, "We will do anything necessary" until the University of Rochester reverses its decision.

## Herman's racism no sport, say Black and white trade unionists

Detroit

Hundreds of UAW members from virtually every plant in the area packed the Lakeside Mall, a suburban Detroit shopping center, on Oct. 4 in support of the striking workers at Herman's.

The demonstration was a strong show of support for the workers who joined UAW District 65 and have been fighting for months to get a contract. Most of the workers are women and Black youth.

The key issues in this struggle are racism and discrimination. Black workers in Detroit are paid 37 cents

less per hour on an average than white workers in area stores, and have virtually no opportunity for advancement. Three hundred thirteen whites have been promoted into management since 1978 while only one Black person has received such a promotion. Sexual harassment on the job is also an issue in these contract talks.

Herman's answer to these charges and to the union supporters was that they would have any Black people who came to the posh Lakeside Mall to picket for the strike arrested! The huge turnout of Black and white unionists forced them to back down, unable to have police take the entire crowded mall into custody!

# Behind the U.S. secret war in the Philippines

By Lydia Bayoneta

It has been barely two weeks since the massive outpouring of Filipinos in the streets to pay their last respects to Leandro Alejandro, who selflessly struggled against U.S. imperialism, fascism, and for national independence. Alejandro was murdered by a right-wing death squad working in conjunction with the U.S. CIA and the Philippine military.

The massive turnout of over 60,000 for Alejandro was a significant political event, and a statement of defiance and struggle, all the more because the military had made threats of possible violence.

The U.S. media barely gave it coverage. This is in sharp contrast to the prime-time coverage given to Col. Gregorio Honasan, the right-wing leader of two attempted coups against the Aquino regime. In his latest attempt, Honasan and his followers killed 52 civilians and wounded many others.

Honasan's subsequent interviews on TV and with Newsweek magazine provided a platform for his militarist views about how to run the country. The views of Honasan & Co. do not really differ in essence from those of Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos or Defense Minister Rafael Iletto.

Both factions of the military have criticized Aquino for not moving fast enough to suppress the revolutionary mass movement that is growing bigger daily. Any differences at this time within the military stem from the degree of loyalty given by the two factions to U.S. policy.

The U.S. would rather have the Philippines under a bourgeois "democratic" rule but, as Rep. Henry Hyde

has put it, "with a professional, competent military working very closely with elected authority."

The U.S. prefers someone like Aquino, who is still perceived in the U.S. as a popular leader, rather than the outright fascism advocated by Col. Honasan or one like the former Marcos dictatorship.

The recent coup attempt against Aquino may have momentarily been perceived by some in the U.S. and around the world as an attack on a besieged democratic leader. This perception, however, can only be maintained if one dismisses the rest of Aquino's policy in both the economic and political spheres, and the relationship of this policy to 55 million Filipinos.

## Aquino's repressive policies

The U.S.-backed Aquino regime has already made a clear response to the people's demand for democratization, genuine land reform and other economic changes. The response has been repression.

President Aquino has never fulfilled her promise to disband the "Civilian Home Defense Force," a fascist organization which was closely tied to the Philippine Constabulary and committed hundreds of atrocities during the Marcos dictatorship.

In fact, Aquino wanted to merge the CHDF with some of the newer vigilante groups. She praised one vigilante group as a "concrete manifestation of people's power, an effective weapon against communism."

When her own Presidential Commission on Human Rights strongly recommended the disbanding of Alsa-Masa, the largest U.S.-equipped vigilante group, Aquino dissolved the

commission! Sister Mariani Dimaranan, one of the members of the commission, said, "She dumped us to appease the military."

## The U.S. secret war

The pals of U.S. imperialism and its military planners today are not essentially different from those of the infamous CIA operative Col. Edward Lansdale, who directed the Philippine armed forces against a rebellion of poor peasants in the 1950s.

Then, as now, the U.S. used assassination, terror, and a disinformation campaign, including rigging the Philippine elections in favor of their puppet Ramon Magsaysay. His election was financed by big businesses to the tune of \$1 million — the biggest contributor was the Coca-Cola Co.

Today, the CIA has once again increased its covert operations in the Philippines. Right-wing groups have been organized by Gen. Singlaub, an acknowledged founder of death squads in Central America. Along with Causa International, the political arm of Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, Singlaub has also advised and contributed financially to right-wing political campaigns such as that of former defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

An example is the Negros Foundation for Peace and Democracy, which is openly affiliated with the World Anti-Communist League. Their goal is to provide covert support for the counterinsurgency in Negros where the New Peoples Army (NPA) is strong.

The organization is run directly by plantation owners and takes the form of a "relief center" for the starvation-stricken peasants of Negros. Food is in fact given, but only in ex-

change for pledges of loyalty and the recipients are required to attend anti-communist seminars. One U.S. general has called this tactic of "charity" combined with terror and assassination, "total war at the grassroots level."

A senior intelligence officer recently expressed some misgivings about the vigilantes. "It will backfire," he said, "when these people start committing abuses, it will help the insurgency."

Defense Minister Iletto responded by dismissing the death squads as a small problem, a "management question." The vigilantes can be dismissed any time. "It's really a matter of substitution," he said, adding that the larger problem was to deny the insurgency access to the areas presently controlled by the vigilantes.

The proliferation of anti-communist death squads and thugs is a concerted, conscious part of the comprehensive, anti-people, counterinsurgency program of U.S. imperialism to defeat the Filipino liberation movement. U.S. military aid to the Aquino regime was recently doubled to \$100 million. Another \$110 million was added in August in order to, in the words of one U.S. embassy official, "enable it to fight the burgeoning revolutionary movement and other threats."

Since March, the Aquino regime has pursued several operations against the rural population, including several Philippine minority groups. In the first six weeks of a military offensive in provinces north of Manila, 50 villagers were killed. Daily bombings were concentrated on the Apayao people's villages and towns. The damages to animals and crops were extensive — 800,000 pesos worth of dead animals; 200,000 pesos in razed crops.

# The role of racism in hiding real issues in Middle East

## Interests of Big Oil obscured by Washington's anti-Iran, anti-Arab tirades

By Joyce Chediac

What progressive person could deny that when it comes to whipping up bigotry, the Reagan administration wrote the book?

Just look at how it has dealt with AIDS. Instead of organizing a massive effort to find a cure for AIDS, the White House has created a climate of bigotry targeting people with AIDS, especially those who are gay, Black or Latino.

So too, Washington has set its bigotry wheels in motion to obscure the real issues behind the tensions in the Persian/Arabian Gulf, where the Pentagon has brought together its largest fleet there since World War II.

For years, Democrats and Republicans alike have branded Iran as "the enemy," a "terrorist" and an "outlaw nation." This government and media characterization began in 1979. Yet, in 1975, an Amnesty International re-

port concluded that "no country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran." At that time there were over 100,000 Iranian political prisoners subjected to the worst abuses imaginable, yet the silence of the U.S. government and the media here was deafening.

What was the difference between 1975 and 1979? Before 1979, Iran was ruled by the shah, a U.S. puppet who was regarded as a Hitler by his own people. There was not a word in the press here about the horrendous abuses under the shah because Washington gained from this oppression. The shah gave the U.S. oil companies a free hand, and they siphoned off Iran's fabulous oil wealth while Iran's workers and peasants got virtually nothing.

The charges of "terrorism" and "outlaw nation" only began in 1979 when the shah was overthrown by a mass movement and Washington was

suddenly on the outs. The imperialists never forgave the Iranian people for overthrowing the puppet shah, and they want Iran back. This is why Iran is targeted.

Washington's war moves against Iran go back to 1979 when the Carter administration froze billions of Iranian dollars in U.S. banks and even tried an invasion of Iran, which failed. The outbursts against Iran in this country starting at that time and continuing to this day are a part of a very deliberate government and media campaign to incite racism in order to make a war against Iran acceptable here.

## Anti-Arab racism also incited

While Washington is aiming its guns at Iranian ships right now, this doesn't mean that the U.S. government is a friend of the people of Iraq or of any Arab people. In fact, anti-Arab racism has also continued unabated, especially against the besieged national liberation struggles in Palestine and Lebanon and against the anti-imperialist government in Libya.

While the daily papers alternately call the Arab people "terrorists" and "corrupt sheiks," nowhere is it mentioned that it's Exxon, Texaco and Gulf that grow fat from Mideastern oil while the majority of the Arab people go to sleep hungry, unable to provide enough sustenance for themselves and their children.

What is the real relationship of forces in the Middle East? It's not the "helpless giant" of the U.S. against a sea of Middle Eastern "terrorists." On the contrary, it's the huge might of the

Pentagon, the Wall Street banks and the oil companies which have oppressed and exploited the people of the Middle East for decades.

## Pretext for intervention

The Western powers are not interested in stopping the Iran-Iraq war. In fact, every NATO power, including the U.S., has sold arms to both sides, hoping to exhaust both oil-producers so they can step in and pick up the pieces. Washington and its imperialist allies want to utilize the Iran-Iraq war to tighten their grip on the Middle East and its oil wealth at the expense of the people who live there.

This is why the NATO powers, led by the U.S., will have 70 warships in place in the Gulf by mid-October. And now there is every danger of a coordinated attack there against Iran.

There is no end to the demagoguery utilized by Washington and the ultra-right to cover the assaults on working people here. Trade unions are called "special interest groups." Black, Latino, Native and Asian people are subject to every imaginable slur. Lesbians and gay men are blamed for illness. Women seeking their right to choose abortion are even called "murderers." Surely those fighting for justice at home have no reason to believe Washington's slanders about the people of the Middle East.

However, workers and oppressed people here do have every reason to demand that the U.S. get out of the Gulf and that the billions of dollars spent to keep the warfleet there be used instead for social services, jobs, daycare and to find a cure for AIDS.

## SAVE THIS DATE!

Saturday, October 31

For a protest and march in New York City to demand:

- ▶ U.S. out of the Persian Gulf!
- ▶ Hands off Nicaragua!
- ▶ Stop the U.S. war drive!

Noon at Herald Square (34th St. & 6th Ave.), march to Times Square recruiting station

For more information contact the People's Anti-War Mobilization at (212) 741-0633.

# FOR LOVE AND FOR LIFE — Lesbians and gay men fight back

**These are proud and angry days for lesbian and gay people.**  
The pride is born of decades of struggle, of hard-won victories in civil rights battles and on-going campaigns for justice, of deepening unity within the community and growing support from allies, and of a militancy that's emerged tougher after each test.

The pride is born of love, too, and of the profound courage of lesbians and gay men who refuse to be driven back into the closet.

The anger is awesome.

It's the anger of women and men whose very lives have been ruled illegal by the reactionary Supreme Court.

The rage of a community that has lost so many lovers and friends. The fury of people who have been forced to fight for the most basic health care rights, to demand a full scale assault on AIDS from a government that couldn't care less.

The way that the lesbian and gay community has responded to the AIDS crisis — caring for those who are ill while waging a political struggle to bring about an end to the epidemic — shows concretely how anger, pride, love and a spirit of struggle propel the lesbian and gay liberation movement and make eventual victory certain.

## **For love, life and liberation!**

This Workers World special supplement addresses the key challenges facing the lesbian and gay movement today, as hundreds of thousands gather to march on Washington.

Using a Marxist analysis of the history of lesbian and gay oppression, the articles show not only that oppression is unnatural but that the conditions are right to root it out entirely, once and for all. The task is to build unity, fight racism, and thereby forge a strong movement to struggle against **all** oppression.

By doing that, the lesbian and gay community, along with all workers and oppressed people, can move mountains. The war against AIDS can be won — in fact, it could have been won already if all the vast resources of the government and corporations had been

poured into a mighty project to do so. As it is, it will take the people to force that to happen —

but the people **will** do it. And lesbian and gay people will win liberation.

Proud, angry, strong and united, we **will** move mountains.

—S. E.

## OPPRESSION Where it came from LIBERATION How to win it

By Leslie Diane Feinberg

Is loving someone of the same sex unnatural? Is prejudice against this sexual preference part of human nature?

Many people would be surprised to find out that for most of human history people were not persecuted for same-sex love.

It's also a relief to discover that bigotry has not always been with us. In the long millennia of human evolution, oppression is really quite recent — perhaps 10,000 years out of hundreds of thousands.

### **Before class society**

History provides abundant evidence that, although hardly free from prejudice and superstition, many of our earliest ancestors considered homosexuality and transvestism natural forms of sexual and social expression, and accorded women equal status with men.

Universal scarcity welded a society of cooperation in which everyone ate or everyone starved. It was humankind against nature, with few tools, during the vast period of human pre-history known as primitive communism.

This changed over a long and complex period as the productivity of human labor gave rise to a new development — surplus. More could be produced than was needed for immediate consumption. The accumulation of this wealth, or surplus, created a

new social division: haves and have nots. Society cleaved into slave-owners and slaves.

Under primitive communism the descent of children was recognized through the mother. But with the development of private ownership of property, inheritance passed through men. Women and children became seen as a source of wealth and property, for women's reproductive capabilities and as a source of labor.

And with the onset of class society, the fact that homosexual relations did not produce children came to be viewed as a threat to the new social order and its economic unit — the patriarchal family. Thus, with the rise of repressive class rule, that which was natural was declared its opposite.

### **Catholic church:**

#### **Weapon of feudal repression**

During the Middle Ages, the center of power in the West was the Roman Catholic Church, by far the most powerful landlord, holding one-third of the soil of Europe. Christianity had been transformed, over a period of several hundred years, from a revolutionary movement of the poor into a state religion serving the rich.

The Church, as a force of repression on behalf of feudal kings and landlords, used the powerful weapon of "gay-baiting" to seize property, and launched a murderous program aimed at homosexuals and transvestites to crush resistance and consolidate class rule.

During the Inquisition, millions of women faced flames while tied to

stakes, accused of being witches. Gay men were burned as fuel, or "faggots."

### **"We won't go back!"**

By the time the Industrial Revolution forged plowshares into weapons and machinery, the ferocious mass bloodlettings of the Inquisition and burnings at the stake had subsided. But sexism and anti-gay prejudice were now woven deep into the tapestry of exploitation.

When profits are the bottom line, even human love is subject to the rule of divide and conquer.

But after centuries of oppression, this outlawed love finally dared to speak its name.

In the summer of 1969, during a "routine" police raid at a Greenwich Village gay bar, transvestites, gay men and lesbians said "No more!" and fought the police in the streets in running battles for four hot-summer nights.

Gay people had been fighting back in any way they could for centuries. But the Stonewall Rebellion marked a turning point in history because it ignited a mass movement that opened closet doors and sent shock waves around the world.

This young movement drew strength and inspiration from the Black and Latino liberation movements in the U.S., as well as from the massive resistance to the Pentagon's war against Vietnam. Within months there were gay liberation groups in every major city, and lesbian and gay banners flew at demonstrations supporting the demands of the Black and

Latino liberation movements, political prisoners, and against the war.

### **Which way to liberation?**

If lesbian and gay and women's oppression has not always existed, if it is not an eternal feature of human society — how can it be ended?

The racism, sexism and lesbian and gay oppression that pervade this society like cancers were created not by workers, but by those who seek to maintain their rule by using bigotry to divide.

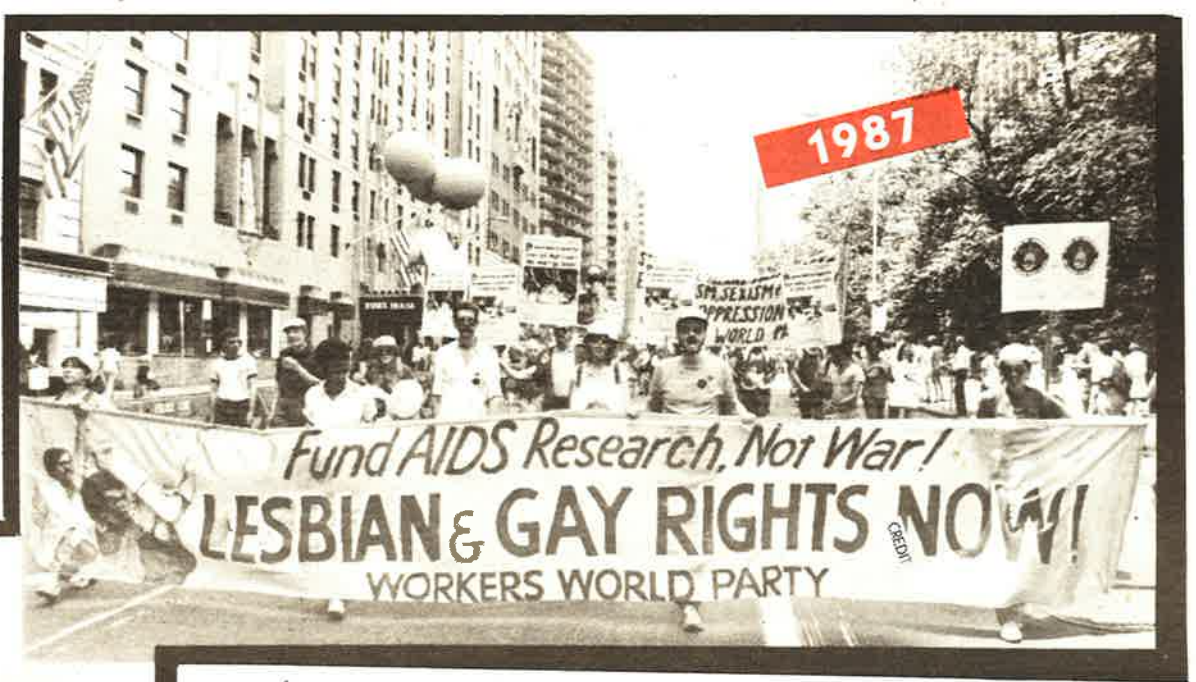
So the struggle for lesbian and gay liberation is part of the life-and-death struggle between exploiters and all the exploited. Genuine political freedom — and social and economic equality — can only be won by a united movement of all workers and oppressed peoples.

The working class today is Black, Latino, Arab, Asian, Native, and white, women and men, gay and straight — and it is faced with a historic task.

By abolishing capitalism and replacing it with a planned cooperative system of production to rationally meet all human needs — socialism — it will be possible to resolve the breaches and antagonisms that keep people from living with toleration and respect for all human variations of expression. When oppression and bigotry are no longer necessary to maintain a system of exploitation, the basis for achieving human liberation will exist.

And those who are fighting for freedom today are shaping tomorrow!

WWP 18 YEARS IN  
THE LESBIAN AND  
GAY MOVEMENT



1987

WW PHOTO: JOYCE CHEDIAC

## From Stonewall to Soweto

## Fight racism, I

Seven years ago, when Ronald Reagan took over the presidency, a loud message was sent to every right wing bigot around the country, saying: Now is the time to try and reverse every gain that has been fought for and won by oppressed and working people through decades of struggles.

Attempts were made to dismantle affirmative action programs. Welfare funding and Aid to Dependent Children were slashed. School lunch programs were cut, and low income housing saw a dramatic rise in rents. Funds for college education were made totally inaccessible to those who needed them.

Unemployment rose to an all time high, as factory after factory closed down or ran away, and union-busting was the first point on every boss's agenda.

And every dollar cut from social ser-

By Carmen Roundtree

From Stonewall to Soweto, people are fighting back.

So goes the chant you hear at just about any lesbian and gay rights demonstration around the country.

It symbolizes the militant resistance that is building after nearly eight years of a rightwing assault against lesbians, gays and all oppressed people.

## The Pentagon and AIDS

By Saul Kanowitz

Eight years of the AIDS epidemic have shown that the Reagan administration is unwilling to do what is necessary to bring about the earliest possible end to this tragic disease.

Eight years of struggle by people with AIDS, the lesbian and gay community, the oppressed communities and progressives have shown that a militant, independent, grass roots movement is the only way to end the epidemic.

It has taken courageous actions like the two-year-long AIDS/ARC vigil in San Francisco and the protests at the

International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C. this past June to get the government to even acknowledge this epidemic.

Now, as the AIDS movement intensifies its demand that the government fight AIDS instead of people with AIDS (PWAs), the real culprits in the lengthening crisis are being clearly exposed.

### Ruling class, Pentagon prolong AIDS crisis

The ruling class, made up of corporate bosses, bankers, and Pentagon generals, is reluctant to allocate money to provide quality healthcare and social services for people with AIDS, or to educate the population about preventing the transmission of the HIV virus.

It took predictions that the number of PWAs would increase eightfold and AIDS medical costs would quadruple



1970

WW PHOTO



1977

WW PHOTO: JOHN LONG

Since the beginning of the modern lesbian and gay liberation movement, Workers World Party has been there, in the thick of the struggle. From the upper left: At the first Gay Pride Day march, NYC, 1970. Demos vs. Anita Bryant, Norfolk, Va., June 1977. ERA rally, Aug. 1977. "Stop the movie 'Cruising!'" in the streets of Greenwich Village, Summer 1979. Next page: Demo vs. the Klan, Greensboro, N.C., Feb. 1980.



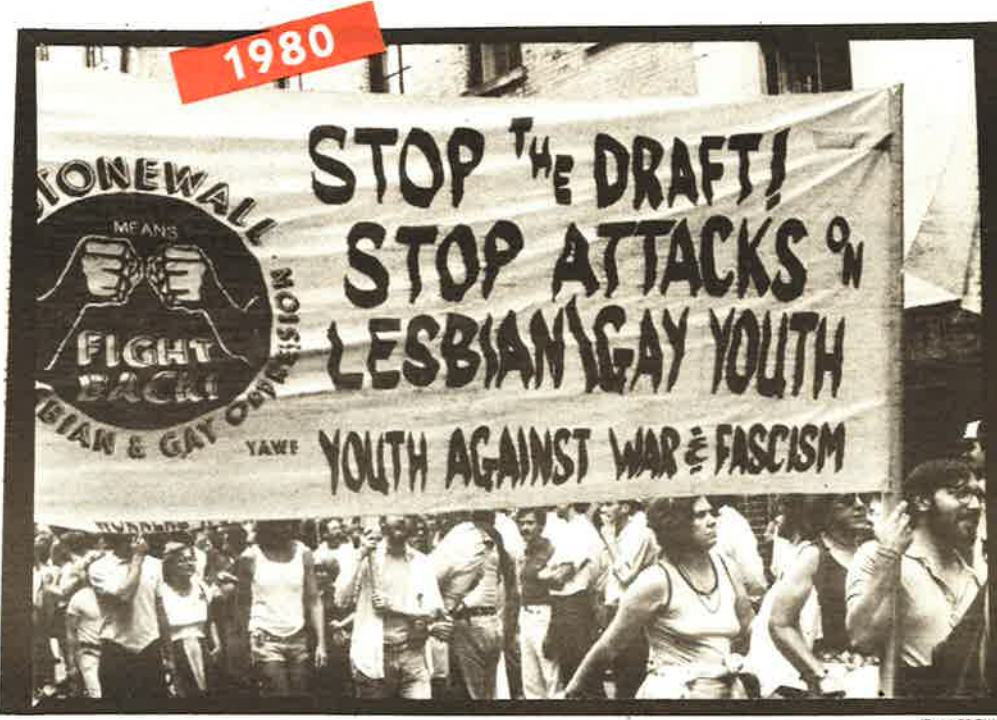
1977

WW PHOTO: PADDY COLLIGAN



1979





# lesbian/gay oppression

vice programs found its way directly into the military budget.

### Racist, sexist, anti-gay violence

From Howard Beach, New York, to Forsyth County, Ga., to Oroville, Calif., racist violence is on the rise, as little bands of vigilantes are encouraged by the racist atmosphere created by the Reagan administration.

Rightwing groups like the "Moral Majority" and "Right-to-Lifers" have seized on this opportunity, bombing abortion clinics and in other ways violently opposing women's right to choose.

They have also stepped up bigoted attacks on lesbians and gay men, much of which comes on the heels of a hysteria created by the bourgeois media and the government.

But from Stonewall to Soweto, people are fighting back!

"An end to racism in this country and apartheid in South Africa," is one of the major demands of the October 11 National March on Washington.

### People of Color Caucus builds Oct. 11 march

It had been realized from the very beginning stages of organizing that this — or any — demonstration dealing with the issues of human and civil rights had to make the issue of racism very high on the agenda.

A People of Color Caucus of the National March on Washington came together early on, and took on the task of massive outreach to the oppressed communities. The Caucus has also been instrumental in making

**R**eading counterclockwise: March to protest police raid of Blue's, a Black gay bar in NYC, Oct. 1982. Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in NYC, 1980. Boston Lesbian and Gay Pride march, 1984. WWP contingent, Lesbian and Gay Pride march, NYC, 1987.



# profits before people

by 1991 to force the Reagan administration to increase funding for research to find a cure and a vaccine. And still it's not nearly enough.

While so little is being done to save life, much is being done to invent new ways of killing.

The Pentagon budget for fiscal year 1986-1987 was about \$2 trillion. That translates into \$11 million spent each hour by the military on death and destruction.

The \$900 million allocated by the federal government for AIDS research for fiscal year 1986-1987 equals 3.4 days of military spending.

### "Manhattan Project" vs. AIDS needed

Objectively, what is needed to end the epidemic is a coordinated society-wide effort that brings community representatives, sympathetic scientists, doctors, virologists, and public

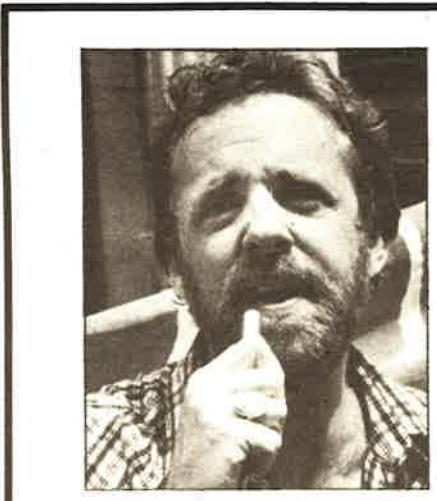
health officials together to develop a strategy and share resources.

Such an effort would have to have available to it all the resources necessary to find a cure and vaccine for the HIV virus, provide quality healthcare, housing, employment and social services for PWAs, and educate the population about AIDS and how to prevent transmission of the HIV virus.

There is historical precedent for such broad coordinated action. The ruling class did it to build the atomic bomb. It was called "The Manhattan Project." They are doing it right now with the Stars Wars program; over \$10 billion has already been spent on Star Wars research.

It has been done for the purposes of death and destruction. It can be done for the purpose of saving life.

Not just the \$2 trillion Pentagon



**Preston Wood**, WWP candidate for NYS Assembly in 1980, one of the several gay activists who have represented the Party in election campaigns.



**Gloria La Riva and Larry Holmes**, WWP 1988 vice presidential and presidential candidate. The struggle for lesbian and gay rights, along with every other aspect of the working class struggle, is a key issue in the election campaign.

# Lesbian and gay workers and the labor movement

By Shelley Ettinger

The labor contingent on October 11 might not be the biggest in the march. Or the loudest. Or get the most media attention.

But it will be among the most significant aspects of a most significant day.

The reasons have to do with both the labor movement and the lesbian and gay movement, and with the working class as a whole. And the result — a step forward toward classwide unity — could have profound impact on the class struggle in this country.

## Lesbian and gay workers

Lesbian and gay people, of course, work in every shop, office, mill and mine side by side with straight workers. Gay workers played leading roles in many labor struggles over the years, as militants in strikes and on picket lines, in sit-downs and walkouts.

But, for the most part, lesbians and gay men, even union militants, were held back by the force of oppression from raising demands of their own as gay workers.

So these demands — which include an end to anti-gay discrimination, harassment and violence, and provision of equal benefit coverage for lesbian and gay workers' lovers and families — were, with rare exception, ignored by the labor movement.

Now, however, conditions are changing drastically, and with the change comes a new chance for labor to take up the lesbian and gay struggle.

Women and Third World workers are



Labor Day 1987, NYC WW PHOTO: GREG DUNKEL

now the majority of the U.S. workforce, and most work in low-paying high-tech and service sector jobs — hotels and restaurants, offices, schools, airports and hospitals, etc. Lesbian and gay workers, although still too often made invisible as a result of oppression, also work in these jobs in great numbers.

Where the most oppressed workers are concentrated, the most militant labor struggles break out. So, over the last few years, there have been major

strikes by, among others, New York City hospital workers, Yale and Columbia University clericals, TWA flight attendants, hotel and restaurant workers in Las Vegas, San Francisco, Atlantic City and New York.

The common denominator in these strikes: leadership by women, Third World, and lesbian and gay unionists. Anyone who watched New York City hotel workers take over the streets two years ago, pounding pots and pans, chanting and clapping, saw it. So did anyone who walked the lines or attended a rally for TWA flight attendants.

## Potential for more

For all the excitement of these recent union struggles, there is potential for so much more. The vast majority of the workforce, especially oppressed workers, is unorganized. Unions that are moving to organize these workers — like the Service Employees, State, County and Municipal Employees, and Food and Commercial Workers — are leading the way. They are also in the lead of the anti-war, anti-racist and anti-apartheid movements, along with several other unions, and together they constitute the most progressive wing of the labor movement.

So it makes sense that it's this section of labor that is also taking up the lesbian and gay struggle.

More SEIU and AFSCME locals endorsed the October 11 march than any other union's. The president of SEIU and the vice presidents of UFCW, UAW District 65, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and the Coalition of Labor Union Women are all attending a Solidarity Reception at the AFL-CIO headquarters calling for mutual support between the gay and labor movements the day before the march. Cesar Chavez, president of the United Farm Workers, is a keynote speaker at the march.

As unions recognize that lesbians and gay men are an integral part of the working class and an important constituency within the trade union movement, the walls of silence and oppression are breaking down.

Lesbians helped lead the way for women entering previously all-male jobs in the construction trades, heavy industry and mining. Lesbians' active participation in struggles for affirmative action for women and Third World workers has been a force for unity among all oppressed workers.

Tens of thousands of gay workers and straight workers toil in thousands of small shops — florist shops, beauty shops, clothes stores, and the like — around the country. Most aren't in unions, have no job security, get low wages and no benefits. Some, like hairdressers, are routinely exposed to toxic chemicals without any health and safety protection.

These workers can be brought into the labor movement, and labor's support of the lesbian and gay movement will help. Already, the UFCW has a hairdressers' organizing department, which recently led a strike at a chain of beauty shops in the Western states.

The leadership of lesbian and gay workers themselves is crucial in moving labor forward. AFSCME District Council 37 in New York City, representing 150,000 city workers, is demanding equal benefit coverage for lesbian and gay workers' lovers in current contract talks — and it was gay rank-and-filers who pushed for the issue to be raised.

All these developments, along with the labor contingent that will take its place in the march for lesbian and gay rights on October 11, make this a promising moment in labor history and in the history of the lesbian and gay liberation movement.

## — Fight back

(Continued from page S3)

sure that those issues that most effect people of color in this country are prominent in the march.

The morning rally, which was organized by the Caucus, is a classic example of the organizing taken on by people of color in this march. The very fact that grassroots organizers, mostly from the oppressed communities, are speaking at this very important rally is historical indeed.

The central purpose of the October 11 March on Washington is to push forward the struggle for lesbian and gay rights. But it is not only necessary, but natural and correct that the march's program concern itself with the struggle against racism.

Indeed, many of those who will be marching in Washington — lesbian and gay people of color — suffer a double and triple oppression under this racist, sexist, anti-gay, anti-worker, anti-poor capitalist system.

The basis for unity on Oct. 11 is broader than the solidarity between all lesbian and gay people. That may be the beginning, but solidarity extends to all who are oppressed under this system.

The most revolutionary and politically astute forces in the people's movement have a saying that applies here: "Same struggle, same fight! All the people must unite!"

## — Star Wars and AIDS

(Continued from page S3)

budget impedes progress toward ending the AIDS epidemic. The whole economic and political structure — the military-industrial complex — is built around and dependent on weapons production.

### Military spending robs health care

Guaranteed profits from arms production compel the corporations to focus all their resources toward building the B-1 bomber or the MX missile. Research and development for Star Wars gets more resources and money than curing AIDS because it is more profitable. New technologies for using lasers are designed to destroy cities instead of cancer.

The military budget is funded at the expense of social service programs. To hide this fact the ruling class uses racism, sexism, anti-lesbian/gay bigotry and other tools of division to pit white against Third World, men against women, straight against gay, the employed against the unemployed, the native-born against the foreign-born, the able-bodied against the disabled and so on. The goal is to divide the working class and the oppressed and keep them from uniting against their common enemies — the Pentagon generals, the corporate bosses and bankers.

To this end, the bosses have seized upon the fact that AIDS has affected primarily gay men and Third World people to whip up anti-lesbian/gay bigotry and racism.

### United struggle will defeat AIDS

People with AIDS and the lesbian and gay community are fighting for what everyone needs — quality healthcare, social services, housing and employment — and this fight is showing the working class as a whole that the ruling class can be challenged and that victories can be won.

The Pentagon is a source of misery for millions of people here and around the world. It is the common enemy that can and will unite the workers, the poor and the oppressed against the bosses to end the AIDS epidemic and go on to end all exploitation and oppression.

## These organizers for the March on Washington subscribe to Workers World Newspaper.

### Here's why . . .

**Andre Powell**, National Media Chair for the March, member, People of Color Caucus:

"As National Media Chair for the March I am extremely pleased and encouraged to see the coverage of the March and Lesbian and Gay issues in Workers World. People of Color and poor and working Lesbians and Gays need to understand what's happening from our own perspective. Workers World understands the changes recent years have brought to the Lesbian and Gay struggle better than any other newspaper."

**Judy Greenspan**, National Logistics Coordinator for the March:

"Workers World newspaper has done much more than any other paper to build the March on Washington. It has consistently covered the March organizing for over a year as well as all of the major issues and demonstrations of the Lesbian and Gay movement. It's a great tool for organizers."

**Tracy Gibson**, Co-chair, Philadelphia Outreach Comm. for the March

"Workers World has helped me to communicate with People of Color and others in our area working on the March. I recommend everyone who supports Lesbian and Gay rights should subscribe."

**Shelley Ettinger**, Steering Comm. Lesbian & Gay Labor Network

"As a labor reporter for Workers World, I know this newspaper is committed to not only covering, but helping to build, union support for the Lesbian and Gay struggle. That means a lot to me and other Lesbian and Gay trade unionists."

## Take out your subscription today!

**Special offer for participants in the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay rights**  8-week trial subscription, one dollar  Full year (52 issues), ten dollars

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# 10,000 Californians go 3,000 miles to Oct. 11 march

By J. Marquardt  
San Francisco

At least 10,000 people from the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area will join the ranks of thousands in Washington, D.C., Oct. 11 at the National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

The local March on Washington organization involved people from all communities in the mobilization. As a result, Albert Lucero, a march organizer said, "Organizing for this march brought out a lot of people who hadn't worked together before, namely women, and Third World women and men. The local organization really did

have 50% women in the leadership, and 25% of the leadership were people of color, people with AIDS and people with ARC."

## Labor and community support

The San Francisco Central Labor Council voted to support the march, as did several local unions, including AFSCME Local 3212 and the Association of Graduate Student Employees. Many union members are planning to attend, as are members of several Third World community organizations. They include: the Latino Coalition on AIDS, Lesbians of Color, Alliance of Lesbian and Gay Asians, Gay American Indians, Third World

Men's Rap Group, Sistah Boom, Pacific Friends, Bay Area Black Lesbians and Gays, and Black and White Men Together.

In addition to contributing to the national "Time to Shine" fundraising effort to pay for people with AIDS and ARC to get to Washington, the local organization raised additional funds to send three people with AIDS and ARC, a lesbian of color, a disabled person, a parent of a gay person, and a low-income person — seven more people in all.

## "Names Project" a community effort, too

The "Names Project" quilt, some

2,000 panels in all, includes the names of people who have died of AIDS — "mostly gay men, but women and children, too," said Cleve Jones, Names Project coordinator. The effort, involving many hours of piecing together and sewing, "also included people from all areas of the community, women and men, young and old," Jones said.

"Often a lover and a parent worked together on a panel," Jones added. "It was good to see."

The quilt of panels from all over the country — every state that has had a person die of AIDS — will be displayed on the Capitol Mall during the national march on Oct. 11.

## — Senate attacks AIDS rights bill

Continued from page 1

fort by the lesbian and gay community turned back a high-financed pressure campaign launched by the insurance companies to defeat the measure.

After the law was adopted, the major insurance companies retaliated by refusing to issue any new life insurance policies for D.C. residents.

This was not the first time that Congress intervened to block progressive legislation adopted in the District. In 1985, the House of Representatives voted to prohibit the District from using either federal funds or the city's own funds to help pay for abortion costs for poor women.

Also, the Senate has voted to freeze the District's funds if the city government does not rescind a city residency requirement for D.C. police and firefighters. This is the most blatant form of racist interference since the residency requirement was designed to insure that the District police and fire departments would not return to their former all-white composition.

## Why statehood is an issue

The dictatorial authority exercised over the District by Congress has hurt the city's residents in almost all areas of life.

D.C. residents pay more local taxes than all but two states. Not only can Congress "veto" legislation passed by the D.C. City Council, it also controls the District's budget.

The federal government owns, controls or provides tax exemption to 55% of the used land in the District. While money-starved D.C. public schools are overcrowded and understaffed, the Congress gives tax-exempt status to right-wing organizations like the National Rifle Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, Veterans of Foreign Wars and many other racist groups that set up lavish headquarters in choice real estate areas.

It is likewise with the giant hotels and military corporations that dominate the city. These corporations are exempted from all but "land" taxes. The Hyatt Regency and the Hilton, for example, built luxury hotels costing \$38 million and \$23 million respectively. Neither paid a penny in taxes.

In return for these huge tax giveaways and the federal use of city lands, the Congress provides the District with a Federal Payment that pays for 19% of the city's operating budget. It is this Federal Payment which gives Congress the "right to review" the District's budget and bludgeoned elected D.C. officials if they dare enact pro-people legislation.

The current system is so obviously undemocratic (D.C. Congressman Walter Fauntroy isn't even allowed to

vote) and so detrimental to the people of D.C. that large majorities have consistently voted that D.C. should end its neocolonial status by becoming a state.

Statehood is a good idea. The District of Columbia population is larger than seven states. The city would be able to control its own budget. It would eliminate the existing taxation without representation. This Black majority city would not be the subject of every arbitrary intervention by Jesse Helms, Gordon Humphrey and other Congressional racists. In all likelihood, statehood for the District would lead to the election of two Black people to the U.S. Senate — currently there are none.

But it is for all the reasons that make Statehood a good idea for the people that the reactionaries in Congress vehemently oppose it. Waiting for Congress to make D.C. a state is to wait forever. Like all genuine civil rights struggles, achieving basic democratic rights for people in Washington, D.C., will require a truly massive struggle conducted on a national basis.

## Anti-gay official forced to resign in Michigan

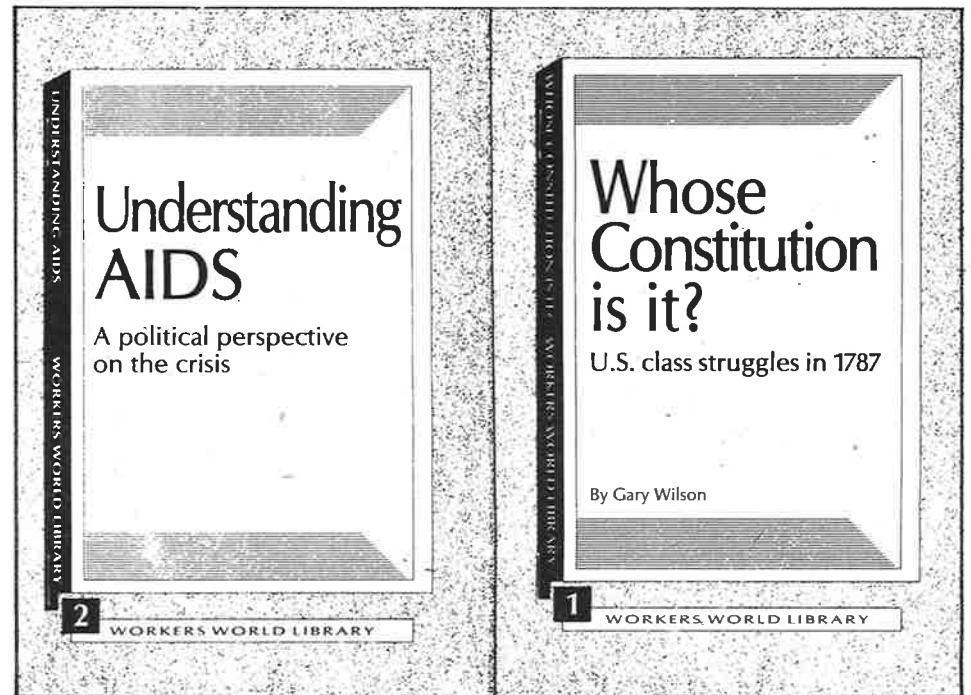
By Kris Hamel  
Detroit

The battle for gay and lesbian rights is heating up on two fronts in Michigan. In a victory for the lesbian and gay community and progressive forces, Traverse City Commissioner John Markl resigned on Oct. 2 after more than 2,500 people signed petitions demanding his ouster.

Markl made virulently bigoted, anti-gay remarks during a September commission meeting and quoted John Birch Society material to back up his statement. The city commission was discussing a request to allow the sale of condoms in vending machines when Markl launched his diatribe against lesbians and gays.

There was an outraged response from Traverse City and around Michigan. Markl announced that he would resign if one thousand people disagreed and signed petitions for him to quit. Over 300 volunteers quickly collected signatures in the small northern Michigan city after attorney Dean Robb and Cindy Robb took up the challenge.

Another Traverse City commissioner, Jasper Weese, is now being targeted for his anti-gay support of Markl at the September meeting. Organizers are demanding a public apology or his resignation.



## Workers World Library series: A Marxist view of today's issues

Have you been wondering what things were really like back in 1787 when the Constitution was drafted? Was it really such a democratic document, or was the democracy then, as now, mostly for the rich?

What political lessons can be learned from the AIDS crisis? Yes, it's a terrible new disease, but what social factors are making it spread most among people who are discriminated against already? What kind of struggle will it take to mobilize the kind of all-out medical and scientific effort that can bring AIDS under control?

Superconductors. Scientists and venture capitalists are agog over this big breakthrough that promises to revolutionize communications, transportation and other key industries. But what will all this mean for the workers? How can the unions start to prepare now to preserve jobs and wage levels against yet another high-tech assault?

These vital topics are taken up in the first three mini-pamphlets of the new Workers World Library series. The new 24-page pamphlets are small enough to tuck in your pocket and cost just 50 cents each (add another 50 cents for postage and handling). New titles will be coming out at the rate of about one a month.

Already available are: "Whose Constitution is it? U.S. class struggles in 1787" and "Understanding AIDS: A political perspective on the crisis." The pamphlet on superconductors will be available in November.

To order, send \$1.00 per pamphlet (includes postage) to World View Forum, 46 W. 21 St., New York, N.Y. 10010.



# EDITORIALS

## —After Oct. 11

Continued from page 1  
for an end to oppression.

This demonstration will go down as a great moment in the history of the lesbian and gay liberation movement.

And after Oct. 11, how can these gains in power and organization further the cause?

This is the question each has to ponder.

History shows that without struggle, no progress can be made. History shows, too, that the greater the unity among the oppressed, the greater the victories won from the oppressors. Nowhere is this truer than in the battle for civil rights and economic justice for all people.

The Black movement in the 1960s, for example, showed that millions of people could be mobilized to force the government to pass important civil rights legislation and win affirmative action programs.

In the 1930s, workers of all nationalities fought for and won unemployment insurance and social security.

Today, a new force reflecting the growth and changes in the developing "high-tech" workforce is bringing more people of all colors and nationalities, more women, and more lesbians and gay men together.

As new technology brings layoffs or low pay, all workers are under the gun of the anti-labor offensive. Lesbians and gays, along with everyone else, feel the pressure of this assault on top of their special oppression.

Together, this new force of natural allies against oppression and exploitation can move mountains. United, this force of workers and oppressed can push back and defeat the reactionary forces of war, racism, sexism and lesbian and gay oppression in this country.

### Which path of struggle in coming period?

This great demonstration was built by independent activists and grassroots lesbian and gay organizations. Sacrifice and a militant love of justice brought everyone here today.

Now that the 1988 elections are approaching, this movement must retain that independence and fighting spirit. As more and more politicians come courting with false promises and lesser-of-two-evils rhetoric, it must be remembered that it is the lesbian and gay movement and its allies — not do-nothing "friends" on Capitol Hill — that got the lesbian and gay movement this far.

The Democratic Party-controlled Congress

has yet to take even a weak stand on the fundamental rights of lesbians and gay men, or to move decisively against AIDS or AIDS-related discrimination. Just days after Reagan's infamous speech at the International AIDS Conference, Congress overwhelmingly approved mandatory HIV testing for prisoners and immigrants. In the very midst of the Iran-contra scandal, Congress voted even more funding for the murderous and discredited Nicaraguan contras. Can we wait any longer? No!

Rather than get caught up in a system designed to keep power out of the hands of the people, the lesbian and gay movement, and all movements aimed at achieving social justice, must take the power into our own hands.

The road to such power comes by building bridges — real solidarity — between all those who are oppressed or exploited. Unity among labor, anti-war, Black, Latino, Asian, Native, women, disabled, gay and lesbian people can wield a mighty fist. It is this power that can rock the foundations of bigotry and break forever tradition's chains.

## The mouse that squeaked

If the U.S.-contra war against Nicaragua collapses, will it be because at last some Democratic leaders have sharply distanced themselves from Reagan on this issue?

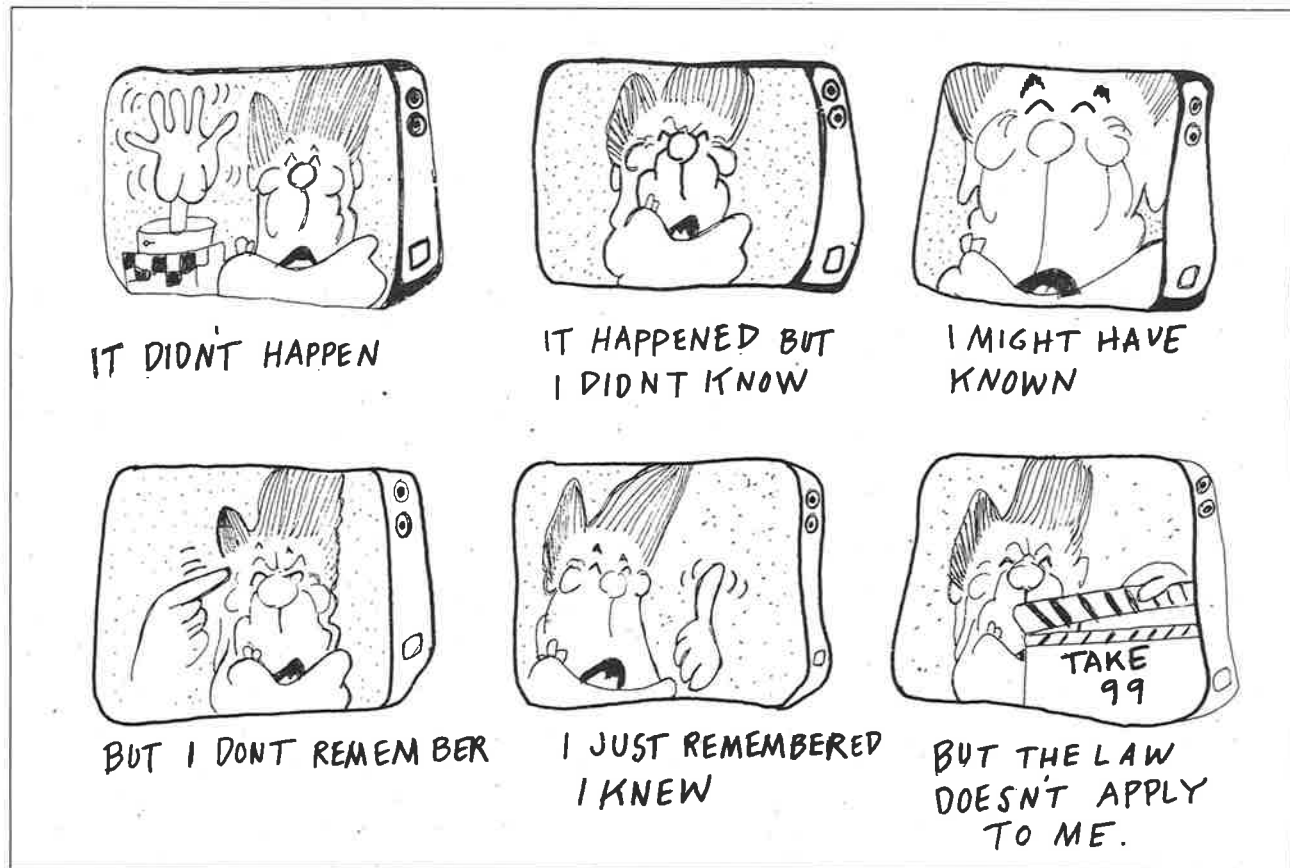
That seems to be what House Speaker Jim Wright of Texas wants everyone to believe. He

has finally, after just two months ago trying to work out a last-ditch formula with the White House, found the words to indicate that Nicaragua is after all a sovereign country and the U.S. really has no right to tell it when to hold elections, what criminals to let out of jail, etc. He has even called Reagan's schemes to continue using the contras "ridiculous."

Words, it must be remembered, are cheap. And they can always be retracted tomorrow. Not so cheap are the real elements that have brought this U.S. mercenary force to its present fiasco: the bravery, sacrifice and dedication of the Nicaraguan people despite great casualties and hardships; the growing solidarity movement in Latin America and around the world that has sent Nicaragua material, human and political support; the rising indignation in the U.S. as seen in militant demonstrations, meetings and the large numbers of Americans who have gone to Nicaragua.

Throughout the Hasenfus affair and the Contragate scandal, the Democrats helped fund the contras, shrank from invoking the War Powers Act and argued that Nicaragua's economic and political system are subject to the approval of Washington.

Now that all the countries of Central America have signed an agreement calling for peace (some for fear that the social consequences of the war would soon engulf them), the U.S. ruling class must find a new strategy. Wright's open criticism of Reagan may be quite significant, but it shouldn't be taken as the gentle cooing of a born-again dove. Better the squeak of a frightened rodent leaving the sinking ship.



## Letters

### LTV retiree

I cannot afford a contribution at this time. I am an LTV Steel retiree. We lobbied our legislators for our benefits. But we forgot to tell our labor leaders not to take money away from the retirees (\$26.82 a month more for major medical and if a husband and wife both worked there the amount would be \$53.64).

What the retirees need is for someone to represent us, to keep labor from negotiating our benefits away. Retirees do not have a right to vote on the contract. If they are to negotiate for us, we should have had the right to vote on the new contract or anything else pertaining to the retirees.

We have 30-40 years in the steel mills and we should have rights on anything pertaining to the retirees.

P.S. I would like to see this in Workers World because it is a worker's friend and a very good newspaper. Keep up the good work. As long as we

can we will keep up our subscription.  
Ernest E. Sellers  
North Canton, Ohio

### Carl Jacob

It was with great sadness and a deep sense of the progressive movement's loss that we, the Connecticut Committee Against Repression, learned of the passing of Carl Jacob (WW, Sept. 17). Only days before his death, Carl had brought his generators, loudspeakers and microphones to Hartford for the national march in support of the Puerto Rico/Hartford 16.

That march, and the rally that followed, was a considerable success for us: more than 2,000 people turned out from Hartford, New York, Boston, New Haven and Jersey City to show support for the Puerto Rican political prisoners and for the Puerto Rican struggle for independence from U.S. colonialism. We consider that success to be Carl's success as well — his technical expertise was evident from the very first speaker to the closing strains of "La Borinquena."

Companero Carl Jacob, we will remember your solidarity!

Connecticut Committee  
Against Repression  
Hartford, Conn.

### Rosenbergs dishonored

The White House has announced that retired Chief Justice Warren Burger and Judge Irving R. Kaufman are to be presented with the presidential medal of freedom at a White House reception on Oct. 7.

This award to Judge Kaufman can only remind the public of the most grievous mistake in the judge's career, his reprehensible role during the hysterical McCarthy period, the "legal" murder of the martyred couple, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. By making this award, President Reagan will be repeating the mistake of the McCarthy period, in effect, "thumbing his nose" at world leaders, Nobel laureates, theologians, philosophers and legal scholars, who pleaded that those tragic electrocutions be halted.

At the Rosenberg trial in 1951, no witness claimed that the Rosenbergs ever transmitted any classified information to anyone. Yet, Judge Kaufman, caught up in the national

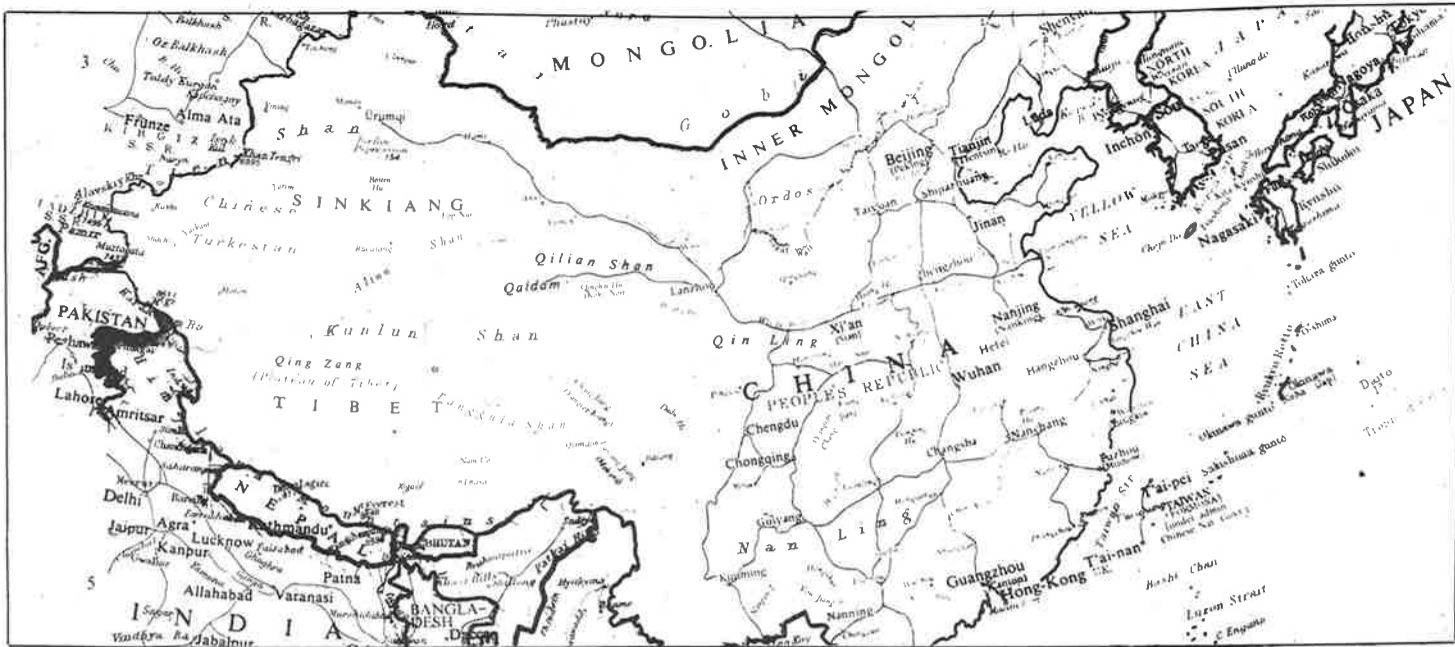
hysteria as he passed his unprecedented death sentences, blamed the Rosenbergs for causing the war in Korea, "putting into the hands of the Russians the A-bomb," costing "untold millions" of future lives and "changing the course of history to the disadvantage of our country." Top atomic scientists pointed out that those atomic charges were false, mythical and impossible, while top legal scholars pointed to the discrepancy between the trial testimony, the jury's verdict and the judge's wild rhetoric in his sentencing statement. Judge Kaufman has never replied to such widespread criticism and has blinded himself to the accumulation of new evidence pointing to Rosenberg innocence.

Aaron Katz  
National Committee to Reopen  
the Rosenberg Case  
New York

Workers World welcomes letters from its readers. Send correspondence to: Workers World, Letters to the Editor, GPO Box 948, New York, N.Y. 10116.

# The struggle in Tibet

By Sam Marcy



Tibet has long been considered the "pivot of Asia" by the great powers. In developing their policy on Tibet, the leaders of People's China have had to take note of this, especially when there was pressure on their borders, as during the Korean War.

No one should be misled by the apparent contradiction between the position of the U.S. Senate, which just voted 98 to 0 to support the Dalai Lama's call for the independence of the Tibet, and the Reagan administration's affirmation of China's sovereignty over Tibet as a province of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC).

This is merely a continuation of duplicitous Anglo-U.S. diplomacy with respect to China which goes back over 75 years. In 1913, the U.S. as well as Britain affirmed the sovereignty of China over Tibet while at the same time they built independent political and diplomatic channels to Tibet.

## China abolished serfdom in Tibet

If the People's Republic of China had done nothing more in Tibet than to abolish serfdom, it would have earned its right to reassert its centuries-old sovereignty over the area, which dates back to 1253 A.D.

The aim of this profound social revolution was to end the thousand-year-old oppression of the peasants by the lamas and the nobility, who owned the land and ruled over the population with an iron hand. The transformation, however, was something in the nature of a revolution from above.

The great, world-historic rebellions of the peasantry which were such a fundamental driving force in the Chinese Revolution were not characteristic of Tibet. The vast social transformation there, even though carried out in the epoch of socialist revolutions, resembled more a 19th century bourgeois democratic revolution carried out from above, with all its problems and limitations.

The nearest analogy is that of the Napoleonic wars, both in eastern Europe and in Spain. In eastern Europe, Napoleon was greeted with great enthusiasm, but he failed dismally in Spain.

When the formation of the Chinese Peoples Republic was declared in early 1950, Tibet was not yet considered a fully liberated area. An early history of the Chinese Revolution (*An Outline History of China* by Tung Chi-ming, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1958) said that "by the end of 1949 all territories on the mainland except Tibet were liberated and the Chinese people had won the third revolutionary civil war."

It should be noted that in the years of the Long March, when the Communist Red Army had to go through part of the difficult terrain of Tibet, many Tibetan people helped it tremendously, often furnishing it with yaks and supplies.

## China wanted to go slow in Tibet

It is the view of this writer that the People's Republic of China would have been content to leave matters alone with respect to Tibet for a considerable transition period, had this been possible. The staggering problems that the Chinese Peoples Republic faced in its early days of political consolidation and economic reconstruction made it virtually certain that the internal situation of China was paramount.

The real priority for China was to begin the task of socialist transformation and the political job of firmly establishing what Mao had called the Peoples' Democratic Dictatorship. Indeed, historical conditions of an internal character more or less dictated that the new Chinese government leave things alone in Tibet, considering its very archaic and encrusted feudal social structure based on serfdom and buttressed by a theocratic form of state.

While not abandoning a revolutionary perspective politically or socially, the immediate task was to maintain the status of Tibet as an integral part of China. As we said, Tibet had been formally incorporated into the territory of China during the Yuan dynasty in the 13th century.

Since 1913, Britain, the U.S., Czarist Russia and Germany too had all affirmed what they called the suzerainty and territorial integrity of China over Tibet. That did not, however, stop them from making overtures to Tibet and creating their own independent links, trade missions, cultural and religious missionaries and innumerable clandestine operations in order to have a foothold in the area.

During World War II, the British and the U.S. conferred about China and Tibet many times, according to China expert Edgar Snow (*Red China Today*, Random House, 1961). Also during the war and afterwards, the U.S. invited Tibet to establish an independent trade mission in Washington, notwithstanding its formal proclamations of Chinese jurisdiction and sovereignty over Tibet.

With the demands of socialist construction at home, China was more than willing to let things alone in Tibet. But were the great powers also willing to do that?

## Significance of Korean War

When the U.S. opened its aggressive war in Korea, the People's Republic of China soon found it absolutely necessary to intervene with revolutionary assistance for Korea, particularly after General Douglas MacArthur proclaimed that his aim was to cross the Yalu River. This was regarded at the time as an attempt to invade China.

Even though there was no immediate military threat in Tibet, the Korean War forced China to look to its other frontier to safeguard it against counter-revolution, which was instigated by those who had long regarded Tibet as the pivot of Asia.

Thus, from virtually the beginning of the Chinese Revolution, it was necessary for the PRC to view Tibet in the light of a changing international situation.

When India was a newly liberated nation, it had every reason, from the viewpoint of the anti-imperialist struggle and its soon-to-be announced principles of coexistence and non-alignment, to have a friendly approach to China. But, as things developed, it became embroiled in a border dispute with China along the Tibetan frontier, which continues to this very day. The recent struggle in Tibet, it should be noted, has also coincided with shooting between Chinese and Indian troops on this same old border.

The fact that the USSR, notwithstanding its historic friendship treaty with China signed in 1950, eventually backed India in the border dispute again reinforced China's concern with developments in Tibet and helped lay the groundwork for the Sino-Soviet split.

Thus, viewed in the perspective of the Chinese Revolution, whatever the internal situation might have been in Tibet, it had an external aspect which also posed a dangerous situation for China.

## Overall U.S. strategy and the Carnegie Corp.

However, Tibet has another and far greater significance to not only the U.S. but Britain, India, Pakistan and the USSR. The whole region in which Tibet is situated has been referred to in some U.S. literature on the subject as a center of gravity for Asia in which all the so-called great powers have been deeply concerned.

An aspect which is often overlooked these days with respect to China is the viewpoint of overall U.S. imperialist policy in the area. Since 1947, the U.S. has regarded the region of Tibet, including the neighboring parts of India, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, as an area calling for particular attention.

It has always been made to appear to the general public that U.S. concerns in Tibet are merely over human rights and in particular the survival of religious freedom. However, as early as 1947, the Carnegie Corporation thought Tibet significant enough that it made a grant to the Johns Hopkins University School of International Relations to study the whole region and analyze the forces at work therein.

Tibet is considered in the West as a very isolated country surrounded by mountains, having poor natural resources and an extremely archaic social structure which for centuries was dominated by the Lamaist offshoot of Buddhism. To the general public and tourists especially, Tibet is of greatest interest for its ancient temples, remarkable architecture and so on.

Although its resources may be considered poor in relation to others, it is necessary to note that Tibet has large deposits of gold, copper and uranium, something the great powers could not overlook. However, mining was long prohibited by the Dalai Lamas for religious reasons, so a great deal of wealth may still be buried in the ground. China no less than any other country would be concerned about this.

Tibet's geographical position locates it in the historic road between India and China. (Tibet is bordered on the southeast by Burma, on the south by India, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal,

and on the west by India and Kashmir, and on the north and east by other Chinese provinces.)

## Tibet's early history

It might be recalled that the Tibetans throughout their history have not been known for being submissive or docile. The first attempt at the unification of the Tibetans came as early as the 7th century A.D. under the leadership of Sron-tsan Gampo, who organized and unified the Tibetan tribes, then situated himself in Lhasa and made it the capital. During the next century, Tibet grew so powerful that it actually threatened, or as the historian Tung Chi-ming put it, "cast covetous eyes on" the southern part of Sinkiang.

The Tibetans distinguished themselves in bravery and armed struggle against the British in 1873. As is the traditional way of the imperialists, they had sent a grouping to study trade conditions in Tibet. They soon demanded entry to Tibet to explore the mineral resources of the region. The Tibetans firmly refused. The British then threatened armed force. The Tibetans, however, were determined and organized resistance.

At that time, the Manchus headed the Chinese state. They were fearful and pointedly refused to support the opposition of the Tibetans, yielding to the British.

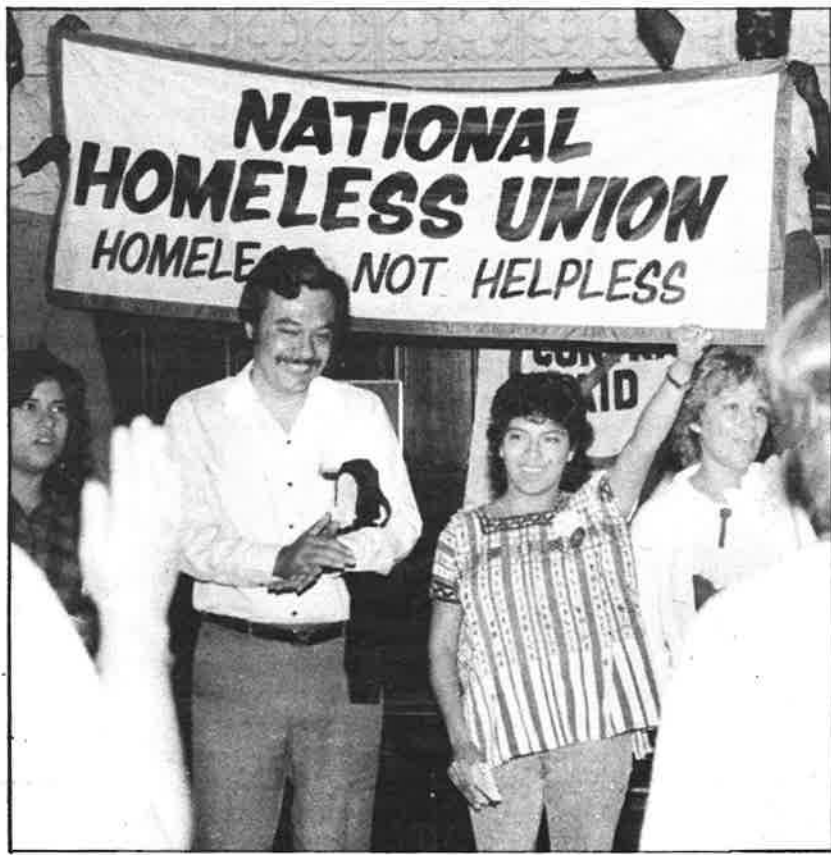
However, due to the determination and militancy of the Tibetans, this time the scheme of entering the region was foiled. It is good to contemplate the significance of this resistance a hundred years later. The go-slow methods of the People's Republic of China in Tibet were calculated to ensure a peaceful and stable relationship and at the same time not forgo either the revolutionary opportunity or the revolutionary duty to support progressive, revolutionary democratic reform in this archaic old feudal country.

## Issue of self-determination

The issue of self-determination is one that has to be settled between China and Tibet and no one else. The right of self-determination has always depended on the character of the historical epoch in which it is raised and the nature of the international situation, which in the contemporary world is always a factor of enormous significance.

China is a state with a considerable number of nationalities. If there is one aspect of the PRC's conduct which stands out for its progressive character, it is its policy with respect to the nationality question. Like the Soviet Union under different circumstances, China has made the greatest progress precisely along those lines.

Continued on page 10



**Homeless protest in Philadelphia.** About 30 homeless people blocked the main entrance to the newly built, 65-floor "One Liberty Place" for two hours this morning. The protesters, some from a caravan of homeless people from Mexico, demanded a \$35 million commitment from millionaire contractor Richard Rouse to rebuild communities instead of downtown corporate skyscrapers. On the previous night, members of the Continental Front of Community Organizers (FCOC) from Mexico spoke on their struggle against homelessness. About 120 people, some homeless and many from the local movement against U.S. intervention in Central America, gathered at Dignity Shelter to hear the speakers describe the large movement for decent housing in Mexico and other Central American nations.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

# Conference of homeless features action agenda

By Leslie Feinberg  
New York

"No viviendas, no paz! No housing, no peace!" was the vehement demand of the hundreds who filled Local 1199's auditorium on Oct. 4 for an all-day international assembly on homelessness and poverty. The gathering brought together the homeless and poor of New York City as well as representatives from other countries to discuss issues and strategies for action.

The assembly was organized by the October 6th Coalition, a broad range of U.S. homeless activists, squatters, housing, peace and solidarity groups.

A caravan of Latin American activists touring the U.S. was a vital part of this Popular Assembly. Present today was CONAMUP (Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular — the Nationally Coordinated Urban Poor Peoples' Movement), formed in Mexico in 1980 by several regional mass organizations. CONAMUP brings together neighborhood residents, homemakers, homeless, renters, earthquake victims, vendors, bus and taxi drivers and other representatives from some 300 neighborhood organizations in 18 states throughout the republic of Mexico. According to CONAMUP, women have played the most active role in this organizing.

Despite government repression, CONAMUP has been working since 1982 towards a Latin American congress of community organizations which was held in February of this year in Managua, Nicaragua. Delegates came from Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay, creating an organization to unite all the nationally organized movements. This newly-formed group, Frente Continental de Organizaciones Comunitarias (Continental Front of Neighborhood Organizations), defined themselves as an anti-imperialist, democratic organization representing the interests of poor urban dwellers throughout the Americas.

They charged that the poverty suffered by the majority of Latin Americans was the direct result of "oppression, exploitation and the chaotic expansion characteristic of capitalist urbanization," and the intolerable foreign debt stealing the wealth of workers' labor to feed the banks, not the children.

A similar anti-imperialist resolution, "The Campinas Declaration," was signed by representatives of 56 trade union federations and trade un-

ions of 25 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that met in May of this year in Campinas in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

## 'No housing, no peace'

The organization will demonstrate Oct. 6 at the United Nations to demand the right to housing.

The UN has declared 1987 to be the year of shelter for the world's homeless, and made a film showing the suffering of those who have no homes. But the U.S. vehemently objected to footage of homeless people in this country and forced the scenes to be cut.

There are 3-to-5 million people without shelter across this country and some 100,000 in New York City alone. Half the homeless population are children, a third are veterans and another third unskilled workers.

Other scheduled demonstrations include a march against the roundup of the homeless by police ordered by City Hall. The march, called by the Emergency Coalition Against Martial Law, will assemble at Grand Central Station Oct. 12 at noon, and march to Washington Square Park.

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## Tibet

Continued from page 9

The exceptionally difficult situation of Tibet dates back to its ancient legacy, which over the centuries, not decades, made it an integral part of China. China did not, like the U.S. did with Alaska, purchase Tibet, nor did it go thousands of miles overseas, subjugate and conquer a Polynesian society as the U.S. did with virtually

genocidal effects on the people of Hawaii.

To attempt the kind of self-determination which the Dalai Lama is proposing from his outposts in New Delhi and Washington can only result in the establishment of a neocolony of imperialism and a dagger pointed at the heart of China. There is, however, wide latitude for solving the national question within the framework of the Peoples Republic of China and the pursuit of a progressive, democratic and socialist policy by Tibet and the Chinese Peoples Republic.

There are unlimited possibilities for approaching the problem of self-determination within the context of autonomy, within the framework of the multinational state of China, or through any other relationship which is the uninhibited result of the mutual, reciprocal relations between China and Tibet. It is exclusively a problem between them, and should brook no interference, overt or covert, from others.

China has successfully arranged its relations with its neighbors like Burma, Bhutan and Nepal and, notwithstanding its aggression against Vietnam, that too will be normalized in the spirit of socialist solidarity and is a matter between China and Vietnam.

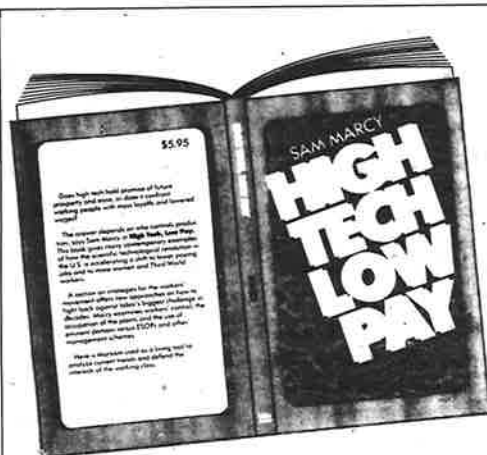
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## NFL strike

Continued from page 4

oly operation which pays very well. As the Washington Post recently reported, Washington owner Jack Kent Cooke could pay each of his players \$230,000 and still start the season with \$6 million in his pocket before selling one ticket.

The NFL monopoly system guarantees the owners big profits, regardless of how their teams do. Each owner receives about \$17 million a year in TV revenues.

But it is the players who make the game, often at the cost of their health. At the very least they deserve wages and benefits that reflect their contribution.

# Salvadoran people rally to support FMLN guerrillas

By Andy Stapp

Thousands of guerrilla supporters turned out in San Salvador on Oct. 4 waving red flags in support of the appearance of the rebel delegation.

It was on the first day of the conference between the Duarte regime and the leftist insurgents.

So large were the pro-guerrilla forces that they quickly took over the entire field in front of the conference site. It was a remarkable scene, civilians singing songs of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) right under the noses of armed government troops! Over the past eight years, tens of thousands have been murdered for less by police and army death squads.

This outburst of pro-FMLN support is not some sort of sign that the Duarte government is becoming more democratic or tolerant of opposition. Hundreds of labor leaders remain in prison, beaten and tortured, simply for fighting for the economic demands of their membership.

The armed forces still kill at will and no military officer has ever been brought to justice. Not once. And, along with the imperialist corporations, 14 families continue to dominate all the national wealth in this country of five million people.

## Duarte's grip is slipping

It is not any new liberalization on the part of the regime, but its growing isolation which emboldened the people to pour out and demonstrate for the guerrillas. Despite more than \$1 billion in aid from Washington, including a recent new grant for the notorious Salvadoran police, Duarte's grip is slipping.

A month ago, when a leftist leader at the National University was kidnapped by a fascist death squad, the students immediately flooded into the streets, chanting, "Workers to power, Yankees go to hell!" and setting ablaze cars operated by security agents.

This defiance is something that the government believed had been buried under the avalanche of terror in the early 1980s. Scores were killed every day back then, all with the complicity of the Reagan administration and the U.S. military "trainers," who still direct the day-to-day operation of the war against the rebels.

Long before he was "elected," Du-

arte was put in as head of the military junta, a fact much of the U.S. news media and Congress tries to forget when they describe him as "leader of a fledgling democracy." William Casey, the late boss of the CIA, actually described this "democrat" as a "long term CIA asset," in recently published conversations with journalist Bob Woodward.

But Duarte's value as an "asset," is somewhat similar to those U.S. bank loans to Latin America which have now been downgraded.

## FMLN has popular support

The armed forces, which U.S. gov-

ernment officials were cheerfully predicting would wipe out the FMLN, is still bogged down, while the rebels have gained effective control of most of the northern part of the country. It is a classic replay of earlier "peoples' wars," where the regular army can make no headway against a force with popular support.

For more than three years, Duarte and his "handlers" in Washington have refused to enter into any talks with the guerrillas. Before negotiations could begin, Duarte always insisted that the rebels must lay down their arms. He has now had to abandon this position, which was really an

ultimatum that the FMLN surrender.

The leftist resistance was much smaller and ill equipped when they succeeded in forcing the ouster of the regime of General Romero in 1979, and they are not about to give up now, when the correlation of forces is more in their favor. When they came for the current negotiations, the guerrilla leaders restated their aim that the 14-family oligarchy, the military despotism and the chronic interference of Washington could have no place in a new El Salvador. "Insurrection is the right of the people," said Leonel Gonzalez, an FMLN commander.

# Exclusive interview: Guatemalan unionists face death threats

By David Sole

*Following is an interview with two trade union leaders from Guatemala who are touring the U.S. The interview was conducted in Detroit on Oct. 1. Both of the unionists requested their names not be used because of the violent repression they face in their own country.*

## What union do you represent?

We are organizers and leaders of STINDE. This is the electrical workers union, the largest in Guatemala. We have 6,000 members employed by the government, in factories, offices and even in the fields.

## How long has your union been in existence?

Our union was finally recognized as legal on July 29, 1987. Guatemala's legal code provides for recognition of a union after a 30-day procedure. But we fought for recognition for 1 year and 3 months!

## What actions did you take to win recognition?

We had two strikes in that time. In October 1986 we struck for three days. Then on April 20, 1987, we stayed out for 15 days. We faced a lot of police repression. Even death threats. But the workers know that only through organization can we find answers to the things we are looking for. We had one demonstration in front of the National Palace on April 29 with 2,000 people.

## Are you involved in trying to

## organize more workers?

Yes. The economy is very bad right now. And we are winning raises for our members, sometimes the first raise in many, many years. We are also trying to organize the peasants, but there is much fear of assassination, death squads.

## Is your union involved with other sections of the community?

We are trying to do some work in favor of the people of Guatemala as a whole. Our union, using union funds, has a national program for literacy and health. The government isn't doing it, and we know our people need it. These projects are for the entire neighborhood.

## What are the greatest problems you face?

The President of the Republic doesn't really have power. The real power in Guatemala is in the hands of the army. The U.S. is supporting this government with arms shipments. All aid to Guatemala is controlled by the army. When we go on strike we face death threats by the police. But the workers are very militant. At the same time we were on strike last spring, 200,000 state employees also went on strike!

## Could conditions in Guatemala result in worker uprisings like we have seen in south Korea?

If the government doesn't change its position, we foresee that this will happen. Not immediately, but in the

future. Our currency in Guatemala is suffering severe inflation, hitting the people hard. The unions are getting much larger in size, but the demands are not being fulfilled, only met with repression.

## What is the aim of your tour?

We are here looking for international support. We are looking for the workers of the U.S. to ask their government to stop the aid to countries in conflict.

## What is your view of the role of the United States government in the Central American region?

The U.S. is playing a bad role. They are supporting governments that are not doing good. Look at the Central American Peace Plan. The trouble is it has no future because of the position of the U.S. government. The U.S. must end its support of the contras in Nicaragua. The plan calls for amnesty. But this must be a broad amnesty. When the Guatemalan refugees from Mexico return, besides making a show about them coming back, they are never taken to their original villages. They take them into "model villages" which are really concentration camps.

## What do you expect when you return to Guatemala?

We already know that retribution is to be expected. We knew when we joined the union movement we were getting into trouble. But we made this trip to let people know around the world what is happening.

# Brian Willson hit again — no charges brought against Navy

By Gloria La Riva  
San Francisco

In an attempted whitewash of stunning proportions, Contra Costa County District Attorney Gary Yancey announced on Sept. 22 that no charges would be filed against those responsible for a train running over anti-war veteran Brian Willson.

Willson lost both legs and suffered a severe head injury while blocking train tracks outside the Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) near San Francisco. CNWS is a major center from which weapons are shipped to U.S. puppet forces in Central America.

The Nuremberg Peace Action Group, of which Willson is a member, had been protesting arms shipments at Concord all summer. On Aug. 21, Willson sent a letter to the Navy announcing his intention to block the tracks used by arms-carrying trains on Sept. 1. On Aug. 28, a major local newspaper carried an extensive story on the group's plans for Sept. 1. An oral

restatement of the intention to block the tracks was made to the Navy on the morning of Sept. 1.

Immediately after Willson was run over, a Navy spokesman claimed that the train was traveling 5 miles per hour and implied that Willson had attempted to commit suicide. Videotapes proved that the speed of the train was at least 17 mph and that it was speeding up as it hit Willson, who was making a desperate attempt to get out of the way.

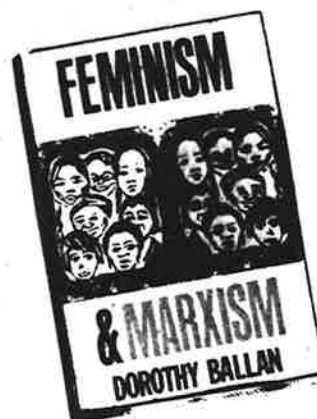
Close to 10,000 demonstrators rallied in solidarity with Willson and against the U.S. war in Central America at the CNWS on Sept. 5.

Holly Rauen, Willson's wife and fellow protester who witnessed the horrifying attack on him, vowed to press for further state and federal investigations. Angrily dismissing the DA's decision not to press charges, she said, "At the time I saw the train bearing down on us, I felt there was a crime being committed. It was in no way an accident."



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## Mundo Obrero presente en la lucha por la igualdad de derechos de lesbianas y gays

Por Lucinda Sintierra

Desde el comienzo de la lucha por los derechos de las lesbianas y hombres gay, Mundo Obrero, partido revolucionario de la clase obrera, ha dado su más decidido apoyo y participación para que un día los homosexuales sean tratados como miembros íntegros de la sociedad sin prejuicios ni discriminación.

Esta lucha comenzó en 1969 cuando la comunidad lésbica y gay, los transvestistas y transexuales, ya hartos de ser atacados y hostigados por la policía, una noche dijeron ¡basta! Y ocurrió lo que hoy se conmemora como la Rebelión Stonewall. En esos días cientos de lesbianas, hombres gay, transvestistas y transexuales salieron a las calles en el Greenwich Village a resistir al estado, y el trato y prejuicio que fomentan entre la sociedad.

Desde entonces la comunidad homosexual se ha desarrollado y se ha organizado en un movimiento poderoso con cientos de grupos y organizaciones que abarcan todo este país. A la vez, en 1971, Mundo Obrero formó el caucus de lesbianas y gays al interior del partido que tiene como tarea participar en el movimiento de la liberación homosexual.

### Epidemia del SIDA

Desde que la epidemia del SIDA salió a la luz, Mundo Obrero ha luchado en conjunto con otros grupos para obligar al gobierno de los EE.UU. que entregue los fondos necesarios para bregar contra esta terrible enfermedad. Miembros del partido trabajan

en organizaciones nacionales y locales para enfrentar los aspectos políticos y las necesidades diarias de personas con SIDA y con el Complejo Relacionado con el SIDA (ARC).

El periódico Mundo Obrero ha dedicado mucho tiempo al análisis de la epidemia del SIDA. Ha desenmascarado la como el gobierno a negado la seriedad de la crisis, y lo racista y lo prejuicioso que ha sido al enfrentarse con la situación, tratando de aislar a los que sufren de esta enfermedad, y además promoviendo el gasto del dinero en pruebas obligatorias para el SIDA y no proveyendo los fondos necesarios para encontrar una cura.

Por otro lado el partido y sus miembros homosexuales y heterosexuales, también pertenecen a sindicatos, grupos comunales y organizaciones progresistas y siempre aseguran que los derechos de lesbianas y gays son promovidos y defendidos.

Entre muchas actividades en que ha participado Mundo Obrero a través de los años están las manifestaciones contra Jerry Falwell y Anita Bryant, la película anti-gay "Cruising" y la película anti-lesbiana "Windows." Participó en la organización de la primera marcha por los derechos de lesbianas y gays en Washington, DC en 1979. También en la lucha de padres y madres homosexuales a quien les han querido quitar los hijos, contra la violencia anti-gay, etc.

Análisis marxista de la cuestión gay

En 1976 Mundo Obrero publicó un libro llamado "La cuestión gay: un



análisis marxista" escrito por Bob McCubbin. Este libro documenta la aceptación de la homosexualidad en las sociedades tecnológicamente primitivas de hace miles de años atrás y muestra como la opresión de la mujer, lesbianas, hombres gay, y transvestistas coinciden con la división de la sociedad en clases y que es fomentada por la clase dominante. También discute el papel especial que juega la iglesia como una fuerza de represión no solo de los homosexuales sino que también de cualquiera expresión libre de la sexualidad. Este libro es único en su análisis porque explica que la lucha de lesbianas y

gays es una parte íntegra de la lucha de la clase obrera para su liberación.

El partido no solo ha participado donde hay un movimiento de masas, por ejemplo la opresión de transexuales y transvestistas, siempre promovemos su liberación al igual que el de todos los oprimidos por el sistema capitalista.

Un daño a uno, es un daño a todos y el partido Mundo Obrero esta comprometido a luchar por la unidad entre nuestra clase: la clase obrera, y el derrocamiento de la clase dominante que es la causa de tanta opresión y sufrimiento. ¡Que viva la clase obrera y su diversidad!

## Imperialismo norteamericano busca derrotar proceso de paz en Centroamérica

Por Carl Glenn

El acuerdo de paz firmado por los cinco presidentes de los países centroamericanos el 7 de agosto, constituye una victoria más dentro del proceso revolucionario del pueblo nicaraguense y también para el Frente Sandinista. El acuerdo Esquipulas II alcanzado en Guatemala es una derrota política indiscutible para la política intervencionista del gobierno imperialista de los EE.UU. Lo que está en juego en estos momentos es el derecho a la auto-determinación de los países oprimidos por imperialismo. Apesar de las posibles dificultades que pueda plantear el pacto o los problemas que se encuentren en su implementación, el hecho de que los gobiernos de Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua y Costa Rica pudieron firmar un documento en contra de los deseos de Washington demuestra que los intereses de estos países y el imperio estadounidense son totalmente irreconciliables. Es la lucha heroica de los pueblos de Centroamérica que ha precipitado este pacto y es la única fuerza que puede iniciar una paz duradera.

No es por casualidad que el gobierno de Nicaragua ha tomado la delantera en el esfuerzo de cumplir con las condiciones del acuerdo de paz. El mandatario sandinista, Daniel Ortega, fue el primero de los cinco firmantes en comenzar a dar los primeros pasos

contemplados en el acuerdo. Su decisión, hasta ahora demostrada, de cumplir estrictamente con los compromisos adquiridos, con seguridad permitirá al gobierno ser más exigente con sus vecinos para que ellos también respeten el plan, y posiblemente debilitará los argumentos de quienes quieren seguir apoyando a la contra nicaraguense; entre ellos, el Presidente Reagan.

En plena guerra, provocada por el gobierno de los EE.UU., el Frente Sandinista ha invitado a la Iglesia Católica y a los once partidos políticos para formar la Comisión Nacional de Reconciliación, que vigilará el cumplimiento de los compromisos contraídos en materia de amnistía y restauración de libertades que habían sido suprimidas para proteger a la revolución de ataques de sus enemigos internos. Nicaragua además ha implementado un cese unilateral al fuego.

Otro elemento en la búsqueda de la paz en Centroamérica es el proceso revolucionario salvadoreño. En relación al acuerdo la Comandancia General del Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional (FMLN) declaró: "En El Salvador el proceso revolucionario encabezado por el FMLN no ha podido ser detenido, a pesar de los tres mil millones de dólares invertidos con ese fin por Estados Unidos a lo largo de siete años de guerra contrainsurgente. . . Son los pueblos de Nicaragua

y El Salvador, sus sacrificios y su sangre, los protagonistas principales de este importante resultado. El gobierno de Duarte no tiene capacidad para llevar adelante un verdadero proceso de democratización nacional y no ha podido resolver los actuales conflictos laborales, controlar al ejército autor de la matanza de 60 mil compatriotas.

... La democracia, la autodeterminación nacional y la paz exigen en El Salvador la formación de un gobierno de consenso nacional. Los factores principales del conflicto en Centroamérica son las profundas injusticias sociales y la intervención imperialista de Estados Unidos."

En Guatemala, el pueblo ha luchado 25 años para conquistar su soberanía nacional después de la sangrienta intervención de la CIA y la United Fruit Company que han sido los responsables directos de las desapariciones, asesinatos, masacres y otros crímenes de lesa humanidad. Ahora el gobierno de Guatemala se ve forzado a negociar con la Comandancia General de la Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) como resultado del acuerdo de Esquipulas.

La situación en Honduras, aunque todavía no se llega a un proceso revolucionario, está explosiva. La miseria y el hambre se mantienen a niveles insostenibles. El campesinado está en pié de lucha, las tomas de tierras han alcanzado proporciones masivas y el país está ocupado por tres ejércitos —

el de Honduras, el mercenario somocista y el de EE.UU.

El autor del acuerdo; Oscar Arias Sanchez, es el presidente de Costa Rica donde la situación económica no es muy diferente a los demás países de la región. Por ejemplo, como resultado de la devaluación de la moneda, los trabajadores de Costa Rica son unos de los peores pagados en todo Centroamérica y el Caribe. Costa Rica tiene una deuda externa de 4 mil millones de dólares que consume la mitad del ingreso nacional.

Aunque Arias es decididamente un anti-sandinista, al igual que los otros 3 presidentes (de Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala), el comparte las mismas ideas con estos líderes, que el objetivo del acuerdo es realmente detener el avance de los movimientos de liberación de los pueblos centroamericanos.

Apesar de la oposición de Washington a la liberación de los pueblos de Latinoamérica y los ataques directos hacia la revolución sandinista y el apoyo al ejército de Duarte para derrotar a la revolución salvadoreña, no ha sido suficiente para parar la lucha liberadora que sacude nuestro continente. Con la participación activa y revolucionaria de toda la clase obrera y de los oprimidos, Nicaragua y El Salvador vencerán y también el resto de los países del Tercer Mundo que se encuentran bajo el dominio explotador de los EE.UU.