



workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

X-523

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BRAWLEY CASE

Time passes, and New York state prosecutors seem unable to find the racists who attacked Tawana Brawley. The media talk like the assault never took place. No wonder the Brawley family wants a special prosecutor!

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NUJOMA IN U.S.

The head of SWAPO tells of defeating South African forces on the battlefield and in the mines of Namibia.

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LEONARD PELTIER

A campaign to free the imprisoned Indian leader gets new support at home and abroad.

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The Polish government has enacted economic 'reforms' that forced thousands of workers on strike. But the reforms were ordered by Western capitalist banks. How can this be? Sam Marcy analyzes the causes and consequences of the Polish crisis.

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Women workers push for broader job benefits

Fight grows for child care, pay equity to counter feminization of poverty



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See special 4-page pullout centerfold

WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

JACKSON HEADS UP LATINO PARADE

Black-Latino unity in California came through loud and clear at this year's Cinco de Mayo parade in San Francisco. The Jackson campaign also reached out to the undocumented, Palestinians and lesbians and gays.

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Retail strike in San Francisco. Union workers at Top Value and Granson's retail stores in the Mission district of San Francisco are on strike against the new owners. The two stores are long-time fixtures in the mainly Latino Mission district. The new owners are demanding deep wage cuts.

On the picket line

Head Start strike. Workers at the Suffolk, N.Y., Head Start centers have been on strike for six weeks. Almost all women, these workers are paid just \$5 to \$7 an hour to care for small children, and management has taken back the minimal wage raise they agreed to in the first union contract six months ago. Over a year ago, the workers voted in the union, AFS-CME D.C. 1707, and the contract they negotiated addressed issues of understaffing, wages and benefits, asbestos hazards and educational issues. But Head Start ripped up the contract and the strikers need labor support. Strike fund donations can be sent to: Head Start Workers Defense Fund, D.C. 1707 AFSCME, c/o Citizen Action, 221 Broadway, Amityville, N.Y. 11701.

Texas Air sues unions: It wouldn't have seemed possible, but

giant Texas Air Corp. escalated the war against labor at its Eastern Airlines unit May 6, when the company sued two unions. The Air Line Pilots and the Machinists were slapped with a \$1.5 billion lawsuit, demanding damages for "leading an illegal conspiracy to destroy" Eastern Airlines. Union leaders labeled the suit "a publicity smokescreen" designed to divert attention from widespread concern about safety in the Eastern skies. It also harks back to the days when union activities were illegal and labor organizers were thrown into jail on conspiracy charges.

Satisfaction. A much-trumpeted survey by Accountemps reported that 65% of all workers feel good about their jobs, 32% tolerate them, just 1% have negative feelings about work, and

Continued on page 10

IP union leaders prepare for coordinated action

By Phil Wilayto
Jay, Maine

"IP had a plan," United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) Local 14 President Bill Meserve told the weekly union meeting here May 4, "and that plan was 'give 'em shit, make 'em walk and then break 'em.' But the only way they can break us is if we let them break us!"

And the 3,400 striking and locked out paperworkers in Jay, Maine, Lock Haven, Pa., Mobile, Ala., and DePere, Wis., show no signs of being broken.

After reporting on the massive march and rally here April 30, which the union estimates drew as many as 10,000 supporters from 15 states and Canada, Meserve announced that UPIU local presidents would be meeting on May 23 in Memphis, Tenn.

The purpose of the meeting, he said, would be "to take some kind of coordinated action" in response to the strike, now in its 11th month. Meserve said he hoped to see a resolution passed and sent to John Georges, chairman and chief executive officer of International Paper Co. (IP), demanding a just settlement in the dispute "or pay the consequences company-wide."

Meserve said the impetus for the meeting had come from other UPIU locals that had been contacted through "Operation Outreach," a program in which the four locals on strike or lockout are reaching out directly to the workers at other IP mills to build support for the strike.

So far, 97 letters of invitation to the Memphis meeting have been mailed out. UPIU officers on the international level will not be attending.

In related strike developments, delegations from Jay, Lock Haven, Mobile and DePere will be in Denver,

Colo., on May 10 for IP's annual stockholders meeting. The paperworkers hope to confront them with the union's message.

Meanwhile, Maine Gov. John R. McKernan Jr. vetoed for the third time a bill passed by the state legislature aimed at reducing the activities of professional strikebreaking companies. Not coincidentally, 'McVeto's' brother happens to be a full-time lobbyist for the American Paper Institute in Washington, D.C.

And in Jay, IP has offered to buy the county seven more cops and two police cruisers. This attempt to extend IP's private security force into the town of Jay itself has been roundly condemned by the union. At the same time the company has bulldozed a "free-fire zone" around the mill on either side of the barbed-wire-topped chain link fence that surrounds the entire property.

Just in case there's anyone who doesn't yet despise the company to its very bones, it was reported at the union meeting that the bosses had a new proposal for the locked-out Mobile workers. Management suggested letting the union members go back to work for a week, then have the scabs go in for a week. After that the company would pick who it wanted to keep working!

Needless to say, the local rejected this gross insult along with the latest contract proposal by a margin even bigger than the last time.

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CALENDAR

NEW YORK

Sat., June 4: Major regional demonstration to show solidarity with Palestinian people and to mark the 21st year of Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Gather at 12 noon at Times Square in Manhattan. Called by Palestine Solidarity Committee. Call (212) 557-5410.

SAN FRANCISCO

Sun., May 15: The 1988 French presidential elections. Featured speaker, John Catalinotto, Workers World managing editor. Workers World Party meeting. 6 p.m. Free. At 2489 Mission #30. Call (415) 826-4828.

Sat., May 21:

"Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson: The struggle for self-determination." Featuring Monica Moorehead, national organizer for All-Peoples Congress. Also, film: "Autobiography of Malcolm X." 7:30 p.m. Donation. At Women's Building, 3543 18th St. Call (415) 826-4828.

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workers world

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Vol. 30, No.20/May 19, 1988 Closing news date: May 11, 1988

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Workers World (ISSN-0043-809X) is published weekly by WW Publishers, 46 W. 21 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10010. Business office (212) 255-0352. Editorial office: (212) 206-8222. Subscriptions: One year: \$10; six months: \$6. All letters received by Workers World become the property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or Xerox from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 46 W. 21 St., New York, N.Y. 10010.
Bundle rates available on request.

Tawana Brawley — the victim is victimized again

City, media, police and state conspire in ugly racist campaign

By Andy Stapp
New York

A little over a year ago, a bunch of racists hounded a Black man to his death in New York City for trying to buy a pizza in a "white neighborhood." They also beat two friends who were with him, nearly killing them, too.

What happened at first in the Howard Beach case was typical. The Queens District Attorney failed to obtain any indictments against the homicidal bigots. Instead he concentrated the resources of his office on investigating the victims.

This ugly but familiar scenario was ultimately exploded when thousands of angry Black people and their supporters took to the streets in protest. The Queens District Attorney went off the case, a Special Prosecutor acceptable to the Black community was appointed, and ultimately the guiltiest of the racist mob were charged, convicted and sentenced to years in prison.

It is good to remember these events in relation to what is now being done to Tawana Brawley. Last November the 16-year-old Black cheerleader from Wappingers Falls, N.Y., was found semi-conscious in a plastic bag, covered with animal excrement and KKK written on her body. She said that six white men had assaulted her, one of whom appeared to have a police badge.

Dutchess County District Attorney William Grady began an investigation, but then withdrew from the case, citing what he called a "conflict of interest." Brawley's attorneys, Alton Maddox Jr. and C. Vernon Mason, the men who had represented the Howard Beach victims, again demanded that New York Gov. Mario Cuomo appoint a Special Prosecutor.

Over the objections of the Black community Cuomo gave them Robert Abrams, a lawyer who had never tried a criminal case in his life! Immediately scandal after scandal rocked Abrams' office. One aide stole transcripts of the grand jury hearings into the Brawley case, and then attempted suicide after he was caught. Another, who was supposed to be following up leads, was nailed selling cocaine. Then someone in Abrams' office sold NBC-TV photos of Tawana Brawley's partially nude body with the racist words scrawled on her chest.

The Brawley family never accepted Robert Abrams as either willing or competent to prosecute this crime and the ugly farce his office made of it amply bore out their opinion.

Role of news media

That's where the news media come in. The racist establishment of this state needs to distract attention from what is really going on and the newspapers and TV have taken up the challenge. They have done it by making Brawley the criminal, just as they tried to do in the Howard Beach case when the victims of the mob were smeared for "being in a neighborhood where they didn't belong."

Ultimately the media lies about the Howard Beach victims were unraveled (and there were many), but it is good to recall all this when these same newspapers and TV stations are crucifying Tawana Brawley and her family.

Here's a sample. On May 4, CBS-TV breathlessly reported that Tawana Brawley couldn't have been kidnapped and attacked on Nov. 27, 1987, because she was at a party. A "witness" identified only as "G" sat in front of the camera, his face covered in a sweatshirt, telling reporter Mike Taibbi that he actually spoke with

Brawley and that she was having a fun time partying at a friend's house during the very period she was supposedly undergoing her ordeal. This story was backed up by another anonymous "witness."

The New York Post ran as its May 5 front page headline: "Kidnapped" Tawana was partying."

The report was a cruel hoax. The next day Gregory Flemming, the father of one of the two youths bribed to lie about Brawley, spoke at a midtown news conference. He said his son and a friend were paid by CBS-TV "to tell the reporter what he wanted to hear. They made it up. It was to get over for them."

Flemming said his 17-year-old son

and "G" came home after the interview "laughing and joking."

"They did not understand what was happening and what kind of position they had been put in by the reporter. (Taibbi) took them to the Burger King and some money changed hands," Flemming said. The two youths had never seen Tawana Brawley in their lives. CBS had paid them \$100 to discredit her.

Racists in power

Racism rules this state. In Dutchess County it's the Brawley case. In Brooklyn the murder by police of Juan Rodriguez. In Queens, the NAACP is accusing the district attorney of cover-

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Police let off in massacre attack on MOVE house

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

May 6 — Wayne Renfrow reacted with anger following the release of a grand jury report on the police assault on the MOVE house in 1985.

"That's the worst whitewash I've ever heard," Renfrow said. "Every act they took led to destruction and death. It seems like a political conspiracy to commit murder. Evidently Ron Castile and the grand jury are part of the conspiracy."

Renfrow's comments expressed the anger in the oppressed communities rekindled by the report released this week by District Attorney Ronald D. Castile.

The report exonerated all city officials and police involved in the May 13, 1985, massive police assault and fire bombing. The assault ended with six children and five adults from the MOVE house burned to death and 61 homes destroyed, including Renfrow's.

Though the assault was an international example of police terror and racism, after two years of investigation involving over 125 witnesses to the 20-member grand jury panel, no one was charged with the crimes.

In fact, the report concluded: "Our investigation has revealed considerable incompetence and ineptitude. It has not, however, disclosed any actions which we believe warrant the filing of criminal charges."

Anger over the grand jury findings was fueled by the decision to exonerate two former policemen, Officer William Klein and Sgt. Edward Connor, of any crime. These two concealed their use of the military explosive C-4 in the bomb which started the blaze when dropped on the MOVE house. Then they lied to the grand jury about the C-4.

The grand jury described the coverup and lying to be "asinine behavior," but failed to even call for a minimum charge of perjury.

The grand jury report also revealed that C-4 was contained in charges that were used "like hand grenades" by the police against the house throughout the day prior to dropping the bomb on the roof.

The report contained testimony that former Police Commissioner Gregore J. Sambor told Klein, who was preparing the bomb for assault, to "use frag and shrapnel . . . if you have to, to get them" and that Sambor also was the first to suggest letting the resulting fire burn out of control.

Community protests report

The grand jury report drew immediate fire from numerous oppressed community representatives, activists, and religious and political leaders, including members of the 1986 mayor's

MOVE Commission.

Julia Chinn, one of the MOVE Commissioner members, said, "We know 11 people died on May 13, 1985. How can they say no one should be penalized for it?"

This obvious injustice has led to renewed calls for and a petition drive to demand the release of Ramona Africa, the only person to be jailed in the aftermath of the bombing. Africa, a MOVE resident found guilty of conspiracy and riot charges and imprisoned in 1986, has been denied parole three times.

MOVE commissioners and attorneys also disputed District Attorney

Castile's report that there was no evidence that police kept on firing after the blaze started. This firing prevented MOVE members and children from leaving the burning house.

A press conference was held on May 5, led by long-time civil rights activist Rev. Paul Washington and attended by community, religious and educational leaders to denounce the grand jury's conclusions.

Rev. Richard Fernandez, executive director of the Northwest Interfaith Movement, compared the 1985 assault on MOVE to the massacre of civilians at My Lai during the war against

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Nevada military plant explosion — a disaster waiting to happen

By Ron Holladay
San Francisco

Many workers and residents feared they had been caught in a nuclear blast on May 4 when huge explosions leveled a Pacific Engineering rocket fuel plant and a nearby marshmallow plant in Henderson, Nev., ten miles from Las Vegas.

While this horrible accident was given major media coverage, none of the press have pointed out that the blasts could have been avoided. In fact, responsibility for the accident rests squarely on the shoulders of the greedy plant owners who refused to remedy unsafe conditions, and the Reagan administration which has gutted the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the government agency which is supposed to make bosses live up to safety standards.

Equally to blame is the military-industrial complex, which is racing to get weapons into space no matter what the cost in lives and property.

What happened? At least 210 people, mostly workers, were injured, and the vice president of operations, Bruce Halker, was killed when the blasts created a 400-foot crater. All twelve buildings in the nine-acre area were totally leveled.

Dozens of workers were knocked off their feet and 3,000-pound cars were flipped over like toys more than one mile from the blast. A smoke-filled crater with twisted girders and burned and overturned cars were all that were left of the plant sites.

Billowing clouds of toxic chlorine gas and smoke stretched for miles, endangering thousands. The rippling blast showed up on seismographs in Pasadena, more than 200 miles away.

Pacific Engineering is one of two plants in the U.S. that manufactures

ammonium perchlorate rocket fuel. Despite having been cited ten times for safety hazards in the last 5 years, the plant was allowed to continue operating.

An accident waiting to happen

The workers knew that this plant was an accident waiting to happen. Angelo Liberatore, safety inspector for the United Steelworkers of America, the union which represents the workers at Pacific Engineering, documented more than 250 safety violations in a letter to the company more than six years ago.

He called the plant "one of the worst I have ever been into. I cannot understand how this plant has not been blown off the face of the earth, given the product it manufactures."

Kevin Williams, a packer in the batch dryer where the fire that led to the explosion started, said he had helped put out two rocket fuel fires in the plant in the last few months. Another worker said there was no alarm system and that people survived only through sheer good luck.

Ammonium perchlorate fuels almost all military solid fuel rockets including the MX missile with multiple hydrogen bomb warheads. Part of the big bang when the space shuttle Challenger exploded came from this same solid fuel. Workers said that it is so delicate in finished form that it could easily explode if dropped or handled roughly.

The explosions at Pacific Engineering underscore the fact that job safety is an issue for all of labor and for the community as well. The indifference of Pacific Engineering, Washington and the military-industrial complex to the obvious dangers at this Nevada plant makes it clear that only when working people are in charge will there be safe working conditions.

Nat'l conference highlights freedom for Leonard Peltier

'He is the single most important Indian of our epoch'

By Bob Gustafson
and Leslie Feinberg
Philadelphia

May 7 — After 32 days in the "hole" in Leavenworth prison, American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier was released from isolation last week.

However, Peltier still remains in the maximum security wing of that prison.

An Anishnabe/Lakota warrior, Pel-

tier is serving two consecutive life terms for the deaths of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1975, even though an FBI ballistics test proved that the bullets which killed the agents were not fired from his gun.

"Leonard Peltier is the single most important Indian of this century. He is the single most important Indian of our epoch," said Russ Redner, director of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, at an all-day national confer-

ence on Peltier's case held in Philadelphia on May 7.

Redner stressed the importance of Peltier's supporters continuing to stay in contact with him by mail and to press forward with outreach, education and organizing work to win his freedom. "This is particularly important during non-crisis times," Redner added.

A struggle for justice

"Leonard Peltier, in fact all Native prisoners, are my sons," declared Ellen Moves Camp, a traditional Lakota elder from Pine Ridge who has been in the forefront of the American Indian Movement since the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973. Moves Camp detailed the history of FBI abuse against the struggle of traditional Native people.

Other speakers included Nilak Butler, an Inuit woman who was eyewitness to the government shoot-out at Pine Ridge, a long-time AIM activist, and organizer for the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; local activist Billy Tayac, Chief of the Piscataway Nation and respected AIM spokesperson; attorney William Kunstler; author Peter Matthiessen; and others.

Speaker after speaker referred to the consistent support from the Soviet Union for Peltier's struggle, ranging from telegrams to the 18 million signatures on petitions by the Soviet people demanding his release.

A Native delegation will be traveling from this country to the upcoming Gorbachev-Reagan summit conference to spotlight the human rights abuse that Peltier's case symbolizes. Redner concluded that the Soviets "want to meet with the indigenous people of this continent, not the Rea-

gans, because they know Reagan lies."

To reach Peltier, write: Leonard Peltier, #89637-132, P.O. Box 1000, Leavenworth, Kan. 66048. For more information on how you can help, write: International Office of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, P.O. Box 10044, Kansas City, Mo. 64111-0044.

Minn. students support Anishnabe takeover

The Council of Indian Students at Bemidji University in northern Minnesota organized a walk of 75 people on May 7 to travel to the Ojibway People for Justice Camp at Leech Lake, Minn. The Camp was set up after Anishnabe people were forcibly removed from Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) headquarters after a one-week occupation protesting attempts by the puppet executive committee to give away their land and treaty rights to the U.S. government and landowners.

The eviction of the protesters was carried out by county cops and state troopers who have no jurisdiction on sovereign Anishnabe territory. Ten people were arrested and charged with trespassing on their own land!

Joined by the students who had walked 15 miles, 150 people feasted together at the camp. Four Wisconsin treaty rights groups, three of which are non-Native, are supporting the camp. Hunger Action has provided tents and food. If you can help, contact Richard Bellecourt, Anishnabe Akeeng (People's Land), Box 356, White Earth, Minn. 56591, or call (218) 983-3741.

Native sovereignty affirmed in Dine adoption case

By Bob Gustafson
and Leslie Feinberg

A Santa Clara Superior Court judge in California ruled last month that under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 the sovereign Dine (Navajo) Nation has jurisdiction over any adoptions involving Dine children.

The case involved Allyssa Keetso, who was given up by her mother to a white couple, Rick and Cheryl Pitts, for adoption in violation of the Dine tribal jurisdiction under the 1978 act. The case was resolved when Allyssa was given over to the custody of her grandmother, Susie Keetso, to be returned to the Dine reservation in Arizona.

For more than a century Native children have been stolen from their people by government agencies and missionaries to be put in boarding schools and sometimes put up for adoption with white couples. Scores of traditional Native parents have risked jail to hide their children from this officially sanctioned kidnapping.

The recent adoption case is the defeat of yet one more attempt to continue the genocidal war on Native people. Electronic and print media, without exception, gave it sensational, virulently anti-Native coverage that was openly sympathetic with the white parents and completely ignored the law involved which firmly establishes that Native nations have jurisdiction over all adoption proceedings concerning their children.

In sharp contrast to the anti-Native media coverage, a statement of support issued by all Native organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as a news conference on this issue they held received little or no media attention. Their statement, which represents a consensus of the Native community in the Bay Area reached during three days of meetings at the American Indian Center, characterized this case as "an emergency and crisis situation" because of the tone of, and inaccuracies in, the media coverage "which contribute to racial misconceptions about American Indian people."

"We deplore the inflammatory journalism that has been exhibited at all levels of the media in this issue. It is reminiscent of the racist, yellow journalism that has been used historically to incite political positions against American Indian issues, that has resulted in the loss of our lives, lands, resources, cultures, water and, especially, our children."

"We support the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation," the statement continues, "and the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. We demand that private adoption agencies and adoption law firms fulfill their obligations to comply with the federal Indian Child Welfare Act."

The statement concludes, "We finally want to express our concern and our love for our Indian brothers and sisters who have been adopted out and who now anguish over the loss of culture and identity."

BP strikers in Philadelphia applaud South Africa boycott

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

May 1 — Members of British Petroleum (BP) Local 8-234 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW), on strike since Feb. 3, welcomed a South African union organizer here today applauding her call for a worldwide boycott of BP products.

Nomonde Ngubo, a founder of the South African National Union of Miners and currently an international representative of the United Mine Workers of America, described her country's brutal exploitation of Black mine workers, who are paid just \$250 a month and are not even allowed to live with their families for eleven months out of the year. BP and Shell Oil, despite a United Nations oil embargo since 1977, "fuel the military vehicles that break strikes" in South Africa. Ngubo applauded OCAW's solidarity with and participation in the international boycott of Shell Oil and BP Oil.

She explained to a crowd of 100 BP

strikers that "slave labor conditions in other parts of the world threaten your bargaining power here," especially if you work for a corporation like BP, which maintains global operations.

Local 8-234 at the Marcus Hook refinery just outside Philadelphia refuses to accept company demands for a 50% cutback in sick pay and reductions in overtime pay and other premium rates. The 345 workers are joined by two other striking BP plants — a Toledo, Ohio, refinery and a Lima, Ohio, chemical plant, all over the same issues.

On April 25, Jesse Jackson spoke to a crowd of several hundred people at a picket line rally at Marcus Hook. Jackson charged that BP is making large profits but is still demanding concessions from workers and "that's not fair!"

BP is the third largest oil company in the world, with revenues of \$2.65 billion in the U.S. alone. It's characteristic of this notorious conglomerate that it also supports and profits from apartheid in South Africa.



WW PHOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

Mothers Day caravan in Washington.

Mother's Day caravan highlights int'l struggles against oppression

By Jarmila Dokladalova
Washington

When we think of Mother's Day, we often picture a nice, warm day spent at home with the children. The mother may get a few gifts and cards. But we don't think of it as a day of political protest. Or do we?

Today, on Mother's Day, over fifty cars took part in a colorful car caravan which drew widespread attention as it made its way past almost a dozen institutions and embassies which are all symbols of oppression. The destination of the caravan was the South African embassy where a demonstration

was already taking place.

The car caravan was planned by the International Women's Committee in order to give an organized expression to the important role women have been playing in the struggle for liberation both in the U.S. and abroad. The leading vehicle invited everyone to join for "a Mother's Day (and every day) without apartheid, racism, oppression, poverty and war."

For the second target, the caravan headed uptown to the secluded Israeli embassy. No one could miss the chants of "Reagan, you should know, we support the PLO!" and "Stop killing

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AIDS Action Week protests crisis

The first week in May was designated AIDS Action Week by AIDS activists around the country, to focus attention on the crisis. Highlights of the week of demonstrations and activities follow.

• On Thursday, May 5 — Cinco De Mayo — a picketline co-sponsored by the Latino Aids Coalition and AIDS Action Pledge at the San Francisco office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service demanded: no mandatory HIV testing or exclusion of immigrants or visitors, open the borders, and U.S. out of Central America.

• Ten thousand people, mostly lesbian and gay, marched on the California State Capitol in Sacramento on May 7, despite pouring rain. During the rally, Michael Dukakis's son John tried to defend his father's notorious opposition to lesbian and gay parenting in Massachusetts. He was nearly jeered off the stage. Jesse Jackson got the opposite reaction as the crowd overwhelmingly cheered for the only candidate of either party who consistently supports lesbian and gay rights and action on AIDS.

• Sunday, May 8, hundreds of activists were back on the Capitol steps at Sacramento drawing chalk outlines of bodies — including babies — and writing in the names of some of the over 7,000 Californians who have died of AIDS. They then staged a "die-in" to draw attention to the life-and-death urgency of pending AIDS-related legislation at the state level.

Then on Monday, May 9, 40 people were arrested when they returned to Sacramento, this time for a sit-in at Gov. George Deukmejian's office. The protesters demanded the governor rescind his veto of the state gay rights bill. Other demands were for quality health care for people with AIDS, an AIDS education and prevention program, an end to violence against women, and recognition of the sanctity of lesbian and gay relationships.

• Saturday, May 7 over 150 lesbians, gay men and their supporters marched through the streets of downtown Cleveland. With great spirit and determination the demonstrators demanded massive funding to end the AIDS epidemic, money for healthcare not warfare, and emphasized the need to keep HIV antibody testing voluntary and anonymous. Speakers attacked not only the Reagan administration but also the Democratic governor of Ohio for withholding much-needed funding to fight AIDS. Everybody at the protest vowed to fight on

against homophobia and racism.

• The AIDS Action Committee sponsored a picketline at Detroit Receiving Hospital on Saturday, May 7. The hospital, which houses an AIDS Treatment and Evaluation Center, was targeted for demands for the release of promising drugs for AIDS treatment.

• On Wednesday, May 4, in New York City 300 AIDS activists distributed 10,000 leaflets and 3,000 condoms at a Mets game at Shea Stadium. The response was great! During the game protesters unfurled large banners reading, "AIDS kills women," "Strike out AIDS," and "No glove, no love!"

• Five to six hundred people marched and rallied Saturday, May 7, at the State Capitol in Albany, N.Y., to demand that the state of New York designate AIDS as the number one priority there. Demonstrators pressed the government to call a state of emergency and address the issues of AIDS in a frank, sex-positive, non-homophobic way with literature that speaks in the languages of the communities affected.

• The week of "fight back, fight AIDS" activities in Washington, D.C., opened May 1 with more than 300 at a rally and speakout against homophobia in Du Pont Circle. On May 7, a spirited march from the Capitol to the White House was held. Ten people were arrested for blocking Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The week's events were sponsored by OUT! (Oppression Under Target).

Reporting by: Sherry Finkelman, Leslie Feinberg, Judy Greenspan, Saul Kanowitz, Joan Marquardt, Susan Schnur.



WW PHOTO: PETER KIMBALL

Chicago

By P. Kimball
Chicago

One hundred demonstrators from the Chicago area targeted the LyphoMed corporation in suburban Rosemont on May 7, attacking its price-gouging policies by which it profits off the death and suffering of people with AIDS.

Ten were arrested for criminal trespass after they went onto LyphoMed's lawn to plant heart-shaped placards bearing the names of people who have died of AIDS. Under the Orphan Drug Act, LyphoMed has a federally guaranteed monopoly on the U.S. sale of pentamidine. This drug is used to treat pneumocystis pneumonia, which kills more people with AIDS than any other condition.

LyphoMed did not invent pentamidine, nor do they manufacture it. They are middlemen who repackage the drug and sell it for a 1000% markup. Since 1984 they have raised the price from \$24.95 to \$99.45 a vial, quadrupling the price although the cost to them has remained constant.

During this same period, LyphoMed's annual profits have gone from \$2.3 million in 1983 to \$21 million in 1987.

LyphoMed has been very worried about the bad publicity it has gotten (including federal sanctions for sloppy manufacturing practices). It went so far as to dismantle the company sign on its front lawn in the week before the protest, leaving a skeletal framework, apparently in the fear it would appear on television.

Trying to get activists to call off the protest, a LyphoMed representative even promised, "We can see that your friends get the drug!"



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

Detroit

Congress still fiddling in face of AIDS epidemic

By Saul Kanowitz
New York

The Senate recently passed a bill allocating \$1 billion to fund AIDS research and care. The bill put a \$590 million ceiling on AIDS education, treatment and care. It calls for \$400 million to be spent on research toward finding a vaccine.

The Senate has approved less than \$2 billion over the last two years to fight AIDS. This stands in sharp contrast to other programs the Senate has funded. While the Senate waited seven years after the start of the epidemic to pass an AIDS bill, it has rushed \$10 billion to the Star Wars nuclear nightmare boondoggle since 1983.

This funding bill comes as revelations have surfaced of criminal neglect by Congress in allocating resources to end the epidemic. Testifying in Congress, Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, said his agency concluded it needed 127 additional staff members to handle the AIDS crisis for the current fiscal

year. It was allotted 11 staff members.

In the midst of these disclosures, the Senate (sometimes referred to in Washington as the Millionaires Club) showed its anti-gay and anti-poor makeup by reaffirming an amendment to last year's bill sponsored by Jesse Helms. The amendment bars funding of "educational, informational or risk-reduction materials or activities to promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activity." When an attempt to veto the bill was made, less than a quarter of the Senate opposed this bigoted life-threatening amendment. The bill also calls for mandatory HIV testing of people convicted of sex and drug crimes.

While Sen. Kennedy, one of the sponsors of the bill, falsely proclaimed, "Finally, we have declared war on the virus and not on the victims," it is apparent to the thousands of people with AIDS, their families, lovers and friends that the solution to the AIDS epidemic isn't going to come from Congress. It will only come from the struggle.



WW PHOTO: JOAN MARQUARDT

Gloria La Riva and Larry Holmes, WWP candidates for White House.

Before an audience of 75 people at the Women's Building, Holmes explained the basis of WWP's support for the Jackson campaign, and defended the right of oppressed people to self-determination. His remarks were warmly applauded.

The debate was videotaped to be aired on public access cable TV sometime before the June 7 primary.

WW PHOTO: SHELLEY ETTINGER

Albany, N.Y.

WW PHOTO: JOAN MARQUARDT

Sacramento, Calif.

Atlanta

By Tom Doran
Atlanta

Thirteen hundred people in Georgia have died from AIDS, the eighth largest state total. Government spending per case is less than 35 other states. The percentage of Georgia AIDS victims who are Black has more than tripled in the last year.

Activists led by AID Atlanta publicized these and other facts at an overnight vigil at the state capitol on May 7. The vigil ended a week-long series of events calling for increased funding for health care and social services for people with AIDS.

Speakers denounced the inaction of the recent session of the Georgia legislature. Conservative politicians and Christian hate groups led a hysteria campaign resulting in a bill requiring testing of prisoners and certain job applicants along with anyone else who is singled out by a court order. No funds were provided for public education or social services.

The vigil ended with a rally of more than 100 people.

WWP's Larry Holmes says 'Support Jackson' at Bay Area debate

By Jane Cutter
San Francisco

May 6 — Support for the Jackson movement and the struggle against racism were the focus of Workers World Party presidential candidate Larry Holmes' remarks today as he spoke at two events in San Francisco.

Holmes participated in a debate sponsored by the Peace and Freedom Party, a ballot-qualified socialist party in California. Workers World Party is participating in the June PFP primary, and is one of six contenders on the Peace and Freedom Party ballot in California. Five of the candidates involved were in tonight's debate.

It is virtually prohibitive for third-party candidates to gain ballot access in California, as over 100,000 valid signatures are required. In recent elections, candidates who successfully collected almost twice that amount have been denied access through technicalities.

A look behind the hype of immigration 'reform'

By Teresa Gutierrez
Houston

Midnight, May 4, was the deadline for the amnesty provision of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (better known as the Simpson-Rodino act because of its authors). The deadline for the so-called amnesty came and went amidst a wave of propaganda about the historic legalization of masses of undocumented workers in this country.

From the day this bill was passed into law in 1986, a cloud of confusion, distrust and misinformation lay on the community. Not only did immigrants and their advocates have limitless questions, but even members of the ruling class were unclear on how to enforce this law.

Upon its passage, this historic immigration "reform" was but one more racist, anti-worker, repressive measure emanating from the White House. Although ruling class propaganda made it appear that this law was a benevolent one that would legalize millions of undocumented, loophole after loophole showed otherwise.

A green light for discrimination

In addition, the law would for the first time in U.S. history penalize the employer for knowingly hiring undocumented workers, giving a green

light to the bosses to discriminate against Third World workers in particular.

As the deadline for applying for amnesty closed May 4, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) heralded the tremendous success of the first phase of the legislation. Page after page in the press created an image of millions happily entering the outstretched arms of the INS, that so many undocumented were coming out from the "shadows" and would finally be in this country "legally."

Undocumented workers, the law says, who entered the U.S. after Jan. 1, 1982, were eligible to apply for amnesty and would be issued resident status. Workers had until midnight, May 4, to gather up the necessary documentation to show continued residence since 1982 and to raise the required fee for the application.

The fee itself became a deterrent for many as individuals were charged \$185, with families paying up to \$420. Total costs, however, ran much higher. One worker paid \$800 for his total amnesty application, paying \$300 each for two affidavits from his employer. A farmworker and his family spent almost \$2,000 for the legalization process!

And while implications are that millions will now be residing here legally, in effect the amnesty program affects

only a third of the undocumented in this country. INS estimates that 1.5 million will be legalized out of the 3.9 million that are estimated to be eligible. In effect, the obstacle that kept the majority of immigrants from applying is the tremendous fear of harassment and/or deportation and separation of families by the INS.

The 1.5 million figure, however, is the number of those who actually applied. It is not known how many of those will become legal. Many thousands submitted applications on the last day and, according to a Houston INS director, up to 40% of the last minute applications could be turned down, bringing the estimated number of those legalized down.

Many more were made ineligible because of the misinformation put out by INS, declaring certain sectors of undocumented (such as those on public assistance) as ineligible. There are currently a number of suits in court that are fighting many such irregularities.

One of the main criticisms of Simpson-Rodino has been that it automatically excludes the more than 1 million Central American refugees in this country. Virtually all the refugees from war-torn areas such as El Salvador and Guatemala arrived after the cutoff date of Jan. 1, 1982, making them ineligible. This major loophole amounts to an intentional repressive measure for all those who flee the U.S.-backed wars against the people of Central America.

Vast abuses by the government

At a recent conference called by the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, over 200 delegates described the effects the new law was having on the undocumented. One immigrant advocate described the law as a complete failure.

The conference reported on abuse after abuse. Hundreds and hundreds of workers have been dismissed from their jobs since Simpson-Rodino became law. At least 20 Mexicans were shot at by Border Patrol officers in California and Texas. Some farmworkers had their documents for legalization confiscated by border officials and others were ordered to go back to Mexico and apply there even though the law specifically says that is not required.

These facts and more that are still to be documented quickly dispel the myth currently promoted by the ruling class. An INS director in Houston stated that through an intense public relations effort the INS had managed

to change its image from a "secretive police agency" to a more "people-orientated service."

The vast number of Central American refugees made ineligible for amnesty could immediately be deported and many have already been fired from their jobs. Many other immigrants have reported being dismissed after seeking letters from employers. Workers with Spanish or Asian names, regardless of their immigration status, have been unduly questioned by their bosses. Advocates also reported that bosses have threatened to call INS if the workers joined a union.

Starting May 5, the INS threw all its efforts into enforcing employer sanctions. Sanctions for those who hire the undocumented, which includes fines of up to \$10,000 for each offense, begin June 1. Legally, workers who have held their jobs since before the law was passed on Nov. 6, 1986, cannot be fired.

This second major provision of the Simpson-Rodino law has been highly criticized. Throughout the history of the movement against immigration reform, employer sanctions have been denounced as a racist measure to harass anyone who is "foreign-looking." This has brought untold discrimination against Latino and Black workers in particular, even those born here. Immigration advocates have begun to gather the necessary evidence to begin a fight to repeal this provision.

However, even with all the problems, the winning of legal status by a limited number of undocumented workers should be considered a victory for the entire working class. It will give them the opportunity to integrate into a workforce that is undergoing phenomenal changes brought on by the scientific-technological revolution going on in this country that promises to bring great struggles ahead.

At the same time, Simpson-Rodino has obscured facts that are vital to remember. It is the greedy transnational U.S. corporations that force millions to flee the economically devastated and war-torn countries of the Third World. A genuine immigration reform would grant immediate unconditional legalization and full rights to all workers, no matter when they came into this country. It would penalize the bosses, alright — but for propping up a system that uses the highly exploited immigrant labor at its whim. And it would declare that there are absolutely no borders in the workers' struggle against exploitation and oppression.

Jesse Jackson grand marshal at Cinco de Mayo parade

By Gloria La Riva
San Francisco

May 7 — Threats to cut funding to the Cinco de Mayo parade because of Jesse Jackson's planned role as grand marshal drew even more supporters to enthusiastically greet the presidential candidate in today's festive procession in the Latino Mission district.

The parade organizers, community activists in the Mission and many Jackson supporters noted that local, state and national politicians have led the annual parade before, and they would not back down from having Jackson lead this year's event.

The NAACP also issued a complaint to protest this blatant attack on the Jackson campaign. San Francisco Chapter President Lulann McGriff told the city's chief administrative officer, Rudy Nothenberg, "I find it ironic that no question has ever been raised when white politicians, who have aspired for . . . offices, have ridden in parades. But when a Black civil rights worker who happens to be a politician is invited to participate, the rules are changed."

Mass pressure and publicity forced the city to finally agree to grant the funds.

Cinco de Mayo is a major Mexican holiday that is also celebrated in Mexican/Chicano communities throughout the U.S. The anniversary marks a decisive victory by the Mexican people, led by President Benito Juarez, against French emperor Napoleon III's forces at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. The 6,000-member French army was considered the strongest in the world at the time.

Five years later, the French marched on Mexico City and installed Maximilian as emperor. They dominated some cities, but were never able to put down the Mexican people's insurgency in rural areas. In 1867, Napoleon III was forced to remove his troops.

The parade began at 20th and Mission, and continued through the head of the Mission on 24th Street, for an



WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Jesse Jackson in San Francisco.

all-day festival at La Raza Park. When the parade was stopped briefly so Jackson could address the crowd at 24th and Mission, thousands of Latinos and other supporters cheered him on. Many in the crowd were undocumented workers, unable to express their support for Jackson by voting, but just as enthusiastic about his candidacy. One undocumented worker from Mexico told this reporter in Spanish, "Jesse Jackson will help us. He is the only one who defends us."

Among the groups greeting Jackson along the way were Palestinians carrying "Arab-Americans for Jackson" posters, the All-Peoples Congress and a Labor for Jackson contingent.

Earlier in the day, Jackson spoke to hundreds of people in the Black community of Bayview District, urging his supporters to vote for him on June 7, the California primary. After the Cinco de Mayo parade, he flew by helicopter to Sacramento to support 10,000 lesbian and gay marchers in the Spring AIDS Action demonstration.

Disabled students win concession at U. of Georgia

Special to Workers World
Atlanta

Disabled students at the University of Georgia in Athens gained two concessions from school administrators after a protest April 24. Officials agreed to move the "Handicapped Services" office from an inaccessible building and formed a task force including disabled students to resolve other problems.

David Bliss, a 19-year-old freshman, left his wheelchair during the rally and crawled up the stairs of the administration building. He hoped to present a list of demands to Dwight Douglas, UGA's vice president for student affairs. Douglas sent an assistant to receive the demands.

Students are doubtful about university promises. "Those are only words," said senior Warren Groves. "I'm not

going to be railroaded and I'm not going to be sidelined." Groves explained that students have waited for a decade for fulfillment of a 1977 plan to expand services to disabled students and to make the campus fully accessible.

Protesters spoke for the 400 disabled students on the 26,000-student campus. Another issue has resulted in a discrimination complaint to the federal Department of Education. Students who use the school's clinic for learning disabilities are currently charged \$600 per year for services such as tutoring and providing books on tape. Officials have announced the charge will increase to \$1800 next fall.

Beth Bailey uses the clinic to overcome the problems of dysgraphia which makes writing difficult. She met with five different administrators before mailing the federal complaint on April 18.

Stories of organizing, fighting and winning

Eight women's views

On May 17, just three days after tens of thousands of working women, their families and supporters gather in Washington, D.C., another critically important event will take place.

That's the day of a key union election at Harvard University. Some 3,700 office and lab workers — 80% of them women — will vote on representation by AFSCME. If the workers win, it will be the biggest labor victory yet among university workers.

The central issues in the union drive are childcare, wages, pensions and benefits, and pay equity.

The Harvard example shows the only possible direction for the working women's movement: organizing, unity and struggle.

Take it to the streets

Workers and their families need decent wages, benefits, housing, childcare, health-care, education, retirement — all the demands raised on May 14 — and more. Beating back racism, protecting reproductive rights, defending lesbian mothers, raising the minimum wage, ending AIDS, gaining pay equity, defeating homelessness and hunger — all are equally labor's fight.

And **fighting** is the only way to win. On picketlines, in sitdowns, sit-ins, marches and rallies, at the plant gates and capitol buildings — in the streets by the tens and hundreds of thousands — working and poor people united can build a powerful movement that can win the real gains desperately needed by so many.

- ➡ Nearly ten million women and men work for the minimum wage of \$3.35 per hour. (New York State Assembly Labor Committee)
- ➡ Between 1979 and 1986, income for the poorest one-fifth of U.S. families fell while it steadily rose for the richest. For every \$1.00 lost by poor families, almost \$10 was added at the top. (New York Times, May 1, 1988)
- ➡ Nine million women with children under age six work outside the home. But only 3,000 of the six million companies in the U.S. provide any childcare assistance, and just a fraction of that is actual material benefits. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

According to a recent Louis Harris poll, 87% of people in this country want the federal government to fund long-term home healthcare for the chronically ill and disabled people. Support is equally strong for pending Senate bills raising the minimum wage and establishing a right to (unpaid) parental and family illness leave.

But the right wing and big business have mobilized against these modest measures. They won't give up one penny of the money they funnel to Star Wars — not unless they're forced to.

They can be forced, and the working class can go on to win even bigger victories.

Workers and the oppressed have a right to better lives for their families — **all** their families — Black, Latino, Asian, Native, Arab and white, gay and straight.

The struggle will bring that better life. On May 14 in Washington, D.C., that — the struggle — is the only thing worth celebrating.

Shelley Ettinger



Women, families and the fight for the future

By Gavrielle Gemma

Like a burning ember finally bursting into flame — at first a small flare but on its way to a full-scale blaze — the coming together on May 14 of women workers and supporters to demand desperately needed childcare, health services, parental leave, pay equity and higher wages may begin a long-awaited battle.

The situation is urgent for millions of working and poor women and their families who face dismal poverty or can barely make ends meet. Weighed down by the daily grind and worries about surviving, they have little opportunity for happiness or to pursue in their lives all the great ideas and interests of which working women are so capable.

Millions of women, both working and unemployed, live a life of constant insecurity and fear about how they will pay for their next meal, rent, doctor's bills, children's needs.

In families where there is more than one adult,

both must work to survive. In a city like New York, astronomical rents mean two or three families are forced to live together. The bosses are trying to bring back homework, forcing women and children to toil all day and night in their homes for piecework pay. And more and more child labor is again rearing its ugly head.

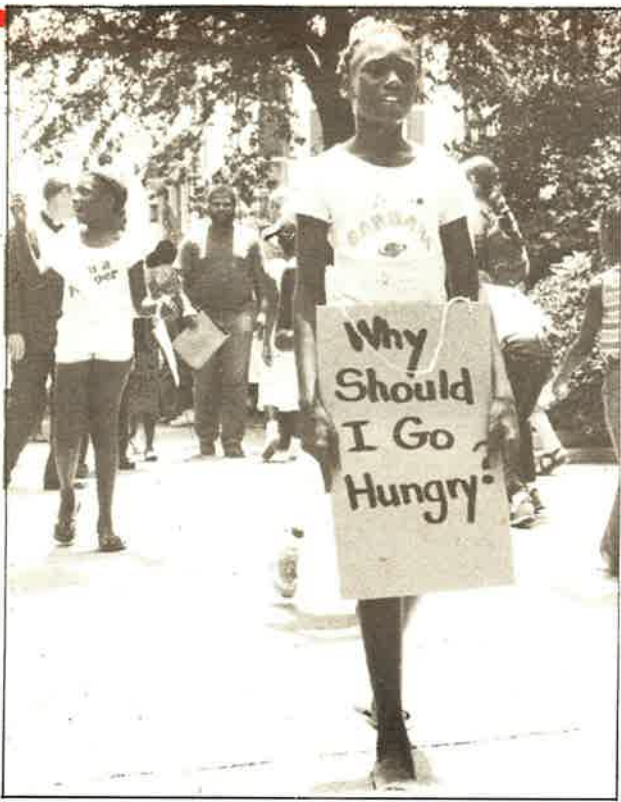
Capitalism destroys families

The family structure in the U.S. has been altered drastically by changes in production and the economic realities those changes have brought. Less than eight percent of families in this country today are comprised of a working husband, wife at home and children.

The shape of families is more often determined by economic necessity than by some archaic social notion of the "ideal" family.

And it is the capitalist ruling class that is respon-

Continued on page S4



Atlanta Welfare Rights demonstration. WW PHOTO

Labor: Defend lesbian & gay families

By Shelley Ettinger
Steering Committee, Lesbian and Gay Labor Network

Karen Thompson and Sharon Kowalski are lovers. But they haven't seen each other in more than three years.

Their family has been tragically torn apart in a way that painfully shows the material reality of lesbian and gay oppression in the U.S.

After Kowalski was severely injured in a car accident that left her a quadriplegic, her parents got a court order making them her legal custodians and barring her lover from caring for her or having any contact with her at all — despite the fact that Kowalski, when she was still able to communicate soon after the accident, told Thompson she loved her and wanted to be with her.

Ever since, Karen Thompson has been waging a legal and political fight, supported by the lesbian and gay movement and the disabled people's move-

ment, for Kowalski's right to be reunited with her in the family they want to be together.

Parents, workers, children

By the most conservative estimates based on studies in the 1950s, there are at least 24 million lesbians and gay men in this country. Living singly and in couples, with friends and children and lovers, in cities and in the country, lesbian and gay workers and their families need the same benefits as the rest of their class sisters and brothers.

But gay families have no legal status. These parents and children and lovers have no access to any family-related rights or benefits.

And unlike heterosexuals, lesbians and gay men **cannot** get their relationships sanctioned or recognized by the state, at least not yet in the U.S. So even if they're in jobs with good union benefits, they have no way to take advantage of that.

If you're a lesbian raising your lover's children with her, you can't get dental coverage for them. If you're a gay man and your lover has AIDS, he can't be covered by your health insurance.

And if he dies, you can't even get paid days off to attend his funeral and express your grief.

If you're a lesbian or gay teenager, don't expect any positive, supportive educational or social services. If you're a gay elder, just try dealing with Medicare, Social Security or your pension plan as part of a gay couple.

In fits and starts, the labor movement has finally begun to take up the struggle for lesbian and

Hunger, homelessness and welfare hotels — This situation is no comedy

By Jelayne Miles

Remember the great television wives of yesteryear?

Wow, that Donna Reed really knew how to keep her family together. And Beaver's mom — wonderful woman! What was her name? June?

The way they sailed through being mother to the children, children for the husbands, keeping the mansions spotless and all the while in full makeup and evening gowns. Truly incredible.

Never was there a thought of where the rent or mortgage payment was coming from. Or money for food, doctor bills or tuition. Assorted "Dears" already had all that under control.

In fact, the only time money ever came up was in deciding whether the kids should have to "work" toward a new car, new champion frog (Beaver), and so on. But of course, these were only questions of principle. Money was never the real issue. "Dear" made all those decisions anyway.

Yes, the TV moms really gave working and oppressed women, particularly single mothers, a model to hold up high and say — "I do not now, nor have I ever known anyone even remotely like that!"

Real life: SROs and welfare hotels

Off screen, real mothers with real families face a very different picture.

One in five families in the U.S. are single-parent families headed by women. The average yearly wage for women workers is only \$13,000. Some 1.8 million single mothers who work make minimum wage — \$3.35 per hour. The median yearly income

of families headed by working women with children under age six is just \$9,913.00! (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

In New York City alone, single-room-occupancy (SRO) hotels are filled to the rafters with single mothers and their children. Thousands more live in so-called welfare hotels.

Conditions in both are desperate; these families are forced to live a miserable existence in dirty, unsafe rooms without cooking or cleaning facilities. Children have nowhere to play. And the racist management of these hotels heap abuse on the oppressed residents.

Tens of thousands more live in fear and insecurity, just barely getting by on welfare payments and food stamps, expecting at any time to be slashed from the public assistance rolls like tens of thousands have been since 1982.

For women of oppressed nationalities, confronting racism is an added load that must be carried with all the others. Black, Latina, Asian and Native women trying to survive and feed and protect their kids under the most difficult conditions also endure the bitter irony of being portrayed by the media and government as the cause, instead of the victims, of the problems of poverty, homelessness and hunger.

Even for women with jobs, making a steady though seldom decent wage, the threat of layoffs and givebacks is ever present. Daily, the gap between women who have it a little better and those who are unemployed or homeless shrinks. Bonds of solidarity are formed both on the basis of sisterhood and class, as struggles unfold.

Many fronts in
working women

Women workers demand

By Kathy Durkin

A key ingredient to a comprehensive healthcare, worker's and women's rights program is the guarantee of reproductive rights for all women.

When women won the right to safe, legal abortion in 1973, it was an important step forward. It meant that millions of women would no longer be forced to seek the unsafe, illegal abortions that had caused thousands of permanent injuries and untold deaths.

And it meant that accessible women's health centers and clinics were established where abortions could be performed safely at reasonable cost. The guarantee of Medicaid funds for abortions was also important so that poor women could exercise this right.

The right wing set out to overturn this right in order to set back women's gains overall. The Reaganites — cheered on by the "pro-lifers," who all claim to be for "rights for the unborn," and to be "pro-family" — gutted most social services needed by women and children, leaving millions hungry and homeless.

But when the right wing couldn't overturn abortion rights legally by changing laws or winning anti-abortion referenda — since polls show most people support freedom of choice and abortion rights — they resorted to coercion. Outright violence and terror against women's health and abortion clinics, and against clinic staff and clients, were utilized in an all-out anti-woman crusade.

The federal government gave the green light to the violent attacks by refusing to condemn them or

Third World women lead the way

By Carmen Roundtree
Member, Communications Workers Local 1101

For many, the perception in the past has been that Third World women workers are peripheral in the U.S. working class.

You don't see many oppressed women as the presidents of big unions, or in the important meetings of the AFL-CIO leadership in Bar Harbor, Fla. They don't seem to be the ones politicians and media refer to when they address themselves to the labor movement.

The double curse of racism and sexism has sought to instill in all oppressed women the notion that they are insignificant, unimportant and expendable, and that they should turn their attention to the home, family matters, food and fashion — anything else except leading the workers anywhere.

But the advance of high technology has irrevocably changed the character of the working class, and at the same time laid the groundwork for sweeping away all of the backward racist and sexist conceptions about oppressed women workers.

The workforce has swelled with those workers the bosses think they can get away with exploiting the most. But far from being a docile and submissive source of cheap labor, oppressed women workers are increasingly playing a different role: instilling new militancy, new levels of class consciousness, and rejuvenating the class struggle.

In recent strikes and struggles around the country oppressed women — from San Francisco hospital workers to Detroit telephone workers to Atlantic City hotel and restaurant workers — have shown the way for the kind of labor unity and militancy that is needed to fight back against all the attacks on the lives of workers and their families.

The new role of these women, along with the general leveling effect underway in the working class as the standard of living for all — men and women, Black and white — plummets, is leading to a new unity. More and more workers, under unrelenting attack by the bosses and inspired by the struggles of oppressed women, are realizing that all are in the same boat.

WW PHOTO



March on Washington, Oct. 11, 1987.

WW PHOTO

gay rights. This is long overdue, and can only help build labor unity.

Gay rights a labor issue

But a call for gay civil rights, although vital, is not enough. Labor — particularly labor union women leading the fight for workers' families — must endorse and take up all the specific demands emanating from the lesbian and gay community. These include equal benefit coverage, child custody rights, gay-positive education and funding for AIDS research and treatment.

If the strength of the whole working class were united behind them, Sharon Kowalski and Karen Thompson could be a family again.

in
en's struggle

and abortion rights



Women's liberation is part of the workers' struggle.

to investigate and prosecute those responsible.

Fighting for women's rights

Women are fighting for their rights coast to coast — for the fundamental civil and human right to make the most personal decisions for themselves, including where to live, with whom to live, and whether or when to have children.

The fullest and most comprehensive reproductive rights program to make these choices possible must be guaranteed and available to all women.

Any real workers' rights program must include: the right to safe legal low-cost abortion with restoration of Medicaid funding for those who need it; healthy, low-cost birth control and sex education; no racist forced sterilizations. It also means the right to jobs with equal pay, childcare, parental leave, quality prenatal care, food, affirmative action, housing, education and all the social supports and services that women need to have and raise healthy children.

The child care crisis

By Naomi Cohen

In April of 1988, President Reagan's Secretary of Labor, Ann McLaughlin, released a report on child care that concluded matter-of-factly that there is no national "crisis" in child-care availability.

While admitting that two thirds of mothers with children under 14 are currently in the workforce, the report only acknowledged "spot shortages of certain kinds of child care." (Wall Street Journal, April 18)

But almost any working mother who has tried to find child care can testify to the fact that the report is a cover-up of a nightmarish situation for millions of parents who are struggling to work and at the same time adequately take care of their children.

25 million children

According to the Coalition of Labor Union Women, 25 million children under age 13 need to be placed in child care centers, but only 1.5 million are actually cared for in such facilities.

What does this mean for the remaining 23.5 mil-

lion children?

While some parents have relatives who can help care for their children, the vast majority are left to turn to unhealthy, unregulated child care arrangements, or even unsupervised (latch-key) conditions.

The facts that the majority of women now work outside the home and one-fifth of all families are now single-parent families (most of these headed by women) all mean that millions of working women face a desperate choice — unsafe, inadequate child care or no income. Add to this the fact that child care costs an average of \$3,000 per year, or half the income of a minimum wage family, and it is easy to see that the child care question has indeed reached crisis proportions.

In fact, according to a report issued in April by the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, the average woman who bears or adopts a baby loses some \$14,000 in wages and benefits during pregnancy and the child's first two years — because of the lack of maternity or childcare leave. In all, working women who become

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There is another way: the case of Cuba

By Pat Chin

Member, Legal Services Staff Assoc., District 65-UAW

The progress of any society can be judged by the overall position of women in that society, and by the delivery of human services such as health-care, childcare and education.

Class society, like the U.S., must continue to subjugate and exploit women, children, people of color and others in order to satisfy the capitalists' insatiable thirst for profits. Capitalism requires the domination of women and control of sexuality, in order to exploit women's labor — including the ability to reproduce future workers — and women's wisdom and knowledge.

But a look at the position of women and the delivery of human services in those societies like the Republic of Cuba, where the revolution laid the basis for reorganizing production on a socialist foundation, is most instructive — particularly in contrast to the U.S.

New women, a new society

Since the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959 (in which women played a vital role), there have been great strides toward integrating women into the multi-faceted fabric of national life. This could not have occurred without women beginning the often difficult process of freeing themselves from the restrictions of domestic life,



Childcare in Cuba, 6 teachers for 13 children.

which required a radical restructuring of Cuban society.

Shortly after the triumphant march of the rebel army into Havana, "millions of Cuban women were mobilized to defend the revolution and to carry out tasks aimed at raising the standard of living of the masses of the people." A most formidable task involved the campaign to wipe out illiteracy, in which "55% of those who learned to read and write were women." (Women and the Cuban Revolution, by Elizabeth Stone, N.Y., 1981)

Other far-reaching educational efforts for the first time provided hundreds of new schools and a free education for everyone.

In addition to gains in education, hundreds of

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The health care crisis

By Sharon Eolis

Grievance Chairperson

New York State Nurses Association

Cabrini Hospital

Thousands of people, from infants to the elderly, die each year in the U.S. because they are unable to afford quality health care.

These victims include the army of unemployed workers and their families, Black, Latino, Asian, Native and white, the undocumented and underemployed, women and men, lesbian and gay people, the disabled, children and the elderly.

Medicaid, supposedly a national "safety net" to provide healthcare for the poor, now excludes almost half of those formerly deemed eligible, so that tens of thousands of families have no access to any type of care at all. As for Medicare, the deductible has increased at such a rate that many seniors cannot get all their medical needs met.

Some 37 million people in this country have no health insurance, and the number is increasing at a rate of one million every year. Another 50 million have health coverage that is inadequate.

Three quarters of the uninsured are employed — but at low-paying service jobs with no benefits. Many of these are women workers who are heads

of households.

Department store workers, for example, receive on average just one-sixth the health coverage that rubber workers do. Hospital and garment workers have much worse coverage than steelworkers. (Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce)

Since jobs in rubber and steel — and all the basic manufacturing industries — are disappearing and workers are more and more concentrated in hospitals, stores, and the like, that means things will be getting even worse.

Even where workers have unions and relatively good jobs, almost every boss has attacked the right to company-paid health coverage over the last few years, doubling and even tripling the deductible workers must pay.

Unhealthy system

Most industrialized countries have a nationalized healthcare system where the government organizes, plans, controls costs and pays for care. A good example is Canada.

Last year when a Canadian truck driver on vacation in the U.S. was hospitalized for emergency heart surgery, the Canadian government paid the \$30,000 bill. In contrast is the story of a working

Continued on page S4

— The fight for the future

sible for the destruction of so many families under the weight of crushing poverty, racism and political and social repression.

Racism on the part of the bosses and the government has resulted in many Black, Latino and Native families being torn asunder. Undocumented workers live under a terrifying cloud of deportation and deprivation of services.

Lesbian and gay couples cannot get health coverage for their lovers or their children. People displaced by plant closings become migrant workers, moving as many as a dozen times across the country trying to find a job.

These are the real destructive problems faced by real families today. They are the result of the bosses' ever-increasing appetite for profit at any cost.

The scientific and technological revolutions in capitalist production, along with industrial plant closings and the shift toward a service economy, have resulted in low wages, displacement of millions of workers and whole communities, proliferation of part-time and temporary jobs with no benefits and vast unemployment.

Capitalism constantly perfects its technology, not in the interest of social progress or bettering conditions for all people, but for super profits.

And isn't this what has happened? The working class as a whole is more impoverished.

Breaking tradition's chain

Over the last three decades women have entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers and demanded new political, economic and social rights. Profound and progressive changes came about as a result of mass movements for liberation.

The women's movement, the civil rights and lesbian and gay movements enabled women to enter the workforce, gain self-confidence and fight some of the most blatant forms of discrimination. All this also changed social relations to some extent.

Many heterosexual women began to be able to approach their relations with men more as a matter of choice, whether that meant to marry, live together, divorce, leave abusive relationships, live separately, or remain single.

Lesbians and gay men came out of the closet with pride in open loving relationships.

Within this context, the breaking down of the "traditional" family advanced humanity.

Working women above all must and can break tradition's chains. Women must fight tooth-and-nail for all the services and benefits needed to be able to defend their families — all kinds of families.

Although there is a new surge of attacks on women's rights, along with the rights of Third World, lesbian and gay, and all workers, working and oppressed women have a greater potential power than ever before.

Women make up 45% of the official workforce. To this should be added the millions in the under-

ground economy, like so many household, farm, restaurant and childcare workers. Black, Latina, Asian and women workers make up the biggest bloc joining unions today. And they are in the lead of many of the most militant struggles here and around the world.

Women workers and labor's agenda

The growing numbers and involvement of women in the workplace and in unions has not only forced all these issues out into the open, but pushed them onto the agenda of the labor movement. The May 14 rally was endorsed and promoted by the AFL-CIO and many affiliate unions. Unions with large numbers of lower-paid women members such as the Ladies Garment Workers and AFSCME organized hundreds of buses.

But the May 14 event, as it has been organized by the top union leadership and churches, is certainly not what most women would desire. It is billed as an "American Family Celebration" and oriented toward festivity rather than struggle.

Its slogan, "Our nation needs strong families," is vague at best. At worst, it parrots slogans the right wing uses to disguise attacks on women's right to reproductive choice, equal pay and benefits, higher minimum wage, union rights, childcare, civil rights and lesbian and gay rights.

It has obviously not yet dawned on the union higher-ups that there is no need to try to legitimize or disguise the demands of working women under the cover of a return to the "traditional family." The vast majority of women (and men) workers not only realize that women work as a matter of necessity, but support women's right to be in the workforce in every type of job.

The attack on women's right to hold a job, or gain comparable wages to men's, to have children and childcare or abortions, has been based on a claim that these rights destroy "the family." But this idea is promoted by the ruling class, the exploiting bosses who profit from either restricting women to the home or paying them the lowest wages, whichever best suits their purpose depending on the needs of production at any given time.

The enormous contradiction between the wealth that women produce on the one hand, and their wages and living conditions on the other is explosive. But just as women workers can produce profits for the bosses, they can also withhold their labor if that's what it takes to win childcare, healthcare, comparable pay and higher wages.

But to truly end the oppression of women and children, economically and socially, to truly allow each and every kind of family and human relationship to develop and thrive — that will take the overthrow of private ownership of industries, services and housing.

It will take replacing capitalism with a socialist society. And women workers are paving the way for that future.

— Child care

Continued from S3

mothers in the U.S. lose an incredible \$31 billion annually.

Because the need for child care is so great, many unions and women's rights organizations are now campaigning widely for both government and corporations to address the issue. So far, the response has been totally inadequate.

Only 10 percent of the more than one million firms with 10 or more employees offer any child care benefits at all. (Wall Street Journal, April 8) And the majority of these so-called benefits are merely counseling and information services — no actual funds for child care itself.

Clearly, the need is for more funding. On-site child care at large corporations should be mandatory, and publicly funded, community controlled child care should be universally available.

But the fundamental problem is the priorities set by a system that puts profits before human needs and condemns millions of women and children to face this crisis individually. The growing movement to demand and win child care is the first step in bringing people together to fight for what is rightly theirs.

The writer is a working mother.

— Cuba

Continued from page S3

new health facilities (polyclinics) and hospitals were constructed with free, quality healthcare guaranteed to everyone.

Numerous free childcare facilities were also constructed, with an emphasis on the development of social consciousness and on quality care from the age of 45 days on.

The ripening fruits of these revolutionary changes can be dramatically seen in Cuba today, where women constitute a high percentage of workers in fields traditionally considered the exclusive domain of men.

Organized under a socialist system, Cuba stands in stark contrast to U.S. cities like New York, for instance, where 250,000 children under the age of five compete for 44,000 spaces in licensed daycare centers.

Fortunately for the Cuban people, the revolution recognized from the outset that without access to education, quality healthcare and childcare, women would remain without the material support necessary to free themselves from the deadening and dehumanizing effects of being forcibly trapped in their homes as the private property of their husbands.

The writer visited Cuba in 1984.

— Health care

Continued from page S3

woman in the U.S. who had open heart surgery and was billed \$60,000. She had no health insurance, and she is spending her convalescence being harassed for payment by the hospital and doctors. (Source: SEIU Union, Sept./Oct. 1987)

She is one of millions who are physically, financially and emotionally destroyed because of the lack of national healthcare and employer-provided medical insurance, along with spiraling costs and deteriorating quality of care.

The U.S. healthcare system has been unhealthy for years. Now the problem has reached crisis proportions with the AIDS epidemic reaching a catastrophic stage for those living with and affected by this illness.

The government can find billions of dollars for Star Wars, but very little for AIDS research and treatment.

As long as it is more profitable to build weapons than hospitals and fund research on Star Wars instead of diabetes, this government run by and for the rich refuses to implement a national health care system.

Health care should be a right for all, not a privilege for the rich.

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By Sam Marcy

Causes and consequences of the Polish crisis

It's about time that the public in the world and in the United States be told the truth about the crisis in Poland.

What needs to be revealed is not some deep, dark secret fortified by unpublished documents or unavailable data. It's all in the public record here and in other leading capitalist countries as well as in Poland. The fundamental problem is to distinguish the causes of the crisis from its effects.

The cause of the crisis lies in the profound and decisive influence over the Polish economy of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, several hundred West European and Japanese banks, and most importantly, of the government of the United States.

Last October's reforms

The most recent problem convulsing Polish society arose from a series of economic reforms and some political changes announced by the Polish government on Oct. 10, 1987. Details of these reforms were reported in the New York Times on Oct. 11, 14 and 17 of 1987. In the Oct. 11 article, the Times characterized the reforms as a "package of far-reaching governmental and economic changes mixing capitalism with socialism which would bring higher prices and increased unemployment, but would also create the conditions for advance."

But it didn't say how the advance would take place.

"The measures," wrote the Times, "appear destined to change Poland's centralized communist economy drastically and many economists and officials say they pose a crucial test for the government of General Wojciech Jaruzelski."

Not reported in this account, however, is that these reforms, as they are called, were tailor-made to meet the demands of the international-capitalist bankers and the government of the United States. That's the cause of the crisis.

The strikes of the Polish workers and the social chaos are the social effect of the Polish government's attempt to implement the arrogant demands of the imperialist banks. To blot out this truth, to obscure it with a heavy volume of anti-communist capitalist propaganda, completely covers up the real situation in Poland.

Of course, the Polish People's Republic has made a gross miscalculation, first in going along with the demands, and then by trying to implement them in a way that has caused deep social and economic chaos and forced the workers out on strike.

Let us see precisely what these reforms are and just how the government is trying to implement them.

Breakup of Poland's banking system

The first and most important reform, which is made little of in the capitalist press, is the breakup of the Polish national banking system. Assuming the plan goes through, it would put Poland's banks on the road to a return to capitalist competition and free them from virtually all government control.

As is well known, each one of the imperialist states has a centralized monetary and financial system, which the imperialist governments control on behalf of the bankers. There are also, of course, independent banks, some small, some large, that compete with each other as part of the capitalist system.

Under imperialism the banks are so tightly linked to industry and agriculture that Lenin defined this complex intimately tied together by the banking system as "finance capital."

The Polish banking system had been tied to the development of socialist industry and agriculture. The attempt to break it up into small competing units more or less independent of the government divorces it from in-

dustry, from the socialist sector, and gives it the upper hand in relation to the socialist sector of the economy, particularly the heavy industries which are its core in Poland.

The second aspect of this breakup of the banking system is to permit the banks to lend more liberally to the private sector, which has grown enormously in the last few years.

Another aspect is to make access to foreign currency more easily available to borrowers, especially the independent entrepreneurs. This will multiply the links between Polish banking and finance and the private, so-called independent sectors of the Polish economy, on the one hand, and foreign capital.

In a socialist economy, the banks merely make credit available to the industrial sector in accordance with an economic plan. It is purely a financial and bookkeeping matter, rather than one conveying economic and political authority. The banking officialdom in Poland have generally been considered lower-ranking government officials, not invested with a great deal of either political or economic power.

However, the reform intends to create competitive commercial banks. It will also facilitate companies (it doesn't say which ones) which seek cheap sources of capital. Thus, it seeks to elevate the banks to a dominant role in relation to industry.

What bankruptcy means to the workers

The reforms will for the first time permit bankruptcy of industrial establishments. There are two kinds of bankruptcy under U.S. capitalist law.

In the first, there is a reorganization in which an understanding is arrived at with the creditors on how to continue management and operation of the company after writing off the losses and putting the reorganized company on a solvent basis. Usually, the smaller creditors lose out and the larger, more important ones reap the harvest.

Almost always the burden of the reorganization is put on the backs of the workers (witness what has happened at LTV, Bethlehem Steel, Continental Airlines, Chrysler, etc.). The plants continue operating but with a much smaller workforce.

The second type of bankruptcy brings outright liquidation, which means closing the plant altogether.

Who has the authority to close the plants or reorganize under the Polish reforms? Not the workers' councils. Not the trade unions. All this is vague and left up in the air. But it is being pushed through and the implication is that the reorganization will fall on the backs of the workers.

The next aspect of the reforms is a very familiar one in capitalist economies, especially during the Reagan years. It is to link wages to productivity, which means speedup and promoting a rat race among the workers instead of working-class solidarity.

Another one is to sell company shares to the workers. This means to put a company strictly on its own, as sort of a caricature of a large corporation. We know what turning workers into shareholders has meant in the U.S. — the collapse of the union and fraudulent manipulation of the remaining assets, ultimately ending in bankruptcy anyway.

The most important change, of course, whose effects are immediately

The consequences are only too clear: workers striking to protect their earnings from steep price hikes. But what caused the crisis? As in 1980, Western bankers are dictating more austerity while posing as the workers' friend.

apparent to the workers, is the institution of wage and price controls. Price controls in the years since the reformers have been in power have resulted in scarcities and a burgeoning black market. As in the capitalist countries, however, the control of wages is carried out very effectively by the administrators and is the cause of the strikes. The wages don't keep up with galloping inflation.

Another of the reforms dear to the heart of the IMF and the Western bankers is to slash government subsidies in public housing and transportation. Some forms of rent control will be abolished. There is already a significant real estate market in private housing.

These then are basically what the reforms are about. The particular regulations which would concretely implement them are not available and for the most part have not been published here.

What happened with the referendum

What has the government done with respect to these onerous banker-imposed reforms? The government leaders were fearful of enacting them without in some way submitting the reforms for public approval. So they hit upon the idea of putting them in the form of a referendum. Like most referendums of that character, it did not tell the masses much but was high on promises of great advances and alleviation of the economic situation.

It is interesting that the pro-imperialist leadership of Solidarity didn't know quite what to do about this. First they got the high sign that the Western imperialists were for the reforms. They were made aware that most of the capitalist newspapers, especially in the U.S., looked favorably on them as great steps forward.

Apparently the imperialists forgot that Solidarity also has to answer to its own constituency, which contains many workers. This forced Solidarity to become evasive and ambiguous about what to do. First they said no to the reforms, but after seeing what the imperialists were for, they changed their mind to indifference and then halfheartedly and ambiguously said they were boycotting the referendum.

Also, the militant and enlightened working-class elements schooled in socialism either didn't vote or gave the reforms unenthusiastic support out of loyalty to the government. While the vote was for the reforms, not enough people participated in the referendum for the government to get a majority of the eligible voters, as required under Polish law. (No capitalist government makes that requirement of a referendum, it is to be noted.)

This should have been very disappointing to the government, but it went ahead with implementing the reforms anyway. Now the most outstanding feature of the Polish economy is the continuing rise in prices and the inability of the workers to catch up with the cost of living.

In order to soften the pro-capitalist character of the reforms and the belt-tightening austerity measures that were causing hardship for the workers, the government attached to them certain language to convey the impression, as the Times put it, of mixing capitalist with socialist reforms. This didn't please the bankers.

Banks demand austerity

In an article headlined "World Bank Urges More Austerity by Poland," the New York Times reported on Oct. 27, 1987, that "The World Bank has urged Poland to speed up the pace of economic change and enact even tougher austerity measures than Warsaw is planning." The bank reportedly had said that the rates of growth in consumption and income expected by the Polish government were not "austere" enough.

How incredible that a socialist government could let itself be lectured, even commanded, by an arm of the imperialist governments to enact tougher austerity measures! But that is precisely what happened.

The banks read the riot act to the government. "The World Bank warned that Poland's foreign debt . . . would grow from \$34.5 billion this year to \$37.35 billion in 1992. It warned that further debt relief measures would be needed from creditor nations."

So what did the World Bank recommend? Cancellation of several large-scale Polish public projects that it considered "wasteful." These included a new coal mine at Stefanow, two nuclear power stations and an extension of the Warsaw subway system.

How can a socialist government let itself be lectured about what is wasteful and what public projects it should cancel?

What did the bank want? That Poland "relax central planning and encourage more private initiative." Could anything show more clearly what it means to become so heavily indebted to imperialist banks?

These reforms, the banks say, will help Poland's competitive position in the world market. What hypocrisy and deceit! How could the socialist leadership swallow this?

Poland's chief export is coal. Are the Western bankers really interested in improving Poland's competitive position? What about the British banks, for instance, which have one of the leading roles in the IMF? They not long ago tried to break the coal miners' union in Britain after forcing the workers out in a long and bitter strike, all in order to improve Britain's competitive position through modernization and restructuring, which means layoffs and wage cuts.

Does France want Poland to modernize and improve its economy so it can compete more effectively with the French capitalists who own the coal fields in Alsace-Lorraine?

What the bankers want is not to make Poland's socialist economy more competitive, but to get the interest payments on Poland's debt.

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— Causes and consequences of the Polish crisis

Continued from page 7

the debt is the result in the first place of an attempt to impose a capitalist economy on the socialist foundations of Poland.

Capitalism in agriculture

In demanding that subsidies on goods and services for the mass of the people be abolished, the bankers were careful to avoid cutting subsidies to the decollectivized, that is, the "free" agricultural sector. This rarely gets mentioned in the capitalist press. The Polish government subsidizes private farmers, although at one period the farms were collectivized and did well for their time, until a counter-revolutionary insurrection in 1956 led to their downfall.

All the efforts of the government since then have been to try to win back the individual farmers, the bourgeois sector of the economy, by granting them concessions. These, however, have strengthened capitalism in the agricultural sector.

Marx and Engels had suggested, long before there was any socialist revolution, that the best way to win over the bourgeois farmers was to show them the advantages of large-scale agriculture; that in this way the farming sector would become socialized along with industry.

What has happened in Poland is a corrupt form of trying to bribe the farmers. However, they are politically dominated by the Catholic hierarchy. The reformist elements of the government have extended great privileges to the Catholic hierarchy, that is, to clerical reaction. The church has far more privileges in Poland than in capitalist Italy or Spain, where the Catholic hierarchy is continually under political attack by progressive and working-class organizations.

The All-Poland Trade Union Alliance

In attempting to rebuild the workers' movement after the collapse of Solidarity, it appears that the government encouraged the formation of the All-Poland Trade Union Alliance (OPZZ). It is incorrect to call this organization a state-sponsored union. Abraham Brumberg, an observer of the Polish scene who is certainly not a friend of the Polish government, wrote in the New York Review of Feb. 18, 1988, that "The new trade union organization OPZZ is now seven million strong and still growing." This is a significant revelation.

Brumberg doesn't call the alliance a state-sponsored organization, although of course it has received the encouragement of elements in the government. Unfortunately, the government hasn't shown any inclination to heed the union's counsels.

According to Business Week of Jan. 19, 1987, "Jaruzelski's government gets harsh criticism, even from the All-Poland Trade Union Alliance. . . . At last month's trade union conference in Warsaw, the chairman of the alliance denounced the level of social benefits and workers' housing," which he said were "much lower" than in other socialist countries.

How Solidarity got back in the picture

It was therefore not surprising that when the bus drivers in Bydgoszcz went out, sparking the recent wave of strikes, the OPZZ represented the workers and won a settlement from the government.

But this set up other strikes, particularly in the Nowa Huta area, which the government decided to crush by force. At any rate, it is very plain that the OPZZ has been disregarded. This gave Solidarity the opportunity to re-emerge, after it had been considered almost defunct except perhaps in the Gdansk area. It tried to turn the just

economic demands of the workers into political channels, compounding the government's problem overall.

The reemergence of the pro-imperialist leadership of Solidarity can only lead to further deterioration of the economic problems in Poland and ultimately to a forceful resolution of the crisis in one way or another.

In the midst of all this, the U.S. government was forced to publicly reveal its hand. Forgotten by the press was Reagan's breaking of the PATCO union and his administration's ensuing virulent anti-labor offensive. Instead, there were headlines when the U.S. made a loud outcry against the use of force by the Polish government.

Almost totally lost was what the Reagan administration spokesman, Deputy Secretary of State John C. Whitehead, said about the economic reforms in a May 7 interview with the New York Times. After going through the routine of denouncing the use of force, the lack of freedom, etc., he made sure to weave into his interview that "the economic program of the government strikes us as being a basically sensible program."

There you have it! He approves of the reforms, but their consequences — that's for the Polish government to deal with!

Furthermore, he said, "In due course we would hope the U.S. would take a constructive attitude with the IMF, World Bank loans and Paris Club rescheduling." What hypocrisy — to give the impression that the IMF and World Bank are independent organizations! If they were fully independent, he wouldn't be talking for them.

If the Polish government behaves itself in accordance with the rules laid down by Wall Street, Lombard Street and the Bourse, according to Whitehead, "commercial bank lending from U.S. banks is a possibility" and further down the road there may be "some kind of direct U.S. government assistance." Such is the real relationship between the Polish economic reforms and the imperialist banks and U.S. government.

The strike struggles are the consequence of this relationship of imperialist neocolonialism to a faltering socialism. The two cannot peacefully co-exist for any length of time. One or the other will have to give way. The present chaos consists almost entirely of this untenable relationship.

Relation to reforms in USSR

In earlier years, the Soviet government was denounced regularly in the imperialist press for encouraging and assisting the Polish government in socialist construction. These attacks are always couched in such terms as the "imposition of a regimented economy," etc. Now that the Soviet gov-

ernment has embarked upon a series of bourgeois reforms of its own, it has encouraged the Polish leadership to do likewise and, given the circumstances in Poland, to go much, much farther.

The capitalist press has been heaping praise on the Gorbachev reforms and is regarding his relations with the Polish government, at least at this stage, as wholly beneficial for the future of the Polish reforms. Some of the Solidarity leaders are openly jubilant about perestroika. Lech Walesa himself has said it is too bad that Brezhnev didn't die two years earlier, meaning before the government showdown with Solidarity.

What ultimately happens in Poland is bound to decisively influence events in the USSR. The outcome of the situation will not only affect the socialist countries but also the movements in the oppressed countries and events in the West as well.

Poland a halfway house

Over the years we have characterized Polish society as a halfway house. The heavy industries, transportation, communications and utilities were nationalized by the government and are the social property of the working class. They make up the socialist sector, however badly or well it may be managed.

Matters are different in agriculture. Right after World War II the large estates were expropriated from the landowners and collectivized, which is a semi-socialist form of ownership. But then in 1956, after a counter-revolutionary insurrection, the collectives were returned to private hands.

Over the years since then there has been a considerable growth of the private sector. The door was opened up to the imperialist West. This laid the basis for the developing economic and financial stranglehold by the imperialist banks and their governments.

The series of rebellions and strikes which started in 1956 ushered in a new first secretary of the Communist Party, Wladyslaw Gomulka, who decollectivized many of the farms. In 1970, after workers rebelled in several cities protesting price increases and incentive wage rules, he was ousted and replaced by Edward Gierek. In 1980 Gierek was replaced by Stanislaw Kania. A year later Kania was dismissed and replaced by Jaruzelski.

What does this series of political eruptions and swift changes of government and party personnel indicate?

It indicates that the government has moved from one that represented, at least objectively, the general socialist interests of the workers and the masses, to a Bonapartist form of regime. What does that entail?

A Bonapartist regime

A Bonapartist regime is a regime of crisis that tries to balance itself on antagonistic classes or social systems. It tries to straddle two opposing social camps. Ultimately, it has only the support of the police, the state apparatus and the military.

Jaruzelski is also trying to balance the Catholic hierarchy, which is pro-bourgeois and pro-imperialist through and through. The Catholic hierarchy has the dominant ideological influence with the decollectivized and atomized peasantry. It carries in its van a substantial segment of the new bourgeois intelligentsia and also the leadership of the Solidarity movement.

It goes without saying that this camp is the promoter of the bourgeois reforms, of links with the imperialist governments and the banks. It covers itself with demagoguery, however, whenever the government attacks the

masses in its effort to overcome the abysmal crisis.

The Jaruzelski regime tries to hold onto and secure the socialist foundations of the economy, that is, the ownership of the basic industries. But the means used continually weaken the class camp of which the regime is the sociological protector. It is continually giving way to the enemy camp.

A Bonapartist regime of this type is like a person whose legs are in two different rowboats, each moving in an opposite direction. Maintaining one's balance under these conditions, especially in stormy weather, becomes virtually impossible. It is characteristic of Bonapartism, going back to Napoleon III, to resort to referendums which superficially show popular support for the regime but cover up the acute class and social antagonisms.

In the year since martial law ended, the government should have known that it had to win over the workers. When the OPZZ succeeded in signing up as many as 7 million union members, it appeared there was a sufficient foundation to start on a new working class course. Difficult though that may be, it is far preferable to going hat in hand to the bankers begging for their panaceas — which every worker in Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Brazil or Nigeria has learned to despise.

The nouveau riche

The bankers' reforms, of course, are wonderful for the imperialist bourgeoisie and for the nouveau riche in the entrapped countries.

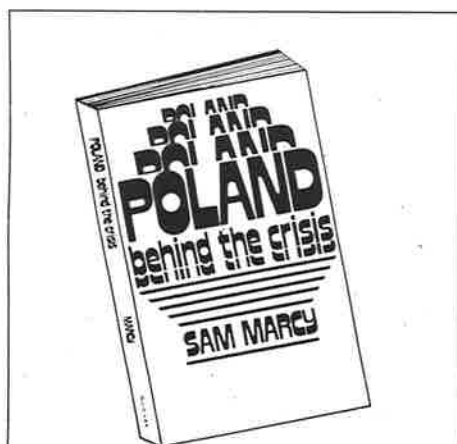
A disillusioned former cheerleader for Solidarity, Daniel Singer, described in frightened tones in The Nation of March 5, 1988, what he saw both on the right and also in the government. "Watching the situation in Poland now is a painful exercise. There are moments of near despair," he wrote. "In a country that before the war had a strong lay left, the ideological domination of the Catholic church is now overwhelming. Red is a dirty word, Reagan is a hero and Milton Friedman provides food for economic thought."

Singer quotes from Polityka, a weekly magazine put out by the reformist element in Poland. An article in the January issue entitled "The Poor and the Rich" created a stir, according to Singer. It described the new bourgeois element that has grown up as a result of the reform policy of the government: "winter skiing in the Alps, summer on the Riviera, a BMW, jewels from Gucci, children in a French kindergarten and an American school, provisions from West Berlin."

That's the nouveau riche. That's the product of the decay of socialist construction and the westward orientation. As for the poor, they would be on the picket lines if they knew who could lead them to what.

Neither Brumberg nor Singer remotely suggested in their articles that a spontaneous eruption of the mass movement of the workers would be taking place now. Each of them bemoaned the loss in standing and disintegration of Solidarity, but neither foresaw that the workers themselves would move on their own. It would be most unfortunate if Solidarity's pro-imperialist leadership were again to take over the movement of the workers.

Jaruzelski cannot long have his feet in two boats as the storm signals grow. Only a clear working-class, revolutionary socialist perspective can bring economic security and socialist fraternity in the population and chart a path to genuine communism. The halfway house means peace with the exploiters and poverty for the masses.



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Head of Namibian movement speaks on victories

SWAPO's Nujoma: 'Armed struggle will continue until Botha hands over power'

By Pat Chin
New York

Dr. Sam Nujoma, president of the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) of Namibia, brought the message of the fighting Namibian people to New York City the weekend of May 6. He spoke in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn; at the Martin Luther King Labor Center in midtown Manhattan; and at the Harriet Tubman School in Harlem where over 1,000 mainly Third World people packed the auditorium to hear Nujoma speak.

Nujoma has been SWAPO's president since its founding in 1960, playing a key role in developing the movement's internal strategy and heading the diplomatic missions which have argued Namibia's case for independence and the withdrawal of the occupying South African forces. As supervisor of the creation of SWAPO's armed wing — the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) — Nujoma is also its commander in chief.

In his appearances, Nujoma decried the role of U.S. imperialism and the role being played by other Western nations such as Great Britain and West Germany, in supporting the South African regime, which he described as one that is not only racist and fascist, but also one "that is supported by international capitalism and imperialism."

Nujoma gave a clear and historical account of SWAPO'S founding and the violent and brutal conditions foisted upon the Namibian people, including the hated pass law, by the racist South African occupying forces. These brutal and repressive conditions had to be fought with force and led to the establishment of PLAN in 1966.

News of victories kept out of press

He elaborated on the news blackout imposed on Namibia by the racist apartheid regime, instituted to suppress news of any successful challenge to South Africa's continued occupation and exploitation of that mineral-rich country. They include the successful strike of Namibian mine workers as well as the numerous military victories scored by the combatants of PLAN against the occupying forces.

Nujoma added that "the armed liberation struggle will continue until Botha comes to the round table conference and hands over power to SWAPO."

Nujoma talked about additional victories being scored against the apartheid regime not only in South Africa, but also in Mozambique and Angola. With specific reference to Angola, he declared: "So the enemy tried to invade the People's Republic of Angola and occupy some southern part of



Sam Nujoma speaks in New York City.

that country to create an impression that the problem is Angola and not Namibia. So they tried. They came in with the tanks. We are knocking them down inside Namibia and in Angola."

He also detailed the futility of the apartheid regime's numerous attempts to install bogus administrative bodies, such as the so-called Advisory Council, the National Assembly and Council of Ministers, and the Namibian people's total rejection of them.

Nujoma concluded by pointing out the importance of unity in action. He added, "We believe that until Namibia and South Africa are liberated, the forces of imperialism and capitalism will always undermine us all — people of African descent — whether at home or abroad. Therefore we consider, brothers and sisters, that your struggle is our struggle. Your victory is our victory. And our victory is your victory."

Israel's 'Operation Law and Order' leaves 40 dead

By Joyce Chediak

When Washington calls for "law and order," it is often code language for a racist assault on oppressed people. This is true abroad as well. On May 4, Israel's "Operation Law and Order" resulted in genocide.

On that day, 2,500 Israeli troops, backed up by heavy artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships, invaded the sovereign nation of Lebanon. They captured and destroyed the tiny Lebanese village of Maydun, and killed 40 people there.

The assault began in the wee hours of the morning. According to the May 5 Washington Post, much of the population of Maydun was forced to flee in the night after being awakened by a thunderous barrage of artillery, as many as 20 shells a minute. Ali Hussein Hussein called it "savagery." He added, "Shells kept getting closer. We had to leave. I left my parents behind. They were too old to run away."

The next day, the Israeli military blew up and bulldozed the 50-60 homes there. As many as 30 Lebanese were carted off to Israel as prisoners.

Israeli helicopter gunships let loose with machine-gun fire and rockets not only on Maydun, but also on the surrounding hills and valleys. Thousands of Lebanese were forced to flee the battle zone. Mehdi Ammar, a farmer from Mashghara, said he and his family of seven had left at daybreak without food, water or clothing. "There are hundreds like us. Can international humanitarian organizations not do anything to help? We left with nothing but the shirts on our backs."

Why was Maydun leveled?

Why was Maydun wiped off the map? There was nothing strategic about this out-of-the-way village. Young men and women from the Lebanese groups Party of God and Amal resisted Israeli troops at Maydun. But

this is not a crime. After all, Lebanon is their country. Israel was the aggressor and the violator of Lebanese borders.

The Israeli newspaper Hadashot claims that the purpose of the incursion was to give the Israeli army back the confidence it has lost in the West Bank and Gaza. It is a telling comment that the huge Israeli military apparatus would receive a shot of confidence by wiping out a Lebanese village of 60 homes. It reminds one of the Pentagon's swaggering after overthrowing the government of Grenada, with a total population of 65,000.

And while Washington claims to be the champion of human rights in such countries as the Soviet Union, Nicaragua and Afghanistan, the Reagan administration hardly uttered a peep over this blatant invasion of a sover-

eign country and the murder of 40 people there.

Tel Aviv's destruction of Maydun and its continued repression in the West Bank and Gaza is done in the name of "safety for Jewish people." But this is a boldfaced lie. Above all else, Israel acts as a garrison state for the Pentagon, keeping down the national liberation struggles in order to make that area safe for exploitation by U.S. oil companies.

Israel's repeated invasions of Lebanon, its repression on the West Bank and Gaza and other aggressive policies are harmful to all who genuinely want to see peace in the Middle East, Arab or Israeli. And this raw aggression by an oppressor nation only increases the determination of the oppressed Lebanese people to struggle for their freedom.

Nationwide protests on June 4 to support Palestinian people

By Joyce Chediak
New York

Important regional demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people will take place around the country on June 4. These actions, to be held in New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle and Houston, will mark 21 years of Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

The protests will demand: stop the killing, beating, imprisonment and expulsion of Palestinians; end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; stop the U.S. funding of the occupation.

Organizers feel that these activities take on a special urgency because of the powerful, mass uprising now challenging Israel's rule of the West Bank and Gaza. Already car caravans and buses are being organized from neighboring cities for the four regional protests.

A key focus of all the actions will be the U.S. role. A call issued by demonstration organizers points out that Washington spends billions of dollars every year to finance the Israeli occupation and continues to justify it.

"A grassroots movement needs to press the U.S. government to face its responsibility for the continued Israeli denial of Palestinian human, political and national rights. People from all sectors — minority communities, trade unions, peace activists, the women's movement, churches, etc., can make justice for the Palestinians and peace for the entire region a factor in U.S. political life that can no longer be avoided."

For more information, and to join the outreach effort to make these demonstrations as large as possible, phone the Palestine Solidarity Committee at (415) 861-1552. In New York call (212) 577-5410.

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EDITORIALS

Ruling class stars unhappy with Reagan

Revelations that Ronald and Nancy Reagan are addicted to astrology have made them the laughing stock of the country. The picture of a president cowering in the oval office, afraid to leave the White House or even schedule important meetings because of an ill-omened horoscope, is devastating.

That the author of this humiliating disclosure is none other than Donald Regan, the one-time Secretary of the Treasury and White House Chief of Staff, has caused considerable comment in government circles.

Donald Regan is not just another Washington functionary who has decided to enrich himself with one of those "kiss and tell" books. He is a powerful capitalist in his own right.

The former director of the New York Stock Exchange, recent chairman and chief executive officer of Merrill Lynch, a member of the policy committee of the Business Roundtable, and a strong voice in the highly influential Economic Club and the Investment Bankers of America, Donald Regan is a certified member of the U.S. ruling class.

When President Reagan brought this man into his cabinet, it was a signal that the most aggressive and reactionary elements of big business were to have free rein, especially those from the banking-military-industrial complex.

It's useful to recall that it was Donald Regan, allied with Henry Kissinger, Alexander Haig, Zbigniew Brzezinski and other notorious cold warriors, who managed to scuttle the Iceland Summit in October 1986. Regan was then the leading opponent of any arms agreement with the USSR.

To a certain extent, however, circumstances overtook the Regan clique, who found that they

could not put over their whole imperialist program, whether it be in Poland, or in halting the construction of the Soviet pipeline project or in toppling the government of Nicaragua.

And when Donald Regan was dismissed, in the wake of the Iran-contra scandal, a new, more moderate grouping emerged. Frank Carlucci succeeded Weinberger at the Pentagon, William Webster took over from Casey at CIA and Regan himself lost his job to Howard Baker.

This did not sit well with the ultra-right and with Regan particularly. He writes scornfully that the president "didn't even have the guts" to tell him that Baker, whom Regan despises as too conciliatory, was his replacement.

So Regan took his revenge by exposing his old boss as a superstitious fool who consults some crackpot astrologer for permission to hold press conferences.

It is not the stars, but a factional dispute in the bowels of the ruling class, which have inflicted this latest wound on the Reagan presidency.

Joblessness real and imagined

If you're one of the millions of people across the country who can't find a job or are barely surviving on minimum wage, don't worry. According to the Reagan administration, everything is just rosy. In fact, Reagan's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has just produced new jobless figures which supposedly show a new "dramatic drop" in unemployment to 5.4%.

So, do these figures — announced with much fanfare — mean that workers and poor people are better off?

Not really.

First of all, it should be remembered that with the elections around the corner, the Reaganites have a vested interest in painting a pretty economic picture. That's why the BLS is saying that for New York City and Los Angeles County it wants to drop its standard procedure of taking public samplings to determine

its figures and will instead rely solely on states' figures on who files unemployment claims, a procedure estimated to leave at least 18% of those without jobs off the rolls and thereby send the official unemployment rate down even further (for those areas).

The real unemployment picture has always been much different from its official version. For several years now, the government has made continual changes in exactly who is considered employed and who is considered unemployed — all with the aim of hiding the problem.

Today, counted as employed are military personnel and the over 25 million part-timers who may put in as little as **one hour's** work each week(!), while the legions of homeless, and the so-called discouraged workers, those who have been without jobs for so long they aren't actively looking for them, are not counted at all. The real jobless rate, according to the Council on International and Public Affairs (CIPA), is more than double the official estimate. For Black and other oppressed peoples, especially youths, it's even higher.

What's more, conditions are worsening for those who have jobs, especially those who've lost jobs in the industrial sector and have been working instead in the growing, lower-paid service sector. "Since 1972," CIPA reports, "the average weekly earnings of all private-sector production and non-supervisory workers, adjusting for inflation, have fallen by 15%." So, even if more people are technically working, the amount being paid out in real wages by the bosses has dropped. How, then, can conditions for the working class as a whole be said to be better?

The capitalist economy, which is solely concerned with maximizing profits regardless of the cost in terms of human suffering, depends on unemployment. The bosses need joblessness as a way of having a reserve army of labor to be drawn into the workforce when needed and discarded on the scrap heap when it's no longer profitable. This is a cruel and inhuman system which must — and will — be replaced by one that is able to guarantee a job for every person who wants one.

Letters

Passover Peace Action

Close to 5,000 people from the Jewish communities in New York City rallied in Manhattan's Upper West Side to protest Israeli violence in the West Bank and Gaza and demand an end to the occupation.

A coalition of 18 American Jewish organizations calling themselves Passover Peace Action sponsored the rally in support of the forces for peace in Israel.

Speaker after speaker addressing the rally noted that the uprising in Gaza and the West Bank shattered the myth that the status quo in the occupied territories is desirable or sustainable. The message made clear by all speakers was that the beatings, killings, arrests and expulsions must halt.

The response from the listeners was equally clear as they held their placards high. These read, "Halt the violence" and "End the Occupation."

An Israeli veteran of four wars fought by Israel, including the one in 1967, asked how many more wars will he be asked to serve in so that Israel can expand and occupy more Arab land.

Jewish people were urged to speak out against Israel's iron fist policy and join with tens of thousands of Jews and Arabs in Israel to secure peace with justice for the Palestinian people.

The prearranged program fell short when the PLO as representatives of the Palestinians was at no point acknowledged, thereby ignoring the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to choose their leaders.

The uprising has galvanized the opposition to the occupation. Those working for peace have greater possibilities to secure it than before December 1987.

This was the first rally of its kind held by the Jewish community in New York. Further actions are being planned which could and should include solidarity with Palestinian-Americans with the same objectives. A broad multinational united movement can make peace a living reality for all people in the Middle East.

Betty Lampell
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.

— Mother's Day

Continued from page 4

the children."

From the Israeli embassy the caravan drove past the contra office and the Salvadoran, Chilean and Philippine embassies. The White House, next on the route, was not overlooked as the source of women's oppression here in the U.S. Signs called for "Money for AIDS research — not Star Wars" and "Support Native rights — free Peltier now."

The South Korean embassy could not miss the demand made by the Young Koreans United of Washington D.C.: "Guarantee women's rights in South Korea" and "Withdraw U.S. troops and nuclear weapons."

The caravan was well received as it joined the fourth annual demonstration of Mothers Against Apartheid which was already in progress at the

South African embassy. As women around the world join hands in the struggle for liberation, they draw attention not only to their role as mothers but also as workers and organizers in their communities.

— Brawley

Continued from page 3

ing up yet another police murder.

Frank Brawley, Tawana's stepfather, has been fired from his job of nine years with the Short Line Bus Company for the crime of sticking by her. And the cops have now been instructed to hunt down and arrest 18 people, including some of New York City's most prominent Black clergy, for last year's anti-racist civil disobedience protests.

In refusing to go along with the racist authorities, Tawana Brawley is saying, "Enough! First you cooperate with us, then I'll testify."

But that simple demand for justice seems too much for them. And that's why they are attempting to humiliate and degrade her a second time.

— MOVE

Continued from page 3

Vietnam. "There are no indictments because MOVE members and their children were Black; MOVE members were considered less than human."

Helen Preston, one of the four grand jurists who did call for criminal charges against Sambor and other officials, reported that several of the other 16 jurists agreed with her but voted to accept the report because "Castile indicated there was not

enough evidence to prosecute."

Mayor Wilson E. Goode has been criticized for his role in the MOVE assault for abdicating his responsibility as a leader of the city, and a representative of oppressed people who helped put him in office.

The real criminal acts, however, were committed by the police, by Sambor and by the federal government officials who helped plan the attack and even provided the means to carry it out, including the explosive C-4. Then they lied over and over to cover up their crimes.

On the picket line

Continued from page 2

none at all hate it. Amazing, right? Here's the punch line: the workers didn't report their feelings themselves to Accountemps. Personnel directors — their bosses — were the subjects of the survey. According to AFSCME Local 171 and Dollars and Sense magazine, "The odds against a personnel director accurately assessing workers' satisfaction are about 1,000 to one."

SF: tune in. "On The Job," a local cable TV program on labor issues produced by San Francisco's Labor Video Project, will show highlights of the labor contingent in the Oct. 11, 1987, March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, featuring exclusive Workers World photographs, and of the solidarity reception held the day before at AFL-CIO national headquarters. The show will be aired May 12 and 26 at 8:00 PM on cable channel 25.

Shelley Ettinger

Little cheering for Mitterrand reelection in France

Ultra-right gains in first round raise questions worldwide

By John Catalinotto

French Socialist Party (PS) leader and incumbent President Francois Mitterrand won the second round of the election handily May 8, getting over 54% of the vote. The rightist candidate, Premier Jacques Chirac of the Rally for the Republic Party, got 46%, worse than the rightists ever did in the past.

But what's being discussed in the working-class movement internationally is not so much Mitterrand's reelection but the results of the first round voting. This showed a continued decline in votes for the French Communist Party (PCF), down to 6.7%, and an unprecedented 14.4% vote for the neo-fascist National Front (FN) and its racist leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, including over 28% of the vote in Marseilles.

That one in seven voted for this Gallic Mussolini shows how much the French ruling class has opened its pocketbook and its media to the ultra-right.

Who is Le Pen, who is the FN?

Jean-Marie Le Pen is a former paratrooper who served French imperialism in Vietnam in 1954, in the French attack on Suez in 1956 and in the French colonial war against Algeria, where there is testimony that he tortured Algerian captives. He's sort of a French George Wallace, with some Oliver North thrown in, and maybe some Lieutenant Calley.

He was an early member of the Poujadist neo-fascist movement of the 1950s that attracted support from shopkeepers and tradesmen with scarcely-veiled anti-Semitic appeals against "international finance" and demagogic appeals against taxes.

After Algeria won independence in 1962, Le Pen was a sympathizer of the OAS, the secret organization of army officers who tried to illegally overthrow the de Gaulle government for settling with the Algerians.

He's shown his anti-Semitism recently with a September 1987 remark that Nazi gas chambers were "a minor point" in the history of World War II. He's come out for quarantining people with AIDS. And of course he has carried out a relentless attack on the French Communist Party.

But Le Pen's central program has been anti-immigrant racism directed especially against Arab people from the former French colonies in North Africa. He has blamed these immigrants for unemployment, even adopting as a slogan, "Two million immigrants equals two million unemployed."

Le Pen's hard-core followers include those French settlers bitter over leaving Algeria to its people, army officers mourning the lost empire, old Nazi collaborators, and some of those shopkeepers and artisans that Poujade attracted.

The PS-PCF government

When Mitterrand won in 1981 in coalition with the French Communist Party (PCF), in the popular sections of Paris there was dancing in the streets. The French workers saw the victory as an opening toward socialism.

In truth, Mitterrand's party opened with a moderate reform program something like Roosevelt's New Deal which brought some gains for workers during the first year. But nothing to challenge the supremacy of capital.

Not only did this policy meet with sabotage from the French capitalists, who rushed to send their money abroad, it also faced fierce pressure from Thatcher in Britain, Kohl in West German and Reagan in the U.S. These three had opened a frontal at-

tack on workers' standard of living.

By early 1983, the PS-PCF government was in retreat. The "New Deal" program was replaced by austerity, which included plant closings in most heavy industries. This was demanded by the French bosses and bankers and their international partners, but carried out by a PS-PCF government dominated by Mitterrand's party.

Unemployment climbed to over 10% officially, where it has remained for years. This disillusioned many workers, especially the unemployed, with the working-class parties in office. In 1984 the PCF left the government coalition, but has been unable to mobilize strong opposition to the austerity program.

In the 1986 legislative elections, the center-right parties regained a majority. The PCF dropped to only 35 representatives from 86. Based on the new proportional representation law, repealed since then, the neo-fascist FN for the first time elected 33 members to parliament.

Role of French ruling class

With all the analysis about Le Pen's vote total, the ruling class never manage to put the blame where it really belongs: on themselves.

The PS-PCF victory in 1981 led to a vicious reaction by the French bosses. Anti-communist rhetoric, never lacking in the capitalist media, became more and more prevalent. And as the economic crisis continued, more and more anti-immigrant, especially anti-Arab propaganda flooded the media.

For example, quite "respectable" publications opened a national debate on whether France would remain French or whether the "foreigners" would out-populate the Europeans by having more children.

After the April 24 election, Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, in Chirac's party and France's equivalent to Ed Meese, has stated that he shares similar values with Le Pen.

And Chirac, fishing for Le Pen's nationalistic voters, tried to take credit for some last-minute imperialist offensives. French hostages were returned from Lebanon. A French secret-service terrorist who helped bomb the "Rainbow Warrior" ship in New Zealand was returned from exile in the South Pacific.

Invasion in Kanaky

And French commandos attacked a group of Kanak rebels in the nickel-rich French territory of New Caledonia (Kanak), killing 19 of the Kanak freedom fighters. Kanaks are indigenous Melanesian people who are demanding self-rule.

While these events failed to gain Chirac the election, the overall impact of the "respectable" right adopting much of Le Pen's program was to make Le Pen's views acceptable to ruling-class public opinion. The media was open to him. And he expressed his racist opinions in the most demagogic, simplistic terms.

Where did Le Pen find his voters? This question has been answered deceptively by ruling-class analysts, both in Europe and in the U.S. They conclude that since the PCF lost votes, "Tired of one brand of extremism from the PCF, the workers shifted to another from the FN."

Polls taken after the election and published in Le Monde April 27 showed that the bulk of FN voters were from the usual layers of society he attracts: shopkeepers, artisans, supervisors and small farmers, with a gain among unemployed and retired people. Where unionized workers voted FN it was for the most part not from the PCF-influenced CGT unions,

which had only 3% voting for Le Pen.

While a direct jump from the PCF to the FN was rare, the electoral decline of the French Communist Party certainly continued in this election, dropping from 15.3% in 1981 to 9.7% in 1986 to 6.7% on April 24.

Even today, the PCF is the strongest organization of France's industrial working class since its role building the CGT unions after World War II. But just as in the other imperialist countries, there has been a decline in basic industry in France, with tremendous closing of plants and mines in coal, steel and auto.

This structural change in French capitalism has brought about a severe loss of union membership in the CGT, as well as in other unions, and a corresponding loss in influence by the PCF. It's similar to how the AFL-CIO has lost membership here.

Also since the late 1960s, when production was expanding, millions of immigrant workers, including Italian, Spanish and Portuguese workers, and many from Algeria and Morocco, joined the workforce.

Only by building solidarity between European-origin and immigrant workers and by aggressively fighting all forms of racism could the PCF win the loyalty of the new layers. This is no easy task even if the leadership gives it the top priority it deserves.

But the PCF concentrated on its usual constituents. A major PCF slogan for this election was "Produce and buy French." As it has since 1969, the PCF

lost votes, mostly to Mitterrand. Even in some areas like the old "red belt" of industrial suburbs around Paris, the PCF was outpolled by the FN.

Other left parties

In addition, in the April 24 election, some former PCF voters opted for Pierre Juquin, a "renovator" who left the PCF and ran separately. Juquin got 2.1% of the vote, in a campaign supported by PCF dissidents and by the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR).

Arlette Laguiller of the Lutte Ouvriere (LO) got another 2.0%. The LCR and LO call themselves Trotskyist. An environmental party — whose voters are not necessarily leftist — got 3.7%.

On May 1, Le Pen challenged the working class by holding his party rally in Paris. A number of unions and anti-racist organizations like SOS-racisme redoubled their efforts for their May Day activities. That day Le Pen had gathered 25,000 of his storm troopers at the Tuileries Garden, while some 70,000 workers marched in other parts of Paris.

On the right, Chirac dropped to 19.9%. The more moderate rightist Raymond Barre also dropped with 16.5%. Chirac's defeat May 8 may mean a new coalition between Mitterrand and Barre's parties, a center-left coalition.

There was no dancing in the streets at this prospect, but a new determination to turn around Le Pen and the FN is reported from Paris.

U.S.-Canada relations — Acid rain and submarines

By G. Dunkel

Canada's Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, made an official visit to the U.S. at the end of April to ask for a 50% reduction in the acid rain produced by the U.S., for confirmation of free trade between both countries and for respect for Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. What he got from the Reagan administration was permission to buy from Great Britain a nuclear submarine that uses U.S. technology.

Gases causing acid rain are produced from the exhaust of cars and trucks and when certain types of coal are burned without emission controls. These gases are transformed into sulfuric and nitric acid in the atmosphere and fall back to earth in the form of rain and snow, disrupting life in lakes and forests.

Millions of square miles of Eastern Canada and the Northeastern United States are severely affected by acid rain produced in the Midwest. The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment reported in 1984 that 3,000 lakes in the Eastern U.S. were affected by acid rain.

It is the general feeling in Canada, which Mulroney at least expressed although he has not done much about it, that Canada faces an "ecological disaster caused by acid rain if nothing is done."

But the day before Mulroney's visit began, Washington rejected his key

demand. U.S. negotiators at an international conference on the environment in Geneva, Switzerland, demanded the right for U.S. industry to "emit 20% more of a key ingredient of acid rain than it produced last year," according to the Washington Post.

The Reagan administration's main response to acid rain has been to change its definition. Rain acidic enough to limit the growth of grass or cause pine trees to shed needles and die can no longer be called "acid."

Free trade and sovereignty

Mulroney also raised free trade and sovereignty. Canadian workers are concerned that U.S. monopolies will use the free trade treaty to gain complete domination of Canada's economy.

Already, some high-paying, union jobs processing fish in depressed areas of Eastern Canada have been moved to low-paying, nonunion plants in the U.S. Mulroney's visit to these Canadian areas on Mother's Day was met by strong pickets protesting the loss of jobs and industry.

While Reagan and the Pentagon agreed that Canada could get U.S.-designed nuclear engines, there is no way Washington is going to agree to respect Canadian sovereignty over the Northwest Passage between Baffin Island and Greenland. The U.S. Navy wants to operate in the Arctic Ocean so it can threaten the Soviet Union.

Though Washington refused to make the slightest concession on matters of real concern to every Canadian and many this side of the border, it went all out to make Mulroney's visit a public relations success. He got a 90-minute personal meeting with Reagan and the chance to be televised in Canada addressing a joint session of Congress.

On any issue of substance, Mulroney came away empty-handed.

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Senador colombiano denuncia violaciones de los derechos humanos en Colombia

Por Octavio Vargas

"No hay voluntad en Colombia por parte del presidente o de los altos estamentos gubernamentales y militares para poner fin al baño de sangre que cubre el suelo colombiano", fué parte de una declaración que hiciera el senador colombiano Pedro Alcántara Herrán, representante del izquierdista movimiento colombiano Unión Patriótica en un acto de solidaridad llevado a cabo el 23 de abril en los recintos del Partido Mundo Obrero.

Pedro Alcántara Herrán quien goza de reconocimiento internacional por su obra en el campo del grabado y la pintura, miembro del Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos en Colombia y senador por la Unión Patriótica de Colombia se encuentra en norteamérica en una gira por diferentes ciudades de Estados Unidos y Canadá invitado por el Comité de Solidaridad con Colombia de Nueva York, para dar testimonio de la grave situación de violación de los derechos humanos que vive este país sudamericano.

El objetivo de esta gira según el propio senador Alcántara, es hacer llegar a los organismos internacionales y nacionales de estos dos países y al pueblo norteamericano la denuncia sobre la desenfadada violencia desatada contra el pueblo colombiano y sus organizaciones políticas, sindicales y gremia-

les. En su intervención en Washington D.C., frente a la Comisión Vigilante de los Derechos Humanos de la OEA, de la cual Colombia fué expulsada por el deterioro de la violación de los derechos humanos, el senador logro que una comisión permanente investigativa de esta organización fuera enviada a Colombia para investigar la grave situación del país.

Alcántara señaló que las causas reales de la violencia endémica que vive el país, han sido los avances de la clase trabajadora en el foro político de la nación, que están poniendo en peligro el control absoluto por parte de la burguesía en los designios del país y que han mantenido desde la formación misma de la república. Estos avances pueden ser claramente vistos en los resultados de la jornada electoral para la elección popular de alcaldes, donde la Unión Patriótica y el conjunto de las fuerzas democráticas conquistaron mas del 10% de las municipalidades del país.

Los avances se pueden notar en toda los diferentes sectores democráticos de Colombia, la reciente formación de la Coordinadora Guerrillera "Simón Bolívar", que agrupa el total de las fuerzas armadas revolucionarias del país, la formación de la CUT, Central Unitaria de los Trabajadores que une el 80% de los trabajadores organizados y el auge unitario que vive toda Colombia. La excusa del narcotráfico como el

causante fundamental de la barbarie en Colombia, es simplemente una cortina de humo pues trata de ocultar que es el militarismo y las instituciones mas reaccionarias del país, que sienten el peso de las masas por el control propio de su destino que los obliga a responder a sangre y fuego.

Alcántara en Washington presentó un reporte de Amnistía Internacional sobre las violaciones de los derechos humanos en Colombia. Este texto señala como culpables de los asesinatos que se han venido perpetrando en contra del conjunto de los sectores democráticos del país y especialmente contra la Unión Patriótica — que han perdido ya más de 600 muertos — a las Fuerzas Armadas de Colombia en concierto con el narcotráfico.

Pedro Alcántara Herrán en la lista de muerte

El hecho que fuera el mismo Alcántara el que presentara el reporte de Amnistía Internacional fue de extrema importancia no solo por ser un dirigente de la Unión Patriótica sino por estar en una de las tenebrosas listas de la muerte que circulan en Colombia, y de las cuales ya fueron asesinados importantes dirigentes políticos de la oposición, y personalidades dentro y fuera del gobierno que en un momento se manifestaron en contra del desangre y demandaban justas y verdaderas rei-

vindicaciones para el pueblo, tales como el presidente de la Unión Patriótica Jaime Pardo Leal, Héctor Abad Gómez presidente del Comité por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos con base en Medellín, Ovidio Cano dirigente sindical de la zona agraria de Urabá y el Procurador general de la nación Carlos Mauro Hoyos.

En los últimos tiempos Colombia ha venido experimentando una peligrosa escalada en la guerra sucia, donde el derecho más fundamental el derecho a la vida se le es negado al pueblo colombiano, manifestó el senador, desde 1986 cuando más de 14,000 personas fueron asesinadas.

Una de las repercusiones que ha tenido esta importante gira del dirigente de la Unión Patriótica ha sido la destitución de un alto encargado del Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (DAS), departamento de la policía que vigila la seguridad nacional, por colaborar con el narcotráfico y especialmente el "cartel de Medellín," esto como resultado de la conferencia de prensa en las Naciones Unidas en la cual Alcántara declaró que la policía y las Fuerzas Armadas de Colombia trabajan junto con el narcotráfico y los más recalcitrantes sectores antidemocráticos para socavar todo movimiento real del pueblo colombiano por una verdadera democracia.

Zonas Francas de Comercio: Obreras bajo la super-explotación

Por Lucinda Sintierra

En solidaridad con las trabajadoras de todo el mundo, es que ofrecemos este reportaje especial sobre las Zonas Francas de Comercio, ZFC's. En países del tercer mundo se han instalado en los últimos 20 años cientos de fábricas en áreas especiales llamadas ZFC. Corporaciones transnacionales como Sears & Roebuck, General Electric, Mattel Toys, Atari, Sony, General Motors, ITT, IBM, DuPont, Exxon, Shell, Texaco y muchas otras super-explotan los recursos naturales y humanos de estos países, sacando enormes ganancias.

Más de 1 millón de personas trabajan en estas áreas, y millones más en plantas que hacen sub-contratos. En estas zonas los trabajadores no tienen derecho a la sindicalización, ni a la huelga; y para hostigarlos existen policías especiales que registran a todos los que trabajan en el área.

En las fábricas 80 a 90% del trabajo de montaje es realizado por mujeres, entre las edades de 16 a 25, y ganan de US\$5 por el trabajo de 6 días hasta un tope de US\$3 a US\$5 por día, que no es suficiente para mantener a una persona y mucho menos a una familia entera.

Las condiciones de trabajo en la ZFC son deplorables, estas corporaciones transnacionales no tienen que darle cuenta a nadie, se rigen bajo sus propias leyes. A las mujeres jóvenes las contratan para mantener los salarios bajísimos, las someten a pruebas obligatorias, tales como la del embarazo, negándole ese empleo tan necesario si es que está en cinta. Muchas de las mujeres que ahí trabajan desarrollan problemas de salud. En algunas fábricas a las mujeres se le hecha a perder la vista, en otras pierden los dedos por la falta de protección en contra de los químicos, y en otras, desarrollan enfermedad de los pulmones, reumatismo y artritis. Cuando una mujer ya está desgastada a consecuencia de las terribles condiciones de trabajo, a la edad de 25, la despiden y emplean a otra de 16.

Los patrones aumentan la rapidez de la producción, y para conseguir esto, amenudo proveen a las trabajadoras con inyecciones de amfetaminas para mantenerlas despiertas, trabajando 12 horas y más, cayendo estas en la adicción. Sumado a esto, el hostigamiento sexual es muy común. Esta realidad es muy dura para las mujeres y aún así la mayoría no ganan lo suficiente para subsistir y algunas se ven obligadas a prostituirse.



Trabajadora en fabrica de reloj Ricoh en las Filipinas.

A pesar de las pésimas condiciones de trabajo y lo que tienen que enfrentar todos los días, estando juntas en el trabajo las ha ayudado para sacarlas del aislamiento que han vivido en economías en su mayoría agrícolas. Han podido compartir sus realidades y ha creado la base para las acciones solidarias y colectivas.

Lesbianas y gays en solidaridad con indocumentados

La semana pasada se efectuó una protesta en la frontera de San Diego, California con Tijuana, México, conmemorando el 4 de Mayo, fin del programa de la supuesta "amnistía" para los indocumentados que han vivido en este país desde antes del 1981. Esta manifestación fué organizada por ACTUP en solidaridad con los indocumentados y para protestar la política racista y anti-gay y lesbiana del gobierno de los EE.UU., se repartieron volantes en este lado de la frontera discutiendo las pruebas del SIDA, obligatorias para todos aquellos que aplican para la "amnistía."

Estas pruebas fomentan la idea racista que son los que vienen de afuera, en particular de países del Tercer Mundo como México, los que traen el virus del SIDA.

Lucinda Sintierra

La lucha de todos los trabajadores en este país, al igual que en los países tercermundistas, están totalmente ligadas unas con otras; son las mismas transnacionales apoyadas por gobiernos imperialistas que explotan a todos los obreros, mujeres y hombres. Nuestra tarea es devolver a manos del pueblo lo que a es suyo. Nuestra solidaridad está basada en intereses comunes. No dejaremos que la clase dominante nos ponga a uno en contra del otro. Con unidad, movilización y organización venceremos.