

workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Noticias en español vea página 12

SOVIET REFORMS

Sam Marcy examines the views of the new right in the USSR who criticize perestroika for not going far enough.

8

TENT CITY

Support grows to 'stay in Lansing' in Michigan jobs protest.

3



'Stay in Lansing' coordinating council.

Office workers can't organize? Harvard shows they can!

Clerical, technical workers vote in union

By Shelley Ettinger

May 24 — They'll be eating more than prestige at Harvard University from now on.

The new AFSCME local representing some 3,400 clerical and technical workers, 83% of them women, is one week old today. While the workers savor the sweetness of their May 17 unionization election victory, they've also begun organizing for the next step: contract negotiations.

The successful union drive focused on the inequities faced by an underpaid, undervalued workforce at an overblown, over-endowed institution. Now, as the struggle to improve wages, benefits and working conditions moves forward, workers have the momentum of victory on their side.

Not only in Cambridge, but throughout the labor movement nationally, the Harvard win brings a tremendous boost to the working class. After a long period of concessions, layoffs and unionbusting, a big victory like this is a shot in the arm for labor.

As AFSCME President Gerald McEntee told the workers, "It gives a real breath of vitality

and life to the entire labor movement. I'm certain that if you can do it at Harvard you can do it at an awful lot of places."

The ruling class hoped it couldn't be done at Harvard. They banked on the conventional wisdom about how secretaries are unorganizable, loyal to their bosses and identify with the prestige of the university.

But the reality of life for Harvard office and lab workers is low pay, lousy benefits, poor health and safety conditions, no childcare, high turnover, laughable pensions—in fact, pretty much the same situation faced by most women workers in the U.S. The vote outcome at Harvard signals the potential for more victories to come.

AFSCME, SEIU and other unions that have turned toward organizing clerical and other mostly female workforces are responsible for most of the new union members of the last few years. More and more, powerful strikes and struggles are being waged by Third World and women office, hospital, restaurant, hotel, textile and school workers.

Harvard is the latest indication of where fu-

Continued on page 3

EDITORIAL

Latest Howard Beach decisions show why family can't trust state in Brawley case.

10

CUBA

Venceremos Brigade members report strong internationalist mood on recent visit.

6

JUNE 4 actions in U.S. to demand Israel end occupation

By Joyce Chediak
New York

"There is a myth that Israel can just ignore the whole world, but it can't," explained Dick Becker, a member of the National Executive Committee of the Palestine Solidarity Committee. This group has initiated a National Day of Protest to End Israeli Occupation on June 4.

Demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people will take place on that day in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston and Tucson.

Becker continued, "The truth is that Israel is vulnerable because it is funded lock, stock and barrel by Washington, especially in the military sphere. This means that strong protests in this country opposing Washington's role in sup-

Continued on page 2



Texas rally protests police killing of Black man.

WW PHOTO: CHRIS CHRISTIANSEN

Cleveland, Texas: People protest killing by police

By Joanne Gavin
Cleveland, Texas

People are angry in this town.

When eleven cops from three agencies beat Kenneth Simpson, a black man, to death in the town jail on March 16, the people's anger forced the suspension of the seven cops involved. This anger was so strong that on March 26, 300 people turned out to march on City Hall.

Now, however, a grand jury indicted no one, and the City Council reinstated the city cops involved. The grand jury and the City Council ignored the overwhelming evidence that Simp-

son was murdered by the cops. For example, an autopsy report showed marks on his neck and reported the cause of death as asphyxiation. A fellow prisoner testified to the sounds of beating in Simpson's cell on the night he died.

People in this town are so concerned that after the City Council decision to reinstate the cops, an angry crowd of spectators tried to prevent the council members from leaving City Hall, then followed them down the street.

The Simpson family is demanding another autopsy and has filed a civil rights suit.

The racists, emboldened by the actions of the

Continued on page 10

Join Workers World in the Struggle

JUNE 4
Support the
Palestinian
Struggle
N.Y.C. and
San Francisco

JUNE 11
Disarmament
March
N.Y.C. and
San Francisco

JUNE 16
Soweto Day
Events

March with our banners

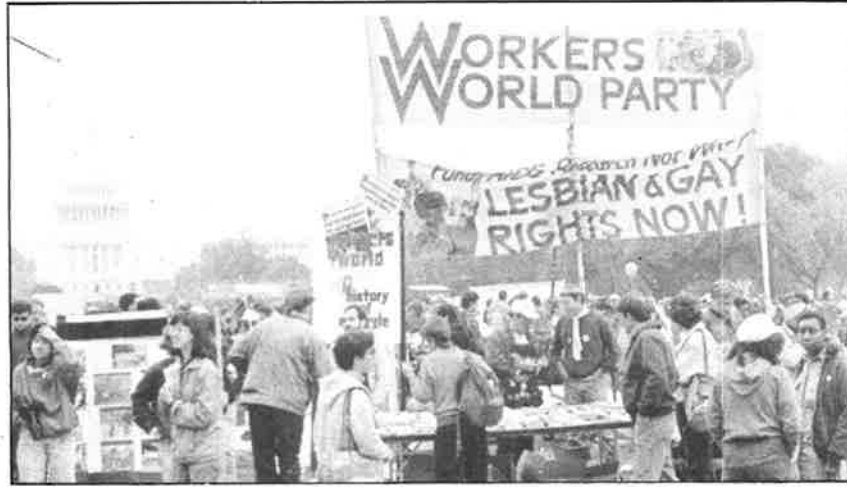
We know you find Workers World important reading. So why not help get it into the hands of others.

You can make an important contribution to our newspaper and to the struggle against imperialism, racism and exploitation by helping to distribute Workers World newspaper at these events and many others around the country. And there are other ways you can support the work we do. You are probably aware Workers World organizes and assists every progressive struggle in many ways—that is why it is so important that our friends help us.

Worker World Party also holds forums and classes you will find of great interest.

You may get a phone call soon, if not, call the branch nearest you or our national office at (212) 255-0352.

Help us distribute Workers World newspaper.



The proof of Becker's statement is a recent victory won through struggle. On April 16, 350 people marched on a Federal Laboratories plant outside of Pittsburgh. This plant produces the extra-strong and sometimes lethal tear gas that Washington sends to Israel to be used against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Due to

the protest, however, Federal Labs has suspended tear gas shipments to Israel.

Organizers for the June 4 demonstrations point to this victory at Federal labs when explaining why the upcoming regional demonstrations are so important. These protests will continue to focus on the U.S. role.

In fact, "Stop U.S. funding of the oc-

cupation" is a main demand. Other demands are: End the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; stop the killing, beating, imprisonment and expulsion of Palestinians.

Thousands expected in New York

The main activity will be in New York City where, according to organizer Yasmin Adib, "We are expecting 5,000 people." Buses and car caravans are gearing to come here from Boston to Atlanta.

And in the city, leaflets are being distributed in English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and French for the Haitian community, in an attempt to reach out widely in this multinational city.

Adib continued, "This demonstration will be an opportunity to test the ground after six months of being inundated with the media coverage on the Palestinian uprising. The June 4 protest is receiving support which cuts across wide sectors of the U.S. public. It is important for everyone to get out in the streets to show this government and the world that U.S. public opinion has changed, that people don't support the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza."

People will assemble in New York on June 4 at 12 noon in Times Square and then march to Union Square for a 3 p.m. rally.

In San Francisco, a march will begin at 11:30 at United Nations Plaza, and proceed to Union Square for a rally.

For travel information, to make donations, or to find out how you can volunteer to get the word out, phone New York City (215) 557-5410; San Francisco and Tucson (415) 861-1552; Houston (713) 668-2145; Chicago (312) 342-2986. If you would like to march with the People's Anti-War Mobilization or the All-Peoples Congress, phone: New York (212) 741-0633; San Francisco (415) 826-4828.

— June 4

Continued from page 1

pressing the Palestinian people are key to taking the pressure off Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza."

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples in this capitalist society. All work together in this organization — Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian and gay, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or if you would like to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

Atlanta: P.O. Box 424, Atlanta, Ga. 30301
 (404) 662-6417

Baltimore: 424 E. 31 St., Baltimore, Md. 21218
 (301) 889-9318

Boston: 186 Lincoln St., Room 602, Boston, Mass. 02111 (617) 426-5626

Buffalo: 349 Niagara St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14201
 (716) 855-3055

Chicago: P.O. Box 6510, Chicago, Ill. 60680
 (312) 489-3829

Cleveland: 2012 W. 25 St., Suite 602, Cleveland, Ohio 44113 (216) 861-6154

Detroit: 1947 Grand River, Room 201, Detroit, Mich. 48226 (313) 962-4979

Hartford: P.O. Box 14411, Hartford, Conn. 06114

Houston: P.O. Box 52115, Houston, Texas 77052 (713) 524-4462

Jackson: P.O. Box 8783, Jackson, Miss. 39204

Milwaukee: P.O. Box 16223, Milwaukee, Wis. 53216

New York City: 46 W. 21 St., New York, N.Y. 10010 (212) 255-0352

Philadelphia: P.O. Box 17116, Philadelphia, Pa. 19105 (215) 626-8704

Rochester, N.Y.: 816 Joseph Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14621 (716) 544-5409

San Antonio: P.O. Box 10510, San Antonio, Texas 78210

San Francisco: 3181 Mission, No. 29, San Francisco, Calif. 94110 (415) 826-4828

Seattle: 1017C E. Pike, Seattle, Wash. 98122 (206) 322-6478

Washington, D.C.: P.O. Box 43841, Washington, D.C. 20010 (202) 328-0990

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.

ROCHESTER, N.Y.

Sat., June 4: Workers World Party campaign rally and community speakout. 7:30 p.m. At New Bethel Church, 270 Scio St. Call (716) 342-5707.

SAN FRANCISCO

Fri., June 3: Evening in Solidarity With the People of Palestine. Featuring Abu Lughod, Palestine National Council member. Speakers. Music. Palestinian Dance. Sponsored by

the Coalition to Support the Palestinian Uprising. 7:30 p.m. \$3-\$5 donation. At First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin at Geary. Call (415) 861-1552.

Sat., June 4: National Day of Protest to End Israeli Occupation. March and rally. 11:30 a.m., gather at UN Plaza (Civic Center BART). 1 p.m., rally at Union Square. Call Palestine Solidarity Committee, (415) 861-1552.

In This Issue ...

NATIONAL

Union wins at Harvard	1
June 4 demonstration	1
Texas police killing	1
Michigan Tent City	3
Teamsters	3
Rights commission wrongs PWAs	4
On the picketline	4
Philadelphia healthcare crisis	5
San Francisco budget cuts	5
Seniors meet in Detroit	5

INTERNATIONAL

Cuba Venceremos Brigade	6
Angola sets back South Africa	6
Dominican Republic unionists	6
Ojeda bailed out	6
Korea's Kwangju remembered	7
Asian news in brief	7
Vietnam	7
The reforms in the USSR analysis by Sam Marcy	8

EDITORIALS AND FEATURES

Tawana Brawley and Howard Beach	10
Eating dust in Panama	10

NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Republica Dominicana	12
Polonia	12
Local 1199	12

workers world

46 W. 21 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10010 Editorial: (212) 206-8222
 Business: (212) 255-0352 Telex: 6501176920
 Vol. 30, No. 2/June 2, 1988 Closing news date: May 25, 1988

Editor: Deirdre Griswold
 Technical Editor: Lallan Stein

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, Joyce Chediak, Robert Dobrow, Gary Wilson; Contributing Editors: Monica Moorehead, Carmen Roundtree, Sharon Shelton, Andy Stapp; Political Prisoners: Leslie Feinberg; Special Supplement: Shelley Ettinger; Technical Staff: Pat Chin, Mark Doran, Ken Franson, Marsha Goldberg, Katy Rosen, Steve Schultz; Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Petra Guerra, Teresa Gutierrez, Santiago Manque-Milla, Rosa Maria de la Torre, David Perez, Lucinda Sintierra, Octavio Vargas, Angela Vera; Darkroom Staff: G. Dunkel, Fabian, Susan Rotgard

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.

Call to 'stay in Lansing' gains backing

Michigan fight for jobs set for June 7

By David Sole
Detroit

May 22 — Organizing for the June 7 "tent city" at Michigan's State Capitol is getting into high gear throughout the state. Groups and individuals are responding to the call for the unemployed, homeless and hungry to gather in protest and then stay in Lansing until they win emergency relief.

In response to the serious question of survival raised by this planned dramatic action, state officials have expressed their opposition because of "the possibility of extensive damage to the lawn and flower beds."

In the past few days alone endorsements and donations have been coming in to the Detroit mobilization office. UAW Local 602 in Lansing and Local 985 in Detroit have joined in.

Detroit City Councilmen Clyde Cleveland and Mel Ravitz are new supporters who intend to introduce a resolution of support before the whole council. Welfare rights and homeless groups are also planning to participate.

One Lansing soup kitchen staff has volunteered to feed the tent city on the

first night while another community service group will provide lunch on June 8.

The idea for the "stay in Lansing" has captured attention across the state with stories appearing in almost every newspaper on May 11. Many radio and TV shows are hosting organizers of the action to discuss the real situation in Michigan. Their comments are expected to contrast with Governor Blanchard's rosy references to Michigan as the "comeback state."

In Detroit, Flint, Saginaw and Ann Arbor, lists are now being drawn up of those who intend to join the tent city and how many tents will be needed. Boxes of canned foods are being collected by volunteers in preparation for June 7.

Arrangements are being made for portable toilets, showers at nearby facilities, medical aid, childcare and all the many other details needed for this ongoing people's lobby.

Rally could attract hundreds

The governor and his staff are not enthusiastic. In a letter to the Coordinating Council, building manager Peter Wise at the Capitol has refused to approve or accommodate the June 7 tent city.

BULLETIN: On Tuesday, May 24, just two hours before the legal deadline, Harvard filed a legal challenge to the union election with the National Labor Relations Board. Union officials expressed confidence that the election results would be upheld and said they are continuing preparations for contract negotiations.

the drive. According to Ed Childs, co-chief steward, the clerical union vote "was just a big boost for us. Everybody was so happy, because now we'll be backed up by the 3,700 of them. People are really up, fantastically up."

The community also supported the union drive. Harvard is a major Cambridge slumlord, and has a reputation for arrogance and racism in the community. Strong solidarity between community and workers developed during the organizing campaign.

The union is now setting up contract committees, and there are discussions with Local 26 about coordinating contract negotiations together.

Besides citing damage to the lawn and flowers, Wise claims that security cannot be provided and other events are scheduled on following days. Most revealing is his expressed fear that "the rally could attract hundreds."

At a meeting of the Coordinating Council on May 21 at UAW Local 15 hall, the body decided to continue to organize for "tent city" and to demand the constitutional right to assemble.

Bill Roundtree of the Coordinating Council told Workers World, "Not one of the state's reasons holds any water. In December they gave the homeless the right to camp out in tents. This is

clearly unconstitutional and illegal discrimination."

Organizers intend to begin a mass telegram campaign to Governor James Blanchard to protest the illegal denial. They also plan to launch a legal challenge to the arbitrary state action.

"They want us to be invisible. But we will be seen and heard from June 7 onwards," stated Joyce Crutchfield, a laid-off GM worker and single mother of four. "I've got my tent and sleeping bag. They are worried about the lawn, and we can't feed our families. We have to do this action and do it now!"



Lansing, Mich., May 10, groups announce 'Tent City.'

WW PHOTO

— Office workers

Continued from page 1

ture labor struggles will come. AFSCME clearly recognized this, reportedly spending well over half a million dollars and assigning about 20 full-time organizers to the campaign.

Less than a quarter of private university clericals are unionized. The Harvard bargaining unit is now the biggest in the country, and workers at other campuses reacted with glee.

At nearby Boston University, where workers are represented by District 65-UAW, there was reportedly elation the day after the victory next door. In New York City, where both the Columbia University and New York University clerical unions are now in contract talks, activists said they felt buoyed and strengthened by the news.

Breaking the isolation.

While the vote was close — the union won by just 44 votes — 1,530 workers voted for the union. That's enough, according to some activists, to shut Harvard down.

Of course, the Harvard bosses did their damndest to keep the union out. Reams of anti-union material — leaflets, flyers, and even a four-page letter from President Derek Bok mailed to every employee — appealed to the workers' devotion to "the academic enterprise."

But workers wore buttons reading, "We Can't Eat Prestige," and pointed to Harvard's \$3.85 billion endowment. Susan Manning, who is paid \$15,600 per year to handle donations of stocks and bonds to the university, said, "When you see all the money coming through... having a union is a cause you have to fight for."

Most of the union organizers were women, and their work not only contributed to the victory but helped break the isolation of many Harvard workers separated in small offices. The day after the election, clerical worker Rachel Nasca told Workers World, a jubilant spirit filled the halls and offices, as the workers felt united and powerful. "Everyone is just so, so excited," she said.

Other Harvard workers, too, joined the fight as well as the victory celebrations. About 500 cafeteria workers are members of Hotel and Restaurant Local 26, and they wore union buttons in the dining halls during the course of

Teamsters union: a change is in the air

64% vote to reject master freight contract

By Gary Wilson

Some truck drivers may have slapped their own faces to make sure they weren't dreaming at the wheel. On May 18, the over-the-road drivers voted nearly 2-to-1 to reject a contract everyone said was rotten. The next morning the union's top officials overturned the vote and signed the contract.

It was the second time in less than a year that the Teamsters union members had voted against a major contract only to have the top leaders nix the popular vote.

The May 18 vote was 64,101 to 36,782 against the National Master Freight Agreement, which covers 200,000 drivers and warehouse workers. The "no" votes were about 64% of the ballots cast.

Last August, 53% of the rank and file voted against the nationwide contract covering 100,000 workers at United Parcel Service (UPS). At that time, the top officials also invoked the provision put in the union's constitution in 1961 that says a contract is rat-

ified unless more than two-thirds of those voting oppose it.

Some see the votes as a sign of a revolt in the ranks of the Teamsters union, a revolt that is already shaking the top leadership. And the last word on the master freight agreement has not been written.

According to Ken Paff, a spokesperson for the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a group which has drawn wider and wider support in the union's ranks, "This is the first time a national freight agreement has been rejected since Hoffa put them into effect in 1964. We are calling on them to return to the bargaining table." James Hoffa was the president of the Teamsters from 1957 to 1967.

"The contract was voted down," Paff continued, "because the members are fed up with losing. The leadership of this union is more and more out of touch with the rank and file. . . . People are tired of being sold out."

There is definitely a change happening in the Teamsters union. There is a change at the rank and file level where more and more of the members are

Black and Latino, more are women. There is a change in the national union, which rejoined the AFL-CIO after being independent for some 30 years. And there is a storm of change in the top levels of the union's leadership.

Teamsters President Jackie Presser, who had threatened the union's membership in a letter before the vote that if they rejected the contract he would invoke the two-thirds rule, stepped down shortly after the vote results were announced. The stated reason was his health, which hasn't been good.

But his stepping down, supposedly for only four months, was unexpected. And the rank and file vote has spurred a cleavage in the union's leadership, with each emerging voice sounding defensive; the arrogance of the past is fast disappearing in the struggle for the top post.

No matter what the day-to-day turns may now be in the Teamsters union, it is certain that a change is coming in what is a most important union.

Civil Rights Commission wrongs people with AIDS

ACTUP protests as bigots testify

By Saul Kanowitz
New York

by falsely counterposing the rights of people with AIDS versus the public health of society"

The Reagan administration has stacked the Civil Rights Commission with bigots. These reactionaries have attempted to dismantle the commission by attacking the victims of discrimination and defending those who champion racism, sexism and anti-gay and other forms of bigotry.

The commission has "defended" white workers who claim they've "suffered" discrimination from affirmative action programs. The anti-women stand of the commission was made clear by chairman Clarence M. Pendleton. Talking about pay equity, he said, "It's the looniest thing since loony tunes."

These latest hearings were a forum

for bigots and their reactionary presentations. For example, the topic of discrimination in housing was addressed by a Texas realtor who was having a hard time selling a house because someone with AIDS died in it!

The inhuman attitude of the commission towards people with AIDS was shown by another witness, Dr. Alexander D. Langmuir. He held up a chart showing a decline in the number of new AIDS cases and stated, "The curve is bending over." The decline in new cases was Langmuir's justification to ask for no more government spending around AIDS. This reasoning ignores the suffering of the thousands already sick from AIDS and the many thousands more exposed to the HIV virus, who may become sick.

Eight years into the epidemic, the

federal government is giving a platform to those like Langmuir who preach genocide as a solution to the AIDS epidemic.

Mary Francis Berry, a Black woman and the only pre-Reagan appointee to the commission left, differentiated herself from the others and issued a statement critical of the hearing. It read in part, "The commission's conclusions have long been announced before the work is done."

After disrupting the hearings and causing a ten-minute recess, the ACTUP demonstrators left, chanting, "Reagan's panel keeps debating while eight years later we're still waiting." When people with AIDS and their supporters become fed up waiting, the pronouncements of the commission will be swept aside by their actions.

On the picket line

Struggle at GE. National contract talks between General Electric and 14 unions open May 24, with the jobs of 72,000 workers at stake. GE has been on a layoff and cutback rampage for the last several years, and is expected to try to further gut workers' job rights. But a struggle may emerge. One signal of the potential is a 52-day strike recently waged — and won — by GE workers in Evendale, Ohio, near Cincinnati. There, the 5,700 members of UAW Local 647 and 1,500 members of the Machinists walked out after GE unilaterally changed job classifications in violation of the union contract; if unchallenged, the change undoubtedly would have resulted in a heavy loss of jobs. The strikers forced GE to the table and won contractual job security guarantees. Most important, the strike was waged with militancy and garnered much support from other unions, including several solidarity rallies that drew thousands. GE is a huge multinational conglomerate with profits of over \$2.9 billion in 1987. It owns NBC, where workers were recently forced to strike over vicious takebacks and job losses, as well as electronic sweatshops all over the Third World, where it is notorious for tremendous exploitation of oppressed workers.

environmental ordinance May 21 that could have a sweeping impact on the town's relationship with International Paper's Androskoggin mill, the site of a year-long strike against the company's concession demands. The 148-page ordinance basically takes the state's environmental regulations and puts them under local enforcement control. The top state officials for OSHA and the Department of Environmental Protection were appointed by the notoriously pro-big business Gov. John R. McKernan, Jr., and have repeatedly been accused of being soft on IP, which has been operating the mill with inexperienced scab labor. Saturday's vote comes after a year of an unprecedented number of chemical leaks at the plant, including one on Feb. 5 that required the evacuation of 4,000 area residents. The latest leak occurred only two days before the vote, causing the evacuation of two pulp mill areas. Townspeople were outraged that IP management never told town officials that the leak was occurring. Company officials have said they would go to court to block implementation of the ordinance. Meanwhile, local UPIU presidents from around the country are meeting in Memphis, Tenn., to try to work out a common strategy to win the IP strike/lockout, involving 3,400 workers at four mills.



WW PHOTO: J. CATALINOTTO

Local 1199 hits Salvation Army. On May 22, over 400 members and supporters of hospital workers union Local 1199 picketed on 14th Street outside Salvation Army headquarters in New York City. They demanded a contract for the 450 workers at Booth Memorial Hospital, which is owned and run by the Salvation Army. Picketers charged the bosses are more concerned with salvation of money than the rights and benefits of the workers.

Since July 27, 1987, workers at Booth Memorial have been working without a contract. The administration has denied benefits to the workers such as the right to medical services. "The Salvation Army," the union said, "preaches brotherhood but is systematically trying to destroy the workers' benefits." Local 1199 is the union which represents workers in hospitals and medical schools and most recently, home care workers.

Petra Guerra

No to AIDS discrimination. The first lawsuit against a company charging AIDS-based discrimination, filed in 1984, ended in victory in April 1988. A court ruled that Raytheon Co. had violated state law protecting the rights of the disabled in housing and employment when it barred John Chadbourne from his job in January 1984 after he was diagnosed with AIDS, although he was able to perform his work. The judge ordered Raytheon to pay back wages and attorney's fees to Chadbourne's survivors; Chadbourne died over three years ago. The decision to pursue the case after his death forced a ruling on the rights of workers with AIDS, and the victory, among the first based on state statute, was considered significant by AIDS activists.

Gay teachers demand benefits. Lesbian and gay workers are increasingly taking up the demand for equal on-the-job benefits, and a new legal front in this struggle has now been opened. Three teachers in the New York City public schools are suing the Board of Education for \$1 million, charging discrimination based on marital status and sexual

orientation. The teachers are demanding that their lovers be provided the same opportunity to receive health and other benefits as the spouses of married heterosexuals. The decision by these particular workers to take on the bosses was especially courageous, since lesbian and gay teachers had long been terrorized into hiding by witchhunts and other horrors.

Con Ed. Anger is brewing in the construction trades in New York City, where Consolidated Edison, the huge electrical utility company, has been bringing in non-union labor from other states, housing them in trailers at its work sites, and denying work to union workers. Over 1,000 building tradespeople blocked traffic outside Con Ed's annual stockholders' meeting at Madison Square Garden on May 17 to protest the company's attempts to bypass its union contracts. NYC Central Labor Council President Thomas Van Arsdale, business agent for Electrical Workers Local 3, told delegates at the labor body's May 19 meeting that an industry-wide strike is being considered.

Shelley Ettinger

IP Strike. By a margin of 813-673, voters in Jay, Maine, approved an en-



Workers protest hiring practices at Con Ed.

Cuts cause crisis in Philadelphia healthcare

Federal funding swallowed by Pentagon

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

On May 12, in the harshest action ever taken by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the James C. Guiffre Medical Center, located in the Fishtown area of North Philadelphia, was ordered to halt almost all admissions, to shut down its emergency room, and to stop performing surgery.

The order came after a state investigation found 124 violations of state regulations, including 12 questionable deaths and 29 cases of unnecessary surgery of a review of just 66 cases.

Guiffre officials are trying to reorganize the medical center before a June 17 deadline to meet all federal standards or lose its Medicare funding and state Medical Assistance funds.

On April 27, the Franciscan Health System announced the bankruptcy closing of Fishtown's remaining hospital, St. Mary's, threatening the jobs of 744 workers and the health care of an entire community.

St. Mary's and Guiffre serve a north Philadelphia community with three times the city's unemployment rate. There three out of four families fall below the poverty level, and a third of the households are on public assistance.

The community consists of Black, Hispanic, Arab, and white workers. It suffers the city's highest death rates due to heart disease, drug abuse, accidents, cancer and influenza.

Guiffre also contracts with the city to treat Philadelphia's 4,000 prison inmates.

Protest at St. Mary's Hospital

On May 4, about 700 people joined in a protest vigil at St. Mary's Hospital. Lukas Louka, a Fishtown worker told a reporter, "Fishtown is a very united community. It's like a union. The people are going to fight very hard to keep it open."

The community has been successful so far in getting Federal Bankruptcy Court Judge David A. Scholl to order St. Mary's to remain open while physicians, politicians and neighborhood

groups find a way to keep the hospital from closing.

While Fishtown is hardest hit, hospitals in the rest of Philadelphia are also scrambling to survive. Bankruptcy has hit some, affiliations, mergers and outright purchases have saved others. Many have laid off workers.

But survival is less likely for "struggling city hospitals that nobody wants," according to Al Zelulinsky, a hospital industry consultant. "They serve those who can't pay for care, and they seem to be slipping through the cracks." In other words, the health care industry's concern is profits before people's health.

Low wages, cutbacks

Federal cutbacks to fund increased Pentagon spending are a major cause of the crisis. Among these cuts are decreased reimbursement for Medicare and Medicaid, cutbacks in payments for graduate medical education, and fewer federal funds for capital projects such as construction of newer health facilities.

These cutbacks are especially significant because of the growing number of families who can not afford medical insurance. One study by the Delaware Valley Hospital Council estimated 84,000 adults and 31,000 children in Philadelphia are "medically indigent — neither public plans like Medical Assistance nor private health insurance pay for their medical care."

The study blamed the growth of uninsured workers on the shift "from

a largely unionized manufacturing economy to a service economy."

Philadelphia is the only major city in the U.S. without a general municipal hospital. Philadelphia General Hospital was closed in 1977. It was replaced with District Health Centers (clinics) and the Philadelphia Nursing Home, to provide health care "regardless of medical history or ability to pay." These facilities are woefully underfunded.

Carol Rodgers, a nurse in AFSCME Local 2187, complained at a recent community meeting that her clinic ran out of bandages May 1, with no funds available to buy more until July 1.

Philadelphia Health Commissioner Maurice Clifford advocates privatization, through which the city clinics would be leased out to private doctors and hospitals. But a pilot project at the Franklinton Health Center resulted in a dramatic decrease in services to the poor and uninsured.

On May 17, over 250 people, 80% Black, a majority sanitation workers, attended a public forum against privatization in the health care and sanitation departments. Thomas Cronin, head of AFSCME D.C. 47, and Carol Rodgers of Local 2187, AFSCME spoke against privatization of health care.

Whether health care, garbage collection, or other vital services threatened by cutbacks and private for-profit takeovers, a struggle is needed to insure the continuation of these programs.

Seniors' convention in Detroit reveals widespread poverty

By Kris Hamel
Detroit

May 13 — The biennial convention of the 28-million member American Association of Retired People (AARP) brought an estimated 35,000 seniors to downtown Detroit this week. Most of the convention participants came from metro Detroit but thousands came from as far away as California and Hawaii.

The three-day meeting at Cobo Hall heard speakers and presentations on many facets of senior life. The vitality and experience of older persons were highlighted all week by local officials and the media.

The happy picture of retirement as a time for well-deserved relaxation and recreation was shattered, however, by figures compiled for the AARP by the Center for Population Research at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

For most seniors, especially for those belonging to oppressed nationalities, the economic and medical realities of life are very bleak.

Elderly Black people, comprising

the fastest-growing segment of the Black population, have a lower median income than any other group of seniors in the U.S. The annual average income for elderly Black men is about \$4,113.

This compares to \$7,408 for elderly white men, \$5,551 for Asian/Pacific Island men, \$4,592 for Latino men and \$4,257 for Native men.

Senior Black women fare even worse. Their median income is a dismal \$2,825 a year! For Latina women it's only \$2,873. White elderly women get about \$3,894 per year, with \$3,476 for Asian/Pacific Island women and \$3,033 for Native women.

The study reports that 32% of urban Black seniors live in poverty, as do nearly 50% of rural Black seniors. Compounding this economic hardship is the inadequate or non-existent healthcare that's also the norm for most working-class seniors.

In this racist and sexist capitalist system, the "golden years" only mean an increase in suffering with no relief from the day-to-day struggle for survival.

San Francisco to close libraries, cut mass transit

By Jane Cutter
San Francisco

May 13 — On Monday, May 9, Mayor Art Agnos announced a brazen assault on the living standards of poor and working people in this city.

In response to a budget deficit of \$179 million, which was "discovered" virtually within minutes of Agnos' taking office in January, he has proposed a plan of service cuts and fare increases which would have a devastating effect on San Franciscans. This deficit was supposedly hidden by the Feinstein administration.

If the Mayor's plan is put into action, the workers who depend on the Municipal Railway (MUNI) to get around town would bear the brunt of the cost of the budget deficit. Agnos wants to raise the adult fare from 75 cents to 85 cents, the senior-disabled fare from 15 cents to 25 cents, and the monthly Fast Pass from \$25 to \$28.

In addition, his plan calls for cuts in service to 17 different lines and the elimination of four lines.

Agnos is also targeting the public libraries. He wants to shut down four branch libraries: Noe Valley, Golden Gate Valley, Glen Park and Oceanview.

The Oceanview library is one of only two branches that serve predominantly Black communities. The tiny library is one of the most heavily utilized in the city, meeting the needs of many children who have access to no other after school programs.

Since closing the Oceanview branch will save the city no more than \$5,000, the act is seen as a racist move. Community residents have launched a petition drive to save the library, as have users of the other three branches. Agnos also wants to eliminate all Sunday library hours.

The Chronicle and the Examiner,

newspapers of the rich, have portrayed the Mayor's budget package as "even handed" and "across the board."

Yet Agnos is proposing an increase in the business tax rate of 1/10 of one percent. This increase will raise only \$7 million. On the other hand, the Fire Department will be cut \$14.5 million, Social Services \$7.4 million, and Public Health \$4.0 million.

Agnos himself has arrogantly tried to make light of the cuts, claiming that people will only have to wait "a few more minutes for the bus . . . and pay a little more at San Francisco General Hospital."

In response, Gloria La Riva of the All-Peoples Congress (APC), which is organizing against the budget cuts, said, "We can't take these cutbacks. There is a great deal of wealth and profits here, generated by the corporations and banks. The deficit should be borne by them."

For information on how to join the struggle against the budget cuts, call the APC at (415) 821-6545.

Malcolm X's contribution reviewed at Bay Area meeting

By Ron Holladay
San Francisco

Seventy-five people gathered in San Francisco for the program "Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson, The Struggle for Self-Determination." Monica Moorehead, national organizer for All-Peoples Congress, which sponsored the forum, contrasted Jesse Jackson's fight in the electoral arena which, she explained, grew out of the civil rights movement, with the more militant fightback movement led by Malcolm X.

The class character of Jackson's fight in 1988 shown by his increasing support among white workers, many who have lost their relatively good-paying job in heavy industries, was cause for support and encouragement among all progressive forces, said Moorehead.

The film "El Hajj Malik El Shabbazz" (the name Malcolm X took



Monica Moorehead WW PHOTO

shortly before his assassination) on Malcolm's life was shown. The large turnout shows that many of the ideas that Malcolm X stood for, including a determined fightback against all racism, still have relevance among concerned people today.

Now there's a book on the high-tech revolution that projects a working-class response.

Order:
World View Forum
46 West 21 St.
New York,
N.Y. 10010

\$5.95 plus
75¢ postage

Internationalist spirit high in Cuba

Report from 19th Venceremos Brigade

By Mahtowin

Since 1969, residents of the United States have been traveling to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade in order to express their solidarity and friendship with the people of Cuba.

This year's brigade numbered 141 Black, Latino, Native, Asian, Arab and white people from the U.S., ranging in age from 16 to 84. These brigadistas went to Cuba in defiance of the travel ban and economic blockade imposed by the U.S. government.

Three contributors to *Workers World* newspaper — Susan Rotgard, Sara Flounders and this reporter — were part of the brigade this year. We were able to see first hand the many gains that the Cuban people have made since the triumph of their revolution in 1959.

The brigade's schedule during our two-week stay included visiting hospitals, clinics, schools, daycare centers, factories and agricultural cooperatives. We also met with representatives of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), Cuban youth (UJC), Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), and People's Power (Poder Popular).

We heard presentations on human rights and democracy in Cuba as well as on Cuba's foreign policy.

What we saw was a country where workers are not exploited, where institutional racism has been eliminated, where women have full and equal rights under the law. In Cuba, health care is a right, not a privilege as it is in the U.S.

Everywhere we went we saw beautiful, healthy children, full of confidence because they know that they are the future of Cuba.

Spirit of internationalism

One of the most inspiring facets of Cuba was the spirit of internationalism that was so abundantly evident. Cuba is a developing country in the process of building socialism, yet provides support for liberation struggles all over the world.

The brigade met with representatives of the liberation struggles of South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Guatemala, Namibia, Palestine, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama and Puerto Rico. These meetings were in keeping with the theme of this year's brigade: No more contras anywhere!

The Cuban people are very well informed on any number of issues, from the uprising in Palestine to the anti-racist struggle in the U.S. The Cubans we met were especially interested in hearing about the progress of the Jackson campaign as well as the status of the case of Leonard Peltier, the AIM leader and Native political prisoner.

Time and time again, what we heard from them was that they knew the people of the United States were not their enemies, despite the bellicose attitude of the U.S. government toward their country.

Brigadistas worked picking oranges (the best any of us had ever tasted) and worked on a construction project, one of the most moving experiences of the entire trip.

We helped to build a clinic and new dormitory for young Salvadorans living in Cuba, many of whom had had arms or legs blown off by the army in El Salvador. We talked with these youth, some as young as 14, who spoke of how they would gladly sacrifice not only their limbs but also their lives to ensure the victory of the Salvadoran people.

Although we had a very busy schedule, we also had some free time. We spent two free nights in Havana, where we talked with many Cubans on the streets and were almost inevitably invited to their homes to visit and meet their families.

While in Havana, we visited a supermarket, which we found to be well-stocked. We also visited some nightclubs in Havana, some of the many places Cubans can go to for fun.

We attended many parties and cultural activities, which should put to rest forever the notion that no one has a good time under socialism. We also spent an afternoon relaxing at Varadero Beach, which is justifiably considered to be one of the best in the world.

Above all, though, what we remember from our trip are the beautiful, smiling faces of the Cuban people, who displayed a warmth and generosity we had never before experienced.

In following weeks, Workers World will have more detailed articles on various aspects of Cuba, including health care, internationalism, women, education, children, elders and the gains of the Cuban revolution. Plus an interview with Assata Shakur.



Cuba, May 1988



Nicaragua walkathon. A walkathon raise funds for a campaign to buy oats to send to Nicaragua. Participants participated in the 10 kilometer walk through Washington and Harlem. An eight-year-old marcher expressed his motivation: "Because I think it is good for children in Nicaragua. I raised a big amount from some friends and that's about 150 pounds of oats and that's what Nicaragua needs because they didn't have it." "Nicaragua needs it because they didn't have it. The U.S. has made a war against the people there."

Angolan troops smash apartheid attack

South African casualties high at Cuito Cuanavale

By Pat Chin

Pretoria's relentless war of destabilization on one of southern Africa's frontline states was recently dealt a decisive blow in the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale, located in southeast Angola.

Cuito Cuanavale has been under almost constant bombardment since November of last year when thousands of South African troops, supported by artillery, planes, tanks and members of the counterrevolutionary

band known as UNITA, invaded southern Angola.

This town is of strategic importance to the defense of Angola. This is so not only because of its southern location, but also because it is the most advanced position of the People's Liberation Armed Forces of Angola (FAPLA) and the site of a military airfield.

Earlier this year, the *New York Times* reported (Jan. 30), rather disingenuously, that "the Angolan Government was facing a major military defeat at the hands of an insurgent

group [Jonas Savimbi's UNITA]."

While admitting that UNITA is supported and armed by both South Africa and the United States, nowhere did the article point out that the invasion was, in fact, being undertaken by none other than the hated apartheid regime. It continued the charade by reporting that Cuito Cuanavale had all but fallen to the "rebel" forces.

Recent reports coming from Angola have, however, described the central role being played by South Africa in this brutal invasion and have also confirmed that the tide has turned decisively in Angola's favor.

Since April, the South Africans have been forced to retreat, fleeing the combined strength of members of FAPLA, newly arrived Cuban troops and units of SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement. This turn of events has forced the South African regime to the conference table where they must now bargain with delegations which include Angola and Cuba.

Bargaining from strength

Now that the six-month siege of Cuito Cuanavale has been broken with the defeat of the racist apartheid forces, the Angolan Government is in a position to bargain from a position of strength. In so doing, it continues to refuse to accept UNITA as a party to the negotiations, pressing ahead with its key demands which, if met, will lay the groundwork for the withdrawal of Cuban forces.

These demands are: first, that the South African regime end its military presence in southern Angola; second, that all aid to UNITA from South Africa and the U.S. cease; and third, that UN Resolution No. 435 calling for Namibian independence be implemented.

monitor his whereabouts and he has to report to a government office every day.

"This forced exile is a disgrace that shows the real character of the U.S. government," Ojeda said. "The leg bracelet would be really humiliating if it were not for the dignity and self-respect my place in the independence movement has given me."

The U.S. demonstrated the colonial character of its domination over Puerto Rico on Aug. 30, 1985. Hundreds of FBI agents armed with automatic weapons arrived on the island in helicopters. After an assault on some 40 homes, they kidnapped and imprisoned within the U.S. the independence activists now known as the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15.

Ojeda, who spent nearly 1,000 days in prison, was held longer without trial or conviction than any other prisoner in U.S. history. Free the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15! Free Puerto Rico!

Ojeda says solidarity crucial to his release from U.S. prison

By Lallan Stein

The last member of the Puerto Rico-Hartford 15 to be held in prison, Filiberto Ojeda Rios, has finally been released on bail.

"My release is not a personal victory," the Puerto Rican independence activist told *Workers World*, "it is a victory for the people." Ojeda expressed his gratitude for massive solidarity in Puerto Rico, in the U.S. and around the world. "The support work has been crucial to winning my release," he said.

Ojeda then told of the degrading conditions still imposed on him by the U.S. government. The bail was \$1 million. His family — his mother, brother, sister and son — had to put their property up for this ransom in order to raise the 10% required.

Even then, Ojeda is not allowed to return home to Puerto Rico. He has to remain in Hartford with an electronic bracelet attached to his leg in order to

Dominican unionists Call for solidarity

By Rosa Maria de la Torre

Representatives of a labor union in the Dominican Republic which is now preparing itself for a struggle with important political and international implications, returned to the Dominican Republic this week after a series of meetings here with labor organizations, trade unionists; organizations in the Dominican community in New York and others.

Rafael Bello Ortiz and Luis Tejada represent the Electricity Corporation Workers' Union, SITRACODE. During their visit, the unionists stressed the importance of solidarity among trade unions and described their efforts to prepare for the developing conflict with management. In this case, management is the Dominican government and the international banks.

SITRACODE was organized 26 years ago and has a membership of approximately 5,200 workers out of a work force of 6,000. It is one of the oldest unions in the country.

With the background of a deepening energy crisis in the country, the SITRACODE workers are preparing for a confrontation with management, the national government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which are blaming the union for the crisis.

The union is calling for the continued construction of hydroelectric plants, that the maintenance policy be kept intact and that existing contracts be respected. Currently, even their right to health care is being denied, al-



WW PHOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS



thon was held in New York City on May 21 to send to Nicaraguan children. About 350 activists through several neighborhoods in Manhattan explained why she was there:

in Nicaragua to have good food and good nutrients of mine and of my parents. I raised \$178.40 that will go to feed a lot of children. It's not that we didn't have enough rain last year and because the there."

Workers explain struggle from U.S. workers

though deductions are made in their wages supposedly for this purpose.

The electric utility in the Dominican Republic is supposed to be a nationalized and autonomous agency. Nevertheless, the IMF is pressuring the government to sell the agency to private owners as a means of generating funds to pay the foreign debt owed principally to U.S. banks.

Foreign debt can't be paid

The private groups interested in buying the agency have said that they will do so only if the union is broken. The position of SITRACODE, on the other hand, is that the foreign debt cannot be paid.

The electric utility has already opened its attack on the workers, firing some 300 employees, among them union leaders and workers with high seniority.

SITRACODE is seeking the support and solidarity of U.S. workers with the understanding that only by showing a united front can the working class in both countries hope to restrain their common exploiters.

There are approximately one million Dominican workers living in the U.S., mainly in the New York area. These workers and their co-workers here are exploited by the same international corporations that exploit the workers in the Dominican Republic. For this reason the workers at SITRACODE are calling upon their trade-union brothers and sisters in this country to lend them moral as well as economic support.

Koreans remember Kwangju uprising

Storm U.S. Embassy in Seoul

By Andy Stapp

John Phelan, the chairman of the New York Stock Exchange, thinks it would be a good idea to build a monument commemorating the Korean War. To that end he presented \$50,000 to the mayor of New York on May 17.

It is fitting that Phelan would lead such a project. Wall Street was the main beneficiary of that war, in which 53,000 GIs and several million Koreans perished.

In south Korea itself, if such a monument were to be erected these days, it would instantly become the target for huge and militant anti-U.S. government demonstrations. The U.S. Embassy in Seoul is now surrounded by a high barrier topped with barbed wires, and even then protesters still manage to get into the compound.

Yankee go home!

On May 20, students chanting, "Yankee, go home!" managed to scale the walls, toss homemade bombs at the building, burn two U.S. flags and unfurl a banner that read, "Drive out America, culprit of the Kwangju massacre."

"There is no excuse for this kind of behavior," sniffed State Department spokesman Charles F. Redman. Of course, Redman is not Korean, so it's easy for him to talk this way.

For Koreans, Kwangju is a crime that will never fade from their minds and it is also an inspiration, like the Paris Commune is for class-conscious French workers.

The uprising in Kwangju, which is about the size of Baltimore, began on

May 18, 1980. This is how the British news agency Reuters reported the first hours of the insurrection: "A huge crowd of 200,000 people are battling 10,000 troops in this southwestern Korean town. Many have been killed and wounded by paratroopers as thousands of civilians — including miners armed with explosives — flock in from the countryside to join the street battles."

It took four days for Kwangju's people, armed with weapons seized from a government armory, to drive the army back. Then, for five days the city was free. A journalist from Time magazine who witnessed the event described the enthusiasm and joy of the masses as reminiscent of "liberated Paris or Rome during World War 2."

Under the boot of U.S.-backed fascists

It was an apt comparison. South Korea has been under the boot of a U.S.-imposed fascist military regime since 1945. To this day, hundreds of political prisoners fill the jails and the "president" of the country is, naturally, a general.

"Many Koreans consider the government of President Roh Tae Woo a continuation of what they term the 'military dictatorship,'" observes the May 21 New York Times. Many indeed! But the Times leaves out the most important part, that is, who is propping up this dictatorship.

Recall how the Kwangju uprising ended. Troops under the command of a U.S. general named John Wickham were rushed to encircle the embattled city. In the pre-dawn hours of May 26,

1980, the 7th, 11th and 3rd Airborne Brigades of the south Korean army, beefed up by elements of the 20th Division, attacked the rebels.

These soldiers were under Wickham's direct control, and the south Korean "president," General Chon, had to get permission to move them into Kwangju. Wickham quickly agreed, authorizing their employment there "for crowd control and internal security."

The soldiers came with M-45 tanks and 85-millimeter artillery pieces, against civilians armed with grenades, rifles and a few machine guns. When the army finally got the upper hand, the atrocities began, the hanging of people from trees in the city park, the dragging of students through the streets tied behind military vehicles, the rapes.

South Korea is still a police state. The regime plans to deploy 100,000 cops and soldiers to watch the crowds at this year's Olympic Games, because whenever more than 20 people get together in south Korea it seems to automatically turn into an anti-fascist, anti-U.S. demonstration.

The Pentagon still keeps 43,000 soldiers in south Korea, the last large body of imperialist troops on the Asian mainland.

State Department flacks can declare until doomsday that there is "no excuse" for the ongoing anti-U.S. outbursts among the population there. But the south Korean people know better.

And they remember the Kwangju uprising.

Asian briefs

Nurses. The Filipino Nurses Organization Project (FNOP) is demanding an immediate moratorium on the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) policy regarding H-1 visas. The temporary five-year work visas are expired. They were given to recruit foreign-born nurses to fill the nursing shortage, which is 10-20% nationwide.

In New York City, Filipino nurses make up 12% of the staff, or about 4,000 nurses, and often work in poorly staffed city hospitals. Despite the nursing shortage and the five-year experience of these nurses, the INS refuses to change its policy. The nurses can be fired and deported. Like all nurses, they work in stressful and understaffed conditions, a grim reality referred to as "working in the trenches."

Like most documented and undocumented workers, they came to work here because of economic conditions at home created by U.S. imperialism. The racist, anti-worker stance of the INS affects more than these nurses alone. Without the nurses in the \$511 billion healthcare business, getting sick won't just be terrible, it'll be dangerous. FNOP's address is: 1472 Broadway, Room 822, New York, N.Y. 10036. (212) 221-4532.

At the movies. "The Last Emperor" is about Pu Yi, the last emperor of feudal China. The sights, sounds and drama are intoxicating like the opium used to destroy resistance to British imperialism in the 1800s.

The film got nine Academy Awards, although none of the Asian stars were nominated. Asian people played themselves (no Charlie Chan, thanks). China, a Chinese story and things

Chinese were reasons to see the movie. Other than Peter Wang's movies, it's a first for Hollywood, which in the past has shown only racist stereotypes of Asian people.

There's one problem: the central character is missing. It is the masses of China who starved and died in feudal China. As Pu Yi collaborated with the Japanese imperialists, it was the masses' decades-long struggle that brought about the Chinese Revolution. The Forbidden City was the repository of wealth and culture stolen from the people. It was the Cultural Revolution that was a safeguard against reactionary forces and ensured the gains achieved. History was made by the masses of China, and Pu Yi was not a victim of circumstance but a mere cricket on the wall.

Korea. After a 19-day strike, Daewoo Motor Co., a 50:50 joint venture with General Motors Co., gave workers a 19.6% wage increase and some fringe benefits. The bosses measured the power of the workers by the profits lost on 11,400 cars not made in that strike. After a 32-day strike, Daewoo Shipbuilding and Heavy Machine Co. gave workers an immediate 20% increase. Strikes continue at other Daewoo subsidiaries. Nationwide about 80 businesses and plants are closed due to strikes by workers whose working conditions and exploitation are the worst in the industrialized world.

Philippines. Tens of thousands of workers took part in nationwide protests demanding an immediate 50 cent increase to the current minimum

wage of \$3.20 a day. Troops fired on the demonstrators, injuring some. 40,000 members of the May 1 Movement (KMU) demonstrated in Manila and called for the dismantling of the U.S. bases. President Aquino's response was that the demand was "ill-advised," a multinational corporation version of "let them eat cake."

Gin T. Loy



WW PHOTO: PADDY COLLIGAN

Madame Nguyen Bihn Thanh

Vietnam. Representatives of anti-Vietnam war forces met May 19 with members of the Vietnam and Laos missions to the United Nations in New York to celebrate together the thirteenth anniversary of the total liberation of Vietnam. Madame Nguyen Binh Thanh, acting permanent ambassador of Vietnam, spoke of the difficulties the Vietnamese people are experiencing in rebuilding after the war. "Starting from a very low level and suffering from the consequences of

Continued on page 10

The Soviet reforms and the thrust from the right

By Sam Marcy

Almost a year ago, an article appeared in the well-known Soviet magazine *Novy Mir* (No. 6, June 1987) which created somewhat of a sensation in the USSR with its sweeping attacks on the Soviet economy and proposals on how to restructure it.

The article was written by Nikolai Shmelyov, an economist at the Institute for the U.S. and Canada in Moscow, a very important arm of the government. (An extensive abstract in English appeared in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Oct. 21, 1987, published weekly in Columbus, Ohio. Excerpts were printed in the *Wall Street Journal* of Aug. 26, 1987, as well as in the 1987 second quarter issue of the *Journal of Economic Growth*, published in Washington.)

This article is not just the expression of an individual, but is representative of the thinking of a considerable layer of the Soviet intelligentsia, including some of the political leaders and some economists. Among the latter are Fedor Burladskii, A.P. Dutenko and E.A. Ambartsumov.

Among the political leaders in this current is Boris P. Kurashvili, a lawyer who has been most vocal in praise of the Hungarian reforms. He is also a leading figure in the Institute for State and Law under the Academy of Sciences in Moscow. The *New York Times* of May 24, 1988, reports that he, along with economist Tatyana Zaslavskaya, is a leading proponent of a proposal to develop an organization which would perform some of the functions of a political party and be what the *Times* calls an "alternative" to the Communist Party. (No official text of their proposal has yet arrived in this country.)

Whether what may be called the Shmelyov thesis, as it appeared in *Novy Mir*, has deep and wide adherence remains to be seen, especially after the extraordinary Party conference scheduled for this June.

The article, far from concealing the basic views of the author, is on the contrary quite open and blunt, if not outright brazen.

Gorbachev's comments on Shmelyov

Because of the widespread interest it generated, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev himself was forced to respond to it. Thus, on June 22, 1987, at a meeting he attended in electoral district No. 5, Krasnaya Borough, Moscow, Gorbachev was asked by a reporter from *Pravda* about "many pointed, controversial materials on restructuring" which were appearing in the Soviet press. Did recent writings on restructuring give "questionable prescriptions for surmounting our difficulties? For example, economist Shmelyov's article in *Novy Mir*."

Gorbachev replied, "I would divide that article into two parts. The first is an analysis of the state of affairs in the economy, and it presents a picture that is close to what actually exists and we will talk about that at the plenary session.

"The second part is what the author proposes," Gorbachev continued. "He apparently proposes, for example, that there be unemployment. That's not for us. We are well aware of our weaknesses and unresolved problems, but neither can we forget the fact that socialism has given every one of us the right to work and to an education, free medical service, and accessible housing. These are genuine values in our society which provide social protection for the individual today and for the future."

Then Gorbachev added, "The measure of consumption is another matter. Socialism is not a system of dependence. Needs grow but they must be managed. And the main tool in that work is the implementation of the basic principle of socialism, to each according to his labor." (*Pravda*, June 22, 1987.)

Right, left and center in Soviet politics

Notwithstanding Gorbachev's assurances, the Shmelyov thesis continues to be of more than topical significance. It is, in fact, the platform of the neobourgeois elements in the government. It can be contrasted to the platform of the so-called conservatives published on March 13, 1988, in *Sovetskaya Rossia* in the form of a letter by Nina Andreyeva, an instructor at a Leningrad high school.

Superficially all this appears to be a reappearance of the older, classical divisions of right, left and center in the Party polemics of the early 1920s. These designations, however, which were represented by Bukharin on the right, the Trotskyist opposition on the left, and Stalin and his supporters in the center, have only the faintest resemblance to today's groupings. Today the entire historical context has changed. But it is helpful to consider them merely from the point of view of analogy.

Shmelyov's thesis scarcely compares with Bukharin's views on a market economy or on dealing with the peasantry in the development of socialism. All the participants at that time had been thoroughly grounded in Marxist doctrines and trained in the school of Bolshevism.

The Shmelyov thesis is a lamentable bourgeois economic critique of the problems of the Soviet economy. While Gorbachev took great care to distance himself from Shmelyov's conclusions and prescriptions, he nevertheless approved his criticisms, which are inescapably linked to the conclusions. It is quite impossible to accept Shmelyov's criticisms, let alone his conclusions.

Shmelyov's thesis is calculated to test out the affirmations made again and again by the Party leadership, especially Gorbachev (see Gorbachev interview, *Washington Post*, May 22, 1988), that no unemployment will result from the restructuring and that none is contemplated.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to see precisely what Shmelyov's criticisms are as well as his prescriptions. The grouping he represents seems formidable, from the point of view of both economics and politics.

Unemployment in the USSR?

First, Shmelyov says there is unemployment in the Soviet Union today.

"Natural unemployment," he says, "resulting from people looking for or changing jobs is now hardly less than 2% of the work force at any given time, and that figure is probably more like 3% if one adds in the hoboes who are unaccounted for in the official records."

If the hoboes, as he calls them, are not accounted for in the official records, where does he get his unofficial records? Who are the so-called hoboes and where do they come from? Are they the people who move from one economic ministry to another, who travel from them to some of the splendid dachas in the suburbs, or who spend their time abroad?

"It is one thing to discuss the matter while pretending that there is no unemployment whatsoever in our country, and it is something quite different to do so while calmly taking account of the fact that there is some unemployment in our country and there would have to be."

Why would there have to be? He doesn't explain.

"We must also not close our eyes to the economic harm that results from our parasitical certainty of guaranteed employment." (Our emphasis — S.M.)

Guaranteed employment, we learn from this sage of bourgeois economics, doesn't bring security and an opening of the well-spring of initiative of the working class, especially since the means of production are owned by them, but on the contrary creates parasitism. Even Milton Friedman is not quite as brutally frank about his thesis. But again, who are the real parasites? Are they in the bureaucracy or are they in the mines, mills, factories, offices and farms?

"I think," he continues, "it's clear to everyone that we owe much of today's disorder, drunkenness and shoddy workmanship to overemployment."

Again, who is he aiming at? Those with their own wine cellars and private champagne parties? Or is it again the workers? In the capitalist countries drunkenness and social disorder are considered a result of unemployment. Shmelyov has the dubious distinction of being the first economist to proclaim that overemployment is the cause of drunkenness and, moreover, shoddy workmanship.

"We should have a businesslike and unflinching discussion of what the benefits might be from a relatively small reserve work force (one that the state would not entirely abandon to the whims of fate, of course)."

In fact, such a discussion is going on and his grouping is vigorously pushing it.

"A real danger of losing one's job and going on temporary unemployment pay, or of having to work where one is sent, is rather good medicine against sloth, drunkenness and irresponsibility. Many experts feel that it would be cheaper to pay adequate unemployment compensation for a few months to such temporarily unemployed than it is to keep a lot of fearless loafers [emphasis added] in the work force who could scuttle (and are scuttling) any and all economic accountability and any and all efforts to improve the quality and efficiency of social labor."

Shmelyov bolsters his thesis with the authority of another economist. "The well-known Soviet economist S. Shatalin stresses that 'socialism has yet to create a mechanism that en-

sure not just full employment . . . but full employment that is socially and economically effective and rational. Socialist principles are not charity principles that automatically guarantee everyone a job, irrespective of his aptitude for it.'"

Furthermore, Shmelyov writes, "Apathy, indifference, theft and lack of respect for honest work are rampant, as is aggressive envy toward those who enjoy high earnings — even in cases where the earnings are honestly come by. There are signs of an almost physical degradation of the Soviet people as a result of drunkenness and sloth. And finally, there is distrust of announced goals and intentions, and skepticism about the possibility of organizing economic and social life in a more sensible fashion."

An attack on the working class

It is hard to believe that Secretary Gorbachev considers this to be mere criticism. No, this criticism is altogether programmatic in character and it is anti-working class beyond any and all doubt. It's the kind of criticism that was rampant from the earliest days of the Revolution and continued into the late 1920s.

Except for slight changes in form, Shmelyov's attacks are a rewrite 70 years later of the propaganda of the Russian bourgeoisie, landlords and bosses. Not even the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, enemies of the Soviet regime, ever resorted to such tripe.

Isn't it a fact that workers here in the U.S. hear this same type of attack again and again in the capitalist press? Who has not heard the accusations of laziness, low productivity, disinterest in production and the work ethic?

What are the causes of it?

According to the Shmelyov thesis, "The reason for our difficulties is not merely the heavy burden of military expenditures and the very costly scope of the country's global responsibilities." He's brushing off what has been seen as the main problem, not only in the USSR but in the capitalist countries as well. How can anyone deny that the heavy burden imposed by imperialist armaments on the whole world, not just the USSR, is one of the basic reasons for a declining living standard?

Of course, he wouldn't care to give a breakdown of how much the imperialist-imposed burden of armaments consumes of the Soviet gross national product. As a matter of fact, it has long been the hope of the imperialists that the acceleration of the arms race would ultimately bankrupt the USSR.

Shmelyov on 'objective laws' of economics

Shmelyov, however, says the problem isn't just the heavy burden of military expenditures. What then is it? And here he finally discloses the real crux of the matter:

"It is the persistent and prolonged attempts to circumvent the objective laws of economic life and to suppress established, age-old work incentives that has ultimately led to results opposite to those being sought."

Now, this is something really worth examining. What objective laws of economic life have been circumvented? Which age-old work incentives have been suppressed?

First of all, there are no objective laws of economic life in general. Marx claimed to have discovered only the objective laws governing capitalist society. Does Shmelyov know of any other laws that govern economic life?

A new bourgeois grouping in the USSR criticizes perestroika as not going far enough. One of its representatives calls for more unemployment plus a return to the 'objective laws of economic life' and 'age-old work incentives.' When Lenin was forced to introduce the NEP in the 1920s, he called all this by its right name: a step backward to capitalism, not a new stage of socialist construction.

There you have it. What Shmelyov is really for is the restoration of the New Economic Policy (NEP) of the early 1920s. He and some of his co-thinkers, like Fedor Burladskii, A.P. Dutenko and E.A. Ambartsumov, all lean in the direction of harking back to a difficult period which socialist construction has overcome.

Some of the new bourgeois reformist economists in Eastern Europe, especially Hungary and Poland, have also shown a strong inclination in the direction of the NEP.

What was this period and how should we characterize it? How did Lenin, who proposed it, characterize it?

Lenin's New Economic Policy

The New Economic Policy was formulated and introduced by Lenin in October 1921. "At the beginning of 1918," said Lenin in a report to the Second Congress of Political Education Departments (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pages 62-67), "we expected a period in which peaceful construction would be possible. When the Brest peace was signed, it seemed that danger had subsided for a time and that it would be possible to start peaceful construction. But we were mistaken because in 1918 real military danger overtook us . . . and then came the outbreak of civil war which dragged on until 1920.

"Partly owing to the war problems that overwhelmed us, and partly owing to the desperate position in which the Republic found itself when the imperialist war ended — owing to these circumstances, and a number of others, we made the mistake of deciding to go over directly to communist production and distribution. We thought that under the surplus-food appropriation system the peasants would provide us with the required quantity of grain, which we could distribute among the factories and thus achieve communist production and distribution. . . .

"That, unfortunately, is a fact. I say unfortunately, because brief experience convinced us that that line was wrong, that it ran counter to what we had previously written about the transition from capitalism to socialism, namely, that it would be impossible to bypass the period of socialist accounting and control in approaching even the lower stage of communism. Ever since 1917, when the problem of taking power arose and the Bolsheviks explained it to the whole people, our theoretical literature has been definitely stressing the necessity for a prolonged, complex transition through socialist accounting and control from capitalist society (and the less developed it is the longer the transition will take) to even one of the approaches to communist society.

"At that time, when in the heat of the Civil War we had to take the necessary steps in economic organization, it seemed to have been forgotten. In substance, our New Economic Policy signifies that, having sustained severe defeat on this point, we have started a strategical retreat. We said in effect: 'Before we are completely routed, let us retreat and reorganize everything, but on a firmer basis.' . . .

"The New Economic Policy means substituting a tax for the requisitioning of food; it means reverting to capitalism to a considerable extent — to what extent we do not know. Concessions to foreign capitalists (true, only

very few have been accepted, especially when compared with the number we have offered) and leasing enterprises to private capitalists definitely mean restoring capitalism, and this is part and parcel of the New Economic Policy. . . .

"The issue in the present war is — who will win, who will first take advantage of the situation: the capitalist, whom we are allowing to come in by the door, and even by several doors (and by many doors we are not aware of, and which open without us, and in spite of us), or proletarian state power? . . .

"On the other hand if capitalism gains by it, industrial production will grow, and the proletariat will grow too. The capitalists will gain from our policy and will create an industrial proletariat, which in our country, owing to the war and to the desperate poverty and ruin, has become declassed, i.e., dislodged from its class groove, and has ceased to exist as a proletariat. The proletariat is the class which is engaged in the production of material values in large-scale capitalist industry. Since large-scale capitalist industry has been destroyed, since the factories are at a standstill, the proletariat has disappeared. It has sometimes figured in statistics, but it has not been held together economically."

Lenin did not mince words. He called things by their real names.

The period preceding NEP had been characterized by the fact that the proletariat had nearly disappeared as a result of the imperialist war, the civil war and the counterrevolution.

"The restoration of capitalism," Lenin says, "would mean the restoration of a proletarian class engaged in the production of socially useful material values in big factories employing machinery. . . ."

Thus, one of the great motivations for NEP was not just commerce and trading, it was to restore and build up a proletariat. How unlike the USSR today, which has the most numerous proletariat in the world. Large-scale production? Of course, the Soviet Union is second only to the U.S.

"The whole question is who will take the lead. We must face this issue squarely — who will come out on top? Either the capitalists succeed in organizing first — in which case they will drive out the Communists and that will be the end of it. Or the proletarian state power, with the support of the peasantry, will prove capable of keeping a proper rein on those gentlemen, the capitalists, so as to direct capitalism along state channels and to create a capitalism that will be subordinate to the state and serve the state."

With respect to the partial restoration of capitalism, Lenin said, "Our Party must make the masses realize that the enemy in our midst is anarchic capitalism and anarchic commodity exchange. We ourselves must see clearly that the issue in this strug-

gle is: Who will win? Who will gain the upper hand?"

As can be seen, Lenin did not try to embellish his New Economic Policy. He said that the question posed by the partial restoration of capitalism was who will win, will it lead to the restoration of the old ruling class and old bourgeoisie and with it the overthrow of the communist regime, or will the proletarian dictatorship survive and get rid of the bourgeoisie?

Not a single phrase in this report or any other report by Lenin on the subject praises capitalist trade and commerce, or the leasing of property to foreign capitalists. He didn't sing paeans to the glories of the capitalist market. He characterized capitalist commodity exchange as "the enemy in our midst."

Lenin frankly and very clearly stated that the NEP was a partial return to capitalism. That is something that every school child should know.

After trials and tribulations and even horrendous mistakes on the part of the new revolutionary government, the capitalists did lose out. The NEP period was finally abolished and socialist construction, vast industrialization and collectivization were begun.

The NEP was an attempt to rescue the Soviet Union from collapse after its industry had been ravaged and virtually destroyed and the working class exhausted by the long Civil War, imperialist intervention, and rebellions — as witness what happened in Kronstadt. The program was openly admitted to be a retreat that was necessary in order to take forward steps later.

All the contending factions in the Party at that time saw the NEP as a breathing spell. However, there were various approaches on how to take the next step towards reconstructing the USSR on a socialist basis. The only question was how to do it. No one thought of the NEP as a permanent state of development.

Shmelyov views the NEP as a utopia

But that is not the way Shmelyov and his supporters are reviewing that period. "A retreat of sorts it was," he says, "but its enduring significance lies elsewhere. . . . It marked the transition to a system that would mobilize rather than suppress all of the working people's creative energies — the transition from 'administrative socialism' to 'economic-accountability socialism.' Three practical ideas were central to Lenin's plan for putting the economy on a normal, healthy basis. First, commodity-money and market relations were to be developed. . . . Second, economic-accountability trusts, voluntarily organized into associations (syndicates) were to be the economy's basic operating units. Third, cooperative property and coop-

Continued on page 11

What were the "age-old work incentives" under slavery, for instance? Under feudalism? What work incentives were there under the czarist autocracy when the bosses owned and controlled the plants and the landlords worked the peasants to death? What age-old work incentives is he talking about that were destroyed?

Marx discovered capitalist accumulation. This law was not circumvented in the USSR, it was abolished by the proletarian revolution. The law of the extraction of surplus value by the capitalists from the exploited working class was not circumvented — it too was abolished.

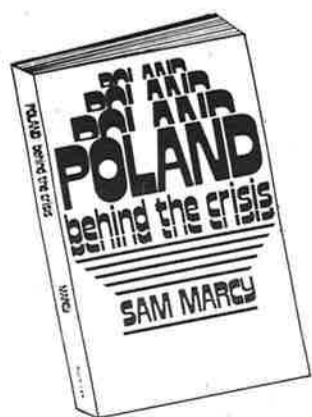
As long as the capitalist class existed in Russia, as long as they were allowed to own and operate the plants, there existed the law of capitalist accumulation and the law of the extraction of surplus value, that is, of exploiting the workers and reducing them to wage slaves. Those were the fundamental objective laws governing economic life in the entire preceding era that began with the development of capitalism in the USSR, which Lenin analyzed in his "The Development of Capitalism in Russia" (first printed in 1899, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, pages 21-607).

There was no circumvention of these laws. There was outright abolition by virtue of the seizure of power by the workers and the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

What is Shmelyov driving at? Certainly if the Soviet economy is up against certain objective laws, those laws must be enumerated and carefully examined to see if they can be modified or abolished, or if the system can be put in accord with them. On this point he is silent, as are all his co-thinkers.

Laws of capitalist development

However, he does give us sufficient reason to believe that what he has in mind is really a restoration in some form of the laws of capitalist development. For we read, "If we do not admit that the rejection of Lenin's New Economic Policy imposed severe difficulties on the building of socialism in the USSR, we will doom ourselves once again — as in 1953 and 1965 — to half-measures, and half-measures, as we know, are often worse than no measures at all. The 'administered' economy that replaced the NEP was by its very nature unable to address questions of quality and efficiency and achieved its quantitative results in spite of the laws of economics, and therefore at great cost in material and human resources."



\$3.95 (add 75c for postage)

Order from:
World View Publishers
46 W. 21 St., NY, NY 10010

EDITORIALS

Tawana Brawley & Howard Beach

Once again, a U.S. court has let racist killers off the hook.

In December 1986, bat-wielding racists attacked three Black men in Howard Beach, N.Y. Their assault forced Michael Griffith onto a highway where he was struck by a car and killed.

This May 25, two of the bigots charged in his death were let off without having to serve a day in jail. They were given the mildest, slap-on-the-wrist sentence of five years' probation with 200 hours of community service.

These racists had even admitted that they went to the pizza shop for the purpose of beating up the Black men. But the judge, who clearly sympathized with the bigots, decided to "give them a break." Griffith, of course, had gotten no break. The prosecution had no objection to the two plea deals.

On the very same day the deals were made, State Attorney General Robert Abrams announced that the state will seek a contempt citation against Glenda Brawley, Tawana Brawley's mother. This citation can mean 30 days in jail. Why? Because Glenda Brawley refused to testify before a grand jury investigating the rape and kidnapping of her daughter.

The state apparatus, aided by the media, has done everything it possibly can to discredit the Brawley family, which is refusing to cooperate with the government unless it appoints a special prosecutor to conduct this case and bring to justice those who kidnapped, raped and assaulted this 16-year-old Black woman.

After her ordeal in November, Tawana Brawley maintained that white cops were among her assaulters. There are indications that elements within the local sheriff's office are involved with this case.

Glenda Brawley's "crime" is that she wants

a serious investigation into this horrible racist assault on her daughter, and wants the perpetrators punished. The Brawley family and their attorneys have demanded a special prosecutor, a demand Gov. Mario Cuomo rejected.

Given the above circumstances, who can fault Mrs. Brawley and her attorneys, C. Vernon Mason and Alton Maddox, for denouncing the current investigation as an attempt to cover up for the culprits? In Glenda Brawley's own words, "I'm not the type of person who's going to stand back and let them attack my child and not do anything about it."

Imagine the uproar if a white woman, the mother of a rape victim, was being threatened with arrest for defending her child? But Glenda and Tawana Brawley are not white, and that is just the point.

If there are any doubts why Glenda Brawley feels compelled to risk jail to get justice for her daughter, one need only look at the kid gloves treatment given the Howard Beach thugs in court the very same day to understand.

Eating dust in Panama

U.S. imperialist fortunes in Central America are sinking fast.

The anti-Nicaragua contra army is in disarray. Guerrilla forces in El Salvador are on the offensive. And in Panama, U.S. efforts to destabilize the Noriega government appear to have backfired.

"Noriega has won" declares a prominent article in the New York Times of May 23. The Times reports that there is a mood of demoralization and resignation among Noriega's political opponents. The regime, having successfully resisted U.S. efforts to starve it into submission, is stronger. Masses of workers stage regular demonstrations in support of the government and against Yankee intervention. The political opposition, consisting mostly of wealthy businessmen and U.S. cronies, is in crisis.

Washington's anti-Noriega campaign has had international repercussions as well. On

Sunday, May 22, the foreign ministers of 13 Caribbean nations issued a unanimous statement calling for an end to foreign intervention in the affairs of Panama. Representatives from Trinidad revealed that U.S. diplomats tried, unsuccessfully, to strong-arm their government into supporting Washington's policy in Panama.

What a sign of the times! For a small, underdeveloped country like Trinidad to stand up to U.S. imperialism on an issue like this would have been inconceivable 20 years ago. Yet today the U.S. can't get Trinidad or any of the Caribbean nations or for that matter one significant government in all of South America to support it.

The anti-Noriega campaign has generated a lot of confusion in the U.S. Many people here think that it has something to do with drugs and keeping drugs out of the U.S. But every class-conscious worker should know that Washington's hatred of Noriega has nothing whatsoever to do with drugs. The CIA is up to its ears in drug scandals involving Afghan counterrevolutionaries and anti-Nicaragua contras. There are numerous stories every week of drug-infested corruption in police departments, from small sheriff's offices in rural Alabama to the biggest precincts in Brooklyn and Chicago. Some of the biggest capitalist banks have been exposed for their role in laundering drug money.

No, the government's interest in suddenly busting drug dealers in Panama is a sham. They hate Noriega, not because he deals drugs, but because he won't go along with U.S. policy in the region. They hate him because Noriega is committed to retaining the Panama Canal at the end of the century, according to the terms in the U.S.-Panama treaty which was signed almost ten years ago, but which the U.S. ruling class now wants to renege on. They hate Noriega because he's not a puppet, like their fascist clients in Guatemala and El Salvador.

Every class-conscious worker in Central and Latin America knows that this is the real issue, which is why there is universal disgust for the U.S. position throughout the region.

Yankee imperialism out of Panama and all of Central America!

— Cleveland, Texas

Continued from page 1

grand jury and the city council, have gotten even more vicious. People organizing protest actions have been receiving death threat phone calls. Despite this tremendous pressure in this small town 50 miles from Houston, a protest rally took place on May 21 as planned.

Faced with the combined might of the city government, the police and the state apparatus, who have let Kenneth Simpson's killers go scot free, the people of Cleveland, Texas, are in need of active support from all those fighting racist attacks.

Send messages and contributions to: Kenneth Simpson Justice Fund, First National Bank of Cleveland, Texas, P.O. Drawer 1648, Cleveland, Texas 77327. Messages can be sent c/o the All-Peoples Congress, P.O. Box 52115, Houston, Texas 77052.

—Vietnam

Continued from page 7

protracted war," she explained, "the Vietnamese people have had to carry out simultaneously two specific tasks . . . maturing and improving the people's lives, accumulating funds for building socialism,

and strengthening national defense."

Madame Thanh during the war represented the Peoples Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam with Madame Binh in Paris and played an important role in mobilizing international solidarity with Vietnam. She described April 30, 1975, as a day "hailed by progressive people the world over as a common victory of all forces struggling for peace, justice, freedom, and social progress. Vietnam particularly hailed it as a common victory of the coordinated struggle of the Vietnamese people and the anti-war movement in the United States.

"It is a special privilege for me today," she concluded, "to express our most sincere appreciation and gratitude to all forces and all friends in the anti-war movement who concurred in this common victory."

Paddy Colligan

Lea un periódico \$6 por 6 meses \$10 por un año
 Marxista revolucionario. . . \$2 por 10 semanas
 ¡Suscríbese a Mundo Obrero! Envíame un paquete
 de Mundo Obrero

\$10 for one year/ \$6 for six months Read a revolutionary
 \$2 for a 10-week trial subscription Marxist newspaper. . .
 Send details on supporter program Subscribe to Workers World!
 I want to get a bundle
 of Workers Worlds

Name/Nombre _____

Address/Dirección _____

City/State/Zip/Ciudad/Estado/Zona _____

Phone/Teléfono _____

Return coupon to/Envíe el cupón a:
Workers World/Mundo Obrero, 46 West 21 Street, New York, N.Y. 10010

Building Fund Appeal

If you don't act now, WORKERS WORLD could be homeless in 1989! The lease on the WORKERS WORLD office is running out. And so is time. We're caught in a nationwide crisis between workers' decreasing income and extortionate rents. Our only solution is to purchase a permanent home for the newspaper. But that requires an enormous amount of money . . . and a lot of help from our friends and subscribers.

WORKERS WORLD'S future depends on you. Give generously today.

Please mail your check to WW Building Fund. For more information write WW Building Fund, 46 W. 21 St. NY. 10010. Or call us at (212) 255-0352

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

What is the Klan?
 Just another right-wing group — or a secret terrorist organization?
 The book examines the special relationship between the Klan and the government that has allowed the Klan to exist for over a century despite its criminal history.



\$2.95 (plus 75¢ for postage)
 Order from **World View Forum**
 46 West 21 Street, NY, NY 10010

— The Soviet reforms and the thrust from the right

Continued from page 9

erative relations were to be developed not merely in the countryside, but in urban areas as well — in industry, construction, retail trade and in what we now call consumer services."

This reactionary fantasy as described by Shmelyov runs up against the reality of what was taking place.

One, the reintroduction of a commodity economy, especially in agrarian relations, gave rise to the kulak class — the very rich peasants. It aided the exploiting rich against the millions of exploited poor. It gave rise to the avaricious profit-mongers known as nepmen: the brokers between city and village, the new trading class, a new bourgeoisie that became even more hated than the old one, particularly since it arose right on the heels of this greatest of all social revolutions.

That's not what the working class and the peasantry had shed their blood for.

Lenin had no illusions about any of this. He characterized commodity production as the enemy that was necessary for a time until it could be superseded by large-scale socialist planning.

It should be very plain that in Shmelyov's pompous talk about circumventing the "objective laws of economic life," he is talking about the laws governing capitalism. These had to be partially restored under trying circumstances in the USSR, but it was then necessary to proceed forward toward socialist construction without the kulaks, without the nepmen, without the myriad of new middlemen, the new commercial bourgeoisie which was consuming such a vast part of the social product and at the same time strengthening its political role.

Collectivization of agriculture

The NEP period finally culminated in crisis. It was necessary to move forward with the collectivization of the peasantry, which in turn ushered in a most difficult period in Soviet history. Few subjects are as confused and lend themselves to as much political tendentiousness in the present era of the Soviet reforms as the collectivization.

It cannot be stated too categorically that the collectivization of agriculture in the USSR was a highly progressive development. It was in fact an additional social revolution, a change in the mode of production from private ownership to collective semi-socialist ownership. It at the same time freed millions of peasants for industry and created a strong and formidable proletariat that became the basis for the industrialization of the USSR and the success of the five-year plans that followed.

This is incontestable. But the neobourgeois critics such as Shmelyov deliberately confuse this with the forced pace of collectivization and the repression that accompanied it under the administration of Stalin, resulting in wholly unnecessary and unwarranted destruction.

The attempt to disqualify socialist property in favor of bourgeois private property, whether it be in agriculture or industry, is a reactionary attempt to bring back the old exploiting order. It is necessary to show clearly and unequivocally what was wrong with the Stalin method of collectivization, but at the same time not to confuse the issue so as to support bourgeois decollectivization of agriculture and dismember socialist industry under the guise of decentralization.

(Those who have forthrightly stood up for maintaining a centralized economy have been ousted. Nikolai Baibakov, the head of GOSPLAN, the Soviet planning agency, was removed

in 1985; N. Patolichev, the former head of the foreign trade department, was also removed in 1985 and the government's monopoly on foreign trade was breached, as we've pointed out in earlier articles; and N. Gluskov, a former head of GOSKOMPSEN and an opponent of the reform, was removed in 1986. [*Reform of the Soviet Economy*, by Ed Hewitt, page 283f, Brookings Institution, 1988.]

It is necessary to distinguish the repression and arbitrary decision-making of the Stalin period from socialist administrative measures in general, which are necessary for the functioning of a socialist economy.

Again and again the neobourgeois economists use the terms "administrative measures" and "command economy." While they may apply in some areas, it has become ever so clear with each passing day that they are subterfuges for attacking socialist planning and administration of the economy.

This should not be confused with legitimate criticism to overcome bureaucracy, over-centralized ministries and arbitrary management decisions. That's a different aspect of the struggle.

Shmelyov wants to elevate private agriculture

"The decision on the new economic mechanism in agriculture," says Shmelyov, "is a half-measure. We need to go the rest of the way. . . . Collective and state farms must have the right to sell their output freely to state and co-operative organizations and to consumers. . . . Personal auxiliary farming must be put on a par with collective farming in terms of both economic and social rights."

These are ill-disguised measures to undermine collective farms rather than develop them further. Personal and collective farming are put on an equal basis. But the unrestricted right to buy and sell is nothing but an open road to commodity production. The idea that a buy-and-sell money economy would lead to small farms, with their vaunted individual initiative and enterprise, supplying the immense Soviet economy with its 280 million people — that is nothing but a fantasy, a reactionary utopia.

The socialist organization of agriculture and its liaison or coordination with industry can raise Soviet agriculture to the status of an industry like any other. Socialist ownership is what will pave the way toward the communist organization of society. This neobourgeois layer of economists and politicians is not attempting to promote the socialist reconstruction of society insofar as agriculture is concerned, but wants to pull it back to an earlier, outmoded bourgeois form.

One would think that the lesson of Poland, where collectivization was long ago abolished for the most part, would be sufficient to show them where this leads. Small farming is the bane of the Polish economy. Food shortages are an ever-present phenomenon.

Need to further socialize and modernize Soviet agriculture

Soviet agriculture has evolved from private farming to collectives and partially to state farming. The next step should be the organization of agriculture as an integrated industrial element of the entire socialist scientific and technological complex of the USSR. In fact, steps taken in the earlier era of the development of collectives into state farms showed a great deal of promise but were not carried forward on a mass scale.

Attempts to discredit these efforts should be resisted. Where the amalgamation of collective farms into state

farms was not well calculated or organized, these errors should not be used as a means to attack the principle of the conversion of collective farms into state farms. This is a step backward.

"We must finally decide once and for all what is most important to us," continues Shmelyov, "to have an abundance of food or to eternally indulge an assortment of irresponsible loudmouths and proponents of equality in poverty. We need to call stupidity, incompetence and active Stalinism by their proper names. We need to do whatever it takes to ensure an ample supply of foodstuffs, for without that the idea of activating the human factor will go nowhere."

He equates abundance with the capitalist market. The struggle for social equality, for communism, he equates with poverty. All this is lumped together with "stupidity," "incompetence" and "Stalinism."

"At one time," he says, "the elimination of the kulaks as a class was put forward as the motto." He then mourns the elimination of the kulaks and says that what was abolished was the peasant class.

It is true that millions of peasants suffered as a result of the forced character of Stalin's collectivization, but it is a wildly gross exaggeration to say that the peasants were abolished. They form what became the industrial and rural proletariat. Would the USSR be today the second greatest world power without them? Crocodile tears for the peasants are in reality a cover for sympathy with the kulaks, who exploited and robbed the peasantry.

Shmelyov treats the peasantry as one undifferentiated mass with the kulaks. He deliberately omits the Leninist approach to the peasantry both before and after the revolution. The Bolsheviks fought for all the peasants. ("Land to the peasants" was their slogan both before and during the revolution.) But in the socialist phase of the revolution, the Bolsheviks differentiated between: first, the kulaks, who by definition employed wage labor (that's what made them rich peasants); second, the middle peasants who did not employ wage labor and worked the land themselves; and third, the poor peasants, the landless peasants and the wage laborers on the land.

The vast majority of the peasants were not kulaks and should not be confused with them, as Shmelyov does, as though the collectivization process with its repression destroyed everybody. These exaggerations only help the bourgeois interpretations of Soviet history.

To sum up, we see that Shmelyov equates a partial return to capitalism with the development of socialism. He lauds the NEP policy, not for what Lenin meant it to be — a temporary period of coexistence with capitalist commodity production — but rather as

a long-term projection of socialist development.

He then further equates the abolition of the kulaks, the exploiters of the peasantry, with the abolition of the peasantry as a class. Moreover, he sees abundance of food as a natural, inevitable product of the capitalist market, forgetting in the meantime that capitalist abundance brings abundance of profits at one pole and misery and poverty at the other pole. This kind of abundance invariably leads to capitalist overproduction and the anarchy of a capitalist crisis.

Small farms disappear in U.S.

His prescription for a retreat to small-scale agriculture even disregards the progress being made in the metropolitan imperialist countries. What has the much-vaunted free enterprise system of imperialism done to agriculture? Is there a free enterprise system in agriculture in the U.S.?

Agriculture in the U.S. is collectivized. Only 1% of the population own their own farms. The rest are huge agribusiness conglomerates that are organized, coordinated and controlled by big business, by the huge chemical and high-tech industries, especially in pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and the production of fertilizer. All of it is organized on the basis of huge farms.

The tendency toward this was pointed out by Lenin himself in his writings on agriculture in the U.S. Today farming is one of the best organized high-tech industries, but it is owned privately by the millionaires and billionaires. While there is splendid coordination between industry and agriculture, the virus that kills it all is the private ownership of the means of production and the predominance of the banks and the huge multinationals.

Politically, the attacks from the right are directed against Stalinism. Of course, Stalin is now an easy target, so it becomes all the easier to equate Stalinism with Leninism and communism, an argument that leads back to bourgeois norms in the struggle for the restructuring of the Soviet economy and back to bourgeois ideology. It is a broad attack against communism, and Stalin is merely a convenient symbol.

The neobourgeoisie attack perestroika not because they are opposed to it in principle but because, as Shmelyov says, the reforms go only halfway toward capitalism. They are for accelerating the process, but they put it in the framework of a bourgeois economic critique of the Soviet economy. Politically, they pretend to be attacking only the "high-handed," "administrative," "command" strategy of earlier Soviet administrations. In reality, they go far, far beyond that. They go to the very essence of what socialism is and the perspective for the Soviet economy.

Palestinian women protest at San Francisco consulate

One hundred Palestinian women and children and other women supporters picketed the Israeli consulate in downtown San Francisco on May 16 to demand an end to Israeli repression and occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

The protest highlighted the key role played by Palestinian women in the heroic resistance. Many of the women wore traditional Palestinian dress, and waved huge Palestinian flags. The protest was organized by the Union of Palestinian Women's Association.

The demonstrators used a sound system to explain the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli repression to hundreds of passersby and to ask for solidarity and support. Many of the people stood quietly to watch, as the children, nearly all under 10, chanted, "Children say no to Israeli occupation!"

The police continually threatened to stop the sound system, and "bring in all available manpower to monitor your conduct," but the women remained undeterred, and the demonstration continued for a solid two hours.

Sindicalistas describen la realidad en la República Dominicana

By Rosa Maria de la Torre

Recientemente, estuvieron en Nueva York dos representantes de el Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Corporación de Electricidad (SITRACODE) de la República Dominicana donde se reunieron con grupos y organizaciones de solidaridad. Los compañeros Rafael Bello Ortiz y Luis Tejada enfatizaron la importancia de la solidaridad entre sindicatos y aclararon que necesitan prepararse para responder a los ataques de los capitalistas y del gobierno.

El SITRACODE tiene 26 años de existencia y cuenta con aproximadamente 5,200 obreros sindicalizados de una fuerza obrera de 6,000. Es uno de los sindicatos más antiguos del país. Mientras la crisis energética se agudiza, en la República Dominicana el Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Corporación de Electricidad intensifica su labor como instrumento de lucha y se prepara para una confrontación con los capitalistas, el FMI y el gobierno, ya que los capitalistas culpan al sindicato por la crisis.

El Sindicato plantea que se sigan construyendo las plantas hidroeléctricas, se mantenga una política de mantenimiento y que se respeten los contratos, ya que los trabajadores no tienen derecho a la salud pese a que se les descuentan cuotas de sus salarios. El artículo 807 es violado ya que dicho artículo estipula que se forme un comité de higiene y comprar equipo de protección

indispensable para la labor de los electricistas.

La compañía de electricidad de la República Dominicana se supone es autónoma y nacionalizada. Pero el Fondo Monetario Internacional ha estado presionando al gobierno para que venda la compañía a grupos privados para generar fondos para pagar la deuda externa a los bancos de Estados Unidos. A su vez el sector privado está dispuesto a comprar la compañía siempre que logren destruir el sindicato.

Por su parte el SITRACODE y otros sindicatos de la República Dominicana piensan que la deuda externa no se puede pagar.

La compañía de electricidad ya inició el ataque contra los trabajadores, ya se han despedido a unos 300 empleados entre los que se incluyen líderes sindicales y obreros con muchos años de trabajo en la compañía eléctrica.

El SITRACODE busca el apoyo y solidaridad de los obreros en los Estados

Unidos ya que sólo un frente unido de la clase obrera podrá detener a los explotadores. En Estados Unidos se encuentra un sector de aproximadamente de un millón de obreros dominicanos quienes principalmente radican en el área de Nueva York. Estos obreros son explotados por las mismas corporaciones internacionales que explotan a los obreros de la República Dominicana, así es que piden el respaldo tanto moral como económico de los sindicatos de este país.



FOTO: J. CATALINOTTO

Miembros del Sindicato 1199 protestan por sus derechos laborales.

Nueva York. El domingo 22 de mayo, cerca de 400 trabajadores hospitalarios, miembros del sindicato de la salud 1199, protestaron en Manhattan frente al edificio del Ejército de Salvación ubicada en la calle 14. Desde el 27 de julio los trabajadores del Booth Memorial Hospital se encuentran trabajando sin contrato, y la administración le ha negado a estos trabajadores los derechos a servicios médicos.

El sindicato ha declarado: que el Ejército de Salvación predica la hermandad entre los seres humanos cuando en realidad lo que está ocurriendo es que se está destruyendo sistemáticamente los beneficios laborales.

El sindicato 1199 representa a los trabajadores de las escuelas médicas y hospitales, y recientemente a las enfermeras a domicilio. — Por Petra Guerra.

La crisis en Polonia y el rol de EE.UU.

Por Lucinda Sintierra

La ola de huelgas que ha padecido Polonia han llegado a su fin, pero los problemas fundamentales y las causas de la reciente crisis no han sido resueltas y por lo tanto necesitan ser encaradas.

Las demandas de los trabajadores eran sólo de carácter económico y fue una respuesta justificada al alza de precios. A pesar de esto las autoridades gubernamentales han respondido con un ataque contra los obreros. Esto a su vez ha permitido el resurgimiento de la organización Solidaridad, que es una agrupación contra-revolucionaria y que busca derrotar la industria estatal socialista que es el sistema básico de la economía polaca.

Antecedentes

El 10 de octubre de 1987, el gobierno de Polonia anunció esta serie de reformas económicas, hechas para satisfacer las demandas de los banqueros capitalistas internacionales y al gobierno de los EE.UU. y es aquí donde se encuentran las raíces de la crisis que afecta Polonia.

Por años la estrategia capitalista ha sido crear la dependencia económica de Polonia, al mercado capitalista. En los años 60, los economistas y dirigen-

tes gubernamentales en Polonia, comenzaron aceptar préstamos de los bancos capitalistas, y ahora, en los 80s, la deuda externa ha subido a US\$30 billones y no la pueden pagar.

Reformas económicas

Dentro de todas estas reformas económicas la más importante y dañina consiste en la desintegración del sistema bancario nacional de Polonia para volverlo al camino de la competencia capitalista y desvincularla del control gubernamental.

El sistema bancario estaba al servicio del desarrollo socialista de la economía de Polonia, ahora se rompe en pequeñas unidades que compiten entre ellas y son más o menos independientes del gobierno. Esto tendrá como consecuencias un mayor auge al sector privado que le da una ventaja ante el sector socialista de la economía, en particular la industria pesada que es el núcleo principal de la industria de Polonia.

Otros aspectos de la desintegración del sistema bancario es que permite a

los bancos prestar con más facilidad al sector privado, que ha crecido mucho en los últimos años.

En breve las otras reformas económicas que se están llevando a cabo es que se permitirá a las facilidades industriales declararse en bancarota, siendo los más perjudicados los trabajadores que tendrán que pagar las deudas de estas compañías. Se vincularán los salarios de los obreros con la productividad, esto significa la aceleración del trabajo y promover la competencia y desunión entre los trabajadores en vez de la solidaridad.

Se venderán acciones de la compañía a los empleados, y se institucionalizarán controles de salarios y precios. Esto es un problema, ya que los salarios no suben al equivalente al costo de vida. Otra reforma es el recorte de subsidios gubernamentales a la vivienda pública y transportación, y la abolición de algunas formas de control de la renta.

FMI y bancos capitalistas

El FMI y los bancos capitalista han

obligado a Polonia a subir los precios en el país, además de las reformas económicas para pagar la deuda externa. El partido comunista a cargo podría solidarizarse con la clase obrera y rechazar las demandas de los bancos imperialistas, pero se han puesto en la posición indefendible de atacar a los trabajadores en huelga por un sueldo suficiente para vivir.

A su vez la organización reaccionaria, Solidaridad, está tratando de usar esta lucha económica de los trabajadores como una campaña contra el estado polaco y le dan la bienvenida a la intervención de los bancos imperialistas. En Polonia las industrias básicas son del estado pero hay un sector grande de la economía que es capitalista y el 80% de la agricultura está en manos privadas.

A la larga el capitalismo y el socialismo no pueden co-existir. Son 2 modos de producción antagónicos, uno basado en la clase obrera como dueños de los modos de producción, y el otro en la propiedad privada y la explotación de los obreros.

El gobierno de Polonia no puede continuar en los dos campos, son los trabajadores los que van a sufrir más explotación y pobreza.

¡SUBSCRIBASE AHORA!